



## Public Meeting 6/18/21 NYC Racial Justice Commission

### APPEARANCES:

- Jennifer Jones Austin, Chair
- Henry Garrido, Vice Chair
- Ana Bermudez, Esq.
- Lurie Daniel Favors, Esq.
- Darrick Hamilton
- Reverend Fred Davie
- Chris Kui
- Melanie Ash
- Jo-Ann Yoo
- Anusha Venkataraman
- Phil Thompson
- K. Bain
- Yesenia Mata
- Una Clarke
- Reverend Herbert Daughtry
- Hazel Dukes
- Reverend John L. Scott
- Chirlane McCray
- Mayor Bill de Blasio
- Deacon Maurice Reid
- Kapil Longani
- Darrick Hamilton

### **Jennifer Jones Austin (JJA) 0:00**

Alright, well again, having a quorum I am opening the public meeting of the New York City Racial Justice Commission. This is a duly noticed public meeting of the Racial Justice Commission and we welcome the members of the public who are tuning in via live stream. I'm Jennifer Jones Austin, Commission Member and Chair. Present today, our Commission Members -- Let's see, we have Lurie Daniel Favors, we have Fred Davie, Ana Bermudez, Philip Thompson, Henry Garrido, Yesenia Mata, and I believe that is all who have joined us thus far, but others should be joining us shortly. Present today, formed in March of this year by Mayor Bill de Blasio, the Racial Justice Commission is empowered with the legal authority of the Charter Revision Commission to identify and propose structural and significant policy reforms that will advance racial justice and equity, and begin to dismantle structural racism for all New Yorkers. The vision of the Commission is to achieve racial equity where the words, talents, and contributions of all people in society are valued and recognized, and race is not a determinant of economic, political, social, or psychological outcomes, as it neither confers privilege nor denies opportunity. This work is necessary because systemic racism has been and continues to shape

our reality. Today's public meeting is a special meeting titled "Juneteenth: Reflections on the Legacy of Racial Justice." We're here today to honor Juneteenth and to reflect on the history that has made this holiday necessary, and we're also here to continue charting the path forward towards racial equity for all. New Yorkers around the city -- Now around the nation, are observing Juneteenth as they choose. Some are resting, some are celebrating, and some are reflecting on the deeply horrific incidents beginning with slavery -- The failure of our nation to safeguard basic human rights for Black persons and families since the days of slavery and continuing. Juneteenth marks the day in 1865 when Black persons who were enslaved in Texas learned they were free -- That slavery had officially ended with the Emancipation Proclamation two and a half years earlier. But sadly, tragically, while free from institutionalized slavery, we're still dealing with systemic racism, which denies Black persons, Indigenous persons, and other persons of color basic human and economic rights. 402 years since Blacks were enslaved and denied the opportunity to learn, to read -- Black children continue to travel behind White children in educational outcomes. Our nation essentially captures -- and I'm saying capture, deliberately captures -- and holds in mass incarceration, African-American adults at six times the rate of White adults. Black women die at twice the rate of White women during pregnancy and childbirth, Black persons -- men and women -- and persons of Hispanic origin earn significantly less than White men and women, even when they have higher credentials. And the racial wealth gap is ever widening. Efforts to suppress the minority vote abound, lynching and other unjustified killings of Black people continue. And for me, the measure that most strikingly demonstrates the cumulative impact of all these injustices -- One in four Black children and one in four children who are Hispanic live-in poverty compared to less than one in ten White children. With childhood poverty being a proven determinant of economic insecurity in adulthood, it's critical that we acknowledge the history and the continuing inconvenient truths that make Juneteenth a reality and a necessity. And their connection to racial injustice and the work that we have to do today, and for the many many years to come -- We've come a long way as a nation but we have so much further to go. As the Racial Justice Commission, an honest and sincere way to open up the public meetings exchange that we are beginning now and will continue through the summer, is to engage with people who've been fighting for freedom. Today, we'll be hearing from civil rights and social justice leaders -- the honorable Una Clarke, Reverend Herbert Daughtry, Dr. Hazel Dukes, Deacon Morris Reed, and Reverend John L. Scott. Our esteemed guests will share wisdom from their years of working to guide the efforts of this city and this nation in charting a way forward to a just, racially equitable future for New Yorkers and even beyond. We want to hear from them, we want to hear them tell the truth -- the struggle, the pain of African-Americans and other persons of color with lived experience. All the challenges that are presented through the years, the concerns that they have still today, and we want to hear what gives them hope in this moment. We want to acknowledge the contributions that they've made, and they and others have made throughout history and in this present moment, we want to hold space for each and every one of them to talk about the enduring commitment that we all must have to racial justice. We're also honored to have the First Lady of New York City, Chirlane McCray, here to welcome you all. And in a little while, we'll also be hearing from Mayor Bill de Blasio, who will be joining us as well. It's my pleasure to introduce to you our first lady, Chirlane McCray. She's a nationally recognized champion for mental health reform. She created Pride NYC, the most comprehensive mental health plan of any city or state in the nation. Among her many roles, she leads the city's Thrive Coalition and Co-Chairs the New York City Commission on Gender Equity and Task Force on Racial Inclusion and Equity. It's my pleasure, it's my honor, my privilege, to ask First Lady Chirlane McCray to deliver some remarks, welcoming remarks. Good afternoon.

**Chirlane McCray (CM) 06:11**

Good afternoon everyone, and thank you Jennifer for that introduction, for your work as Chair, and all the ways that you have helped our city pull through this past year. I also thank each of the Commissioners for what is an extraordinary service that you are doing, and it's an honor to be with leaders who have dedicated their lives to the fight for racial justice. Reverend Scott, Dr. Dukes, Deacon Reed, the honorable Una Clarke, Reverend Daughtry -- I appreciate you more than words can communicate. And I would smile, but I just had a root canal so my expression is partly because of the seriousness of what we have to talk about, but also because I can't move my mouth. There is truly so much work ahead but the progress that has been made and the fact that we have the power to take actions and craft policies to tackle racism is because we stand on the shoulders of your work and your activism. I've been thinking a lot this week about last Juneteenth one year ago, just a few weeks after we announced the City Task Force on Racial Inclusion and Equity. What I said then, was that racism is a disease, a disease that has infected every facet of our lives in New York City -- Disrupting families, stealing away hard-earned gains and leading to everyday dignities that everyone on this Zoom knows all too well. This kind of disease doesn't disappear overnight, and of course, the manifestations of this disease have never been exacerbated more than this year as Black and Brown communities full of essential workers and those most at risk for the brunt of COVID. What I can say as I sit here today is that one year can make a difference. Our task force, and I'm proud that we've got Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson and Executive Director Sadia Hermann and our other Deputy Mayor Melanie Hartzog -- I believe, are all on this Zoom. Our Task Force leaped into action and has begun a new dialogue with the people in our hardest hit neighborhoods. We are redistributing resources, we're training our communities in mental health support, making sure that people have what they need, where they need it from providers who understand the cultures, the challenges, and speak the languages. We've also put a plan in place to bring reliable broadband to thousands and thousands of households that didn't have it before -- That allows for remote learning, that enables telemedicine, that provides more opportunities for employment in the 21st century economy. So, we're beginning to get at the core of some of these issues but as everyone here knows, we have so much more to do. Today, as we begin celebrating Juneteenth, many people are speaking about freedom. And as we all know, freedom is about so much more than laws -- Real freedom is knowing our children will have safe spaces and support in school, the support in school that they need. Real freedom is self-determination and the ability to build generational wealth. Real freedom is when people have affordable housing and so much more. There is great urgency in the challenge ahead and this is the moment for concrete actions, for policies with real teeth. I look around this Zoom at our chair, our commissioners, at our elder leaders who paved the way for us. I see people with incredible life experience, who know our communities, our pain, and our challenges. I know you are ready to deliver for the people of New York City. I thank you and I stand ready to do my part this year and beyond. Thank you.

**JJA 10:19**

Thank you, thank you First Lady McCray for your leadership. We know that you know so much of what we're doing in this moment would not be possible without your input and your direction, and so we thank you for all that you're doing and all that you've done. I am going to ask Vice Chair Henry Garrido now to share a few words as we prepare to welcome our special guest into this space.

**Henry Garrido (GA) 10:47**

Thank you Madam Chair and good afternoon everyone. I'm the Executive Director of DC37, the largest municipal union here in New York City. I was baptized into this labor movement about 25 years ago to this day actually, and as we celebrate today, Juneteenth, I'm honored to be here as one of the commissioners who are looking at the injustices and the inequities that have been

perpetuated for decades to not only New Yorkers in general, but in particular for city workers. What some of you may know about me and my background is that I am of Dominican Descent. I was actually born and raised in the Dominican Republic with a very large family by a matriarch woman named Graciela, who was my grandmother who raised 16 children, and I was the 17th brought up. We were raised in the most abject poverty that you can think of and one of the things that we did very much in the mountains, in the Dominican Republic because we didn't have a tv is that my grandmother would gather all her children and grandchildren around and tell stories about our families. In much of our tradition in the Dominican Republic and for years, being the oldest grandson, I heard that story being told over and over about an uncle of ours who did so much work for it that was mesmerizing, and I knew it word for word from beginning to end and I loved her dearly for it, and just ingrained in my brain and my history, my upbringing. Years later when I came to New York and went into City College and started in the program of Architectural Environmental Studies, one of my favorite books were "Their Eyes were Watching God" by Zora Neale Hurston, and someone recommended that I read "Mules of Men" as a subsequent to it. And much to my surprise, I found in one of those stories the very same story that my grandmother was telling me when I was a kid. It was in that book and I couldn't believe it -- I mean, I said how could it be -- My grandmother never spoke a word of English, never came to the United States, never had an inkling with anyone, but in the same tradition of African-Americans that told the stories of their culture to folklore, we were doing the same, and I took that as a prime example, the quintessential example, that we have more that unites us than divides us, that we are told one thing to keep us all at bay and separated so that we don't come together to fight the very things that make us and kept us in a system that is inequitable. And so today, I come here as a commissioner, you know, having the honor, having served as the President, the Executive Director of the largest municipal union in New York City, representing essential workers, mostly people of color, Black and Brown, who had a distinct honor of serving New York during the most horrific pandemic that this city has ever seen. And yet we see here, we stand here at a time where more than 300 of those city workers die from COVID19 as a result of their service and their sacrifice to keep us all in New York healthy and protected, and I cannot help but mention that over 300 of those who died, more than two-thirds of them were African-American or Latino, that out of the 320 families so far who have been identified, two-thirds of those who have received benefits from those COVID-related benefits that we have fought for when pension and health insurance, have been the very same, who have been denied, have been the very same African-American workers who gave their lives on there and I cannot help but reflect that the reasons why that was, wasn't because the color of the skins make them more vulnerable to a disease, but the fact they were twice as likely to be named essential and twice as likely to live in a neighborhood where asthma and diabetes and all the environmental challenges that we've seen, are much more prevalent because back in the 80s, city workers were made to live in New York City but not all city workers, because not all city workers were treated equally -- That there was a residency requirement that forced people to live in the same poverty in the same area that we're talking about. For some of the laws, the lowest-paid city workers, when some of the white counterparts that were making six figures were allowed to leave New York and to live in Westchester, in Long Island, in areas where those conditions were not there, where city workers, the ones I represent, are most likely to live in public housing where lead and the conditions were there, and are there as prevalent right now, led to the health to be in a condition where they were most vulnerable to this disease. And here we are, the day like today, celebrating Juneteenth as a people, as an institution, and memorably hearing that the President has called this day a national holiday and that the state has called it a national holiday, and that CUNY and SUNY have done so, and yet we were unable to create or negotiate a deal that would allow the very same essential workers who benefit from it to have the day to celebrate Juneteenth. So, I took this role with responsibility, with an honor, but also

with the absolute promise that I will speak the truth when I felt it was, and I believe what has been committed for city workers has been an injustice. Having said that, I set aside to say this Commission has a tremendous opportunity to start the process of not only healing, but to fight the institutional inequities that we have seen, the institutional racism that we've seen in housing, in environmental justice, in addressing the access to capital, in the way we invest our pensions, in the way we hire and fire individuals, in the way we recruit and train next generation workers -- We are more likely to invest from New York dollars in the streets of Germany than we are in the streets of Brooklyn right here, and that ought to be the beginning of the thinking on our end with this Commission, to begin to do and undo the system that created the institutional systems that have allowed for things like that to happen. I'm honored to be here and I'm honored to fight with my Co-Chair together for what is just, and with Phil Thompson who is, you know, has been a stone worth of our, even before this Commission was there, and I'm honored to serve with our commissioners. Thank you very much for the opportunity to address you today.

**JJA 18:30**

Thank you, Vice Chair. I just, I want to thank you for your remarks and in doing so, reminding us all that even as we make positive strides, there is work to be done even in this moment. The Racial Justice Commission, the creation of it is one thing but we've got to make sure that in all we do, not just you know, after charter revisions are passed, but in the present that we tried to live up to, and evidence in all of our dealings, equity at every turn, so I just want to thank you for your remarks and speaking the truth as it needs to be told. We are now going to turn to a conversation with our esteemed panelists. I have to begin by sharing with you all that it's very, it's a moment where I feel, I guess I should say privileged and grateful to know personally all five of our panelists -- Civil rights leaders and social justice leaders, who've been on the front line for decades, fighting for justice, for you know, for persons who've been marginalized and oppressed, be they Black persons, persons of Hispanic origin, Indigenous persons, other persons of color -- They are a tremendous group and I know them all in part because in a couple of instances, a few instances my father, as I've shared before with the public, was a civil rights leader and he was joined up in good trouble with several of the persons who are on the panel today. But also because of, you know, during the course of my life and in my work, I've had the opportunity to learn from and in many respects, be mentored by them. And then, I also have some family friend connections with a few, so we're going to get started because you don't need to hear from me, you need to hear from them. We need to hear from them, we need to learn from them. We need to grow having heard what they have to say. I'm going to begin with Reverend Herbert Daughtry. And Reverend Daughtry was born in Georgia, but I think that he probably, you know, claims just as much the New York City streets. He's known by many to be the Pastor for the people, the Pastor for the community, and he's got 60 years of involvement in church and community service. As I said, he's been labeled the people's pastor, he's organized numerous delegations and advocated on civil rights issues facing the global community, played a critical role in the South, anti-apartheid South Africa movement, I know him also to have been a comrade of my father for many years, and I'm just honored, we all are honored to hear from him this afternoon. Reverend Daughtry, please talk to us.

**Reverend Herbert Daughtry (RHD) 21:40**

We're working on, I must confess, I'm trying to graduate from kindergarten with all these equipment around me here, but I have experts so that sometimes works -- It's counterproductive when other people can do what you want done, it's not always a good thing sometimes they should make it, should force you, I'm doing all sorts of rambling going on. Alright! Well, I'm so honored to be among this distinguished group and especially with you Jennifer -- Oh my lord, when I remember, when you were a little girl your father was the preeminent civil rights leader,

one of the civil rights leaders in the 60s. He chaired the Appalachian Breadbasket Metropolitan New York, Jesse Jackson was the Director, Reverend Scott was the Executive Director, I was the Executive Vice Chair, which meant that I did all the work Reverend Scott -- But we were all inspired by Reverend Dr. Bill Jones of the, Pastor of Bethany Baptist Church, and Operation Bread Basket, you know, was Dr. King's brainchild. We had social mobility but economically, the advance was not there and so he conceived this idea of preachers confronting economic situation via corporate America and governmental arrangements and etcetera, so that topic as we, it just seemed well, I've reached the grand old age of 90 now and been on this journey what, 25 the resume says 60 years, it's been longer than that -- maybe closer to 65, 70 years, been on this journey so you get the feeling that you've heard it all before and just what needs to be done. I had more time, I written a book called "My Beloved Community" some years ago, which traced the history -- What I've been particularly concerned about is the reaction to Black progress and what I did was lay out the history of how whatever progress we made, we should get prepared for a reaction and the reaction is generally ever increasing in fury, and so in my book, I talk about racism, I define racism in categories. In other words, there is what I called "sadistic racism" -- that is the KKK type and there is the "sophisticated racist," that is the more acceptable, respectable hints of corporate America, etc. There is the "subtle racism" smiling in your face but talking behind your back, and there is what I call "simple racism," that is, nice people, nice white folks who just, going along with the program, classic book is Reinhold, Dr. Niebuhr, "Moral Man and Immoral Society," in which he argues that nice people will just go along with the crowd, which crowd is doing some very evil things, but they would never think of themselves as racist -- they just benefit from what the blatant racist, sadistic racism is doing. And then fifthly, there is what I call "shatterer of racism," there have always been White people who have been on our side -- Senator Sumner, Stevens, in during other reconstruction days -- So they've always been "shatterers" of racism. So, when defining this way, we can kind of identify where people are coming from. And then what I point out is that even when we've made progress, after the Civil War in 1865 and the Congress had passed legislation in March the second, 1867, calling for constitutional conventions in the Southern rebellious states and people's right to vote, and out of that situation it came. You believe, in 16 people in the Congress at that time with two Senators from Mississippi, Blanche K. Bruce and Hiram Revels, well, once the Southerners, the slaveholders saw that they were losing the political ascendancy power, they began to organize and would you believe it, in about 10 years, what gains had been made had been rolled back. They employed every kind of terroristic tactic you can mention and some you can't mention, and thus on through the history, I could cite case after case, the book that I write about is -- I was invited in 1982 to a constitutional convention, discussing the constitution and what was called at that time backlash, backlash, we should fear these white people because they are fearful of the progress that have been made. Well, the Civil Rights Movement says in 1955 and then Black power in 1966, all of this had four-minute great striving and a great militancy and great methodologies. We were moving, attacking in every direction and then around the eighties, we began to get this white backlash, and so I again, did the history -- Well, I don't know that there's anything new under the sun, I've written another book yet, it's called "No Monopoly on Suffering," Black and Jews and, which lay out again, some of the strategies to achieve a goal, you know, defining goal is the ultimate objective -- What we may want to achieve on the way to achieving the goal, strategies or what we lay out, totally trying to define these terms because if we don't, we get in trouble when we be battling for the strategy and not the goal. We can agree on the goal, differ on the strategies and tactics, so what I see, I mean, some of, and hopefully the discussion will touch on further, I'm certain it will, but it just seemed to me that what we at this critical moment in our history, where we see the emerging power of women, in particular Black women -- Number one, I think in whatever message we use, we've got to have cohesiveness. I'm concerned because as I said, I see the

backlash. January the 6th in DC, was a drama that had been played out before, so we've got to be very very conscious of the enemy that will come in various ways, this is why I tried to lay out various racist categories because people don't give up power. You know, those who are discussed in power is not going to just say okay, you nice Black folks, you now got what is it, Juneteenth -- You got a holiday, and that's it. So, we've got to be conscious as never before, cohesive as never before, cultural as never before. I'm concerned that we may gain some degree of political power and lose our cultural power. For example, Kamala Harris is never referred to as African, she is Black -- She's Black, and what East Asian, well is Black, where's the continental Black? I don't know about continental, I don't know, they said some Black folks live on, but the reference to Africa as our homeland, I'm not sure that there isn't a deliberate attempt to divorce us from origin, so there's consciousness, cohesiveness, culture, courage that we gotta keep on fighting and conversation, keep on having these conversations and I'm going to stop right there.

**JJA 31:53**

You know, you do know there's a big party that wants you to continue and I want to begin engaging in conversation with you directly but the way we set this up is we'll hear from all panelists and then we're going to have a dialogue, and we're going to bring in Commission members as well to participate in the dialogue. Thank you, thank you so much. The next person from whom we will hear from is Hazel Dukes, Dr. Hazel Dukes, and again, I'm just, I'm privileged to know her too, in many ways mentored by her, she's a you know, an ever-present example of someone who's dedicated her life to human rights and to lifting up those who've been you know, marginalized and oppressed. She has for many years, led at the NAACP both serving as a member of the Board of the National NAACP and here in New York as President of the New York State Chapter, and her track record speaks for itself. I just want to welcome her into this space and just really looking forward to hearing what you have to say. Dr. Dukes.

**Hazel Dukes (HD) 33:05**

Thank you so much! Can you hear me?

**JJA 33:07**

I can hear you.

**HD 33:08**

Thank you, you can't see me though. We having some problems in my area here with internet, and this is New York City. Let me first express my sincere gratitude to the Commissioner, to you, Chair, your Vice Chair, the First Lady of the City of New York, and all the members of this great Commission, and to all my fellow Civil Rights warriors. Everyone you have on this panel, I have worked with them over the years -- I spent four decades in this battle and so for me to be on with Reverend Daughtry, who I had the privilege to see yesterday to get a hug from. From one 'clock, we spent good trouble at several national conventions and to Reverend John Scott, who has been one of the people beneath my wings here in New York City doing work when I thought about and, let me also congratulate the Mayors, I did yesterday when I saw him about this Commission. It says that it was to root out systemic racism across New York. For me and for each of you who are on this program and who are members, you've been doing this line of work all the time, and when I think about the NAACP in 1909, when a white woman on Fifth Avenue in New York City, altogether Black and White, Jew and Gentile, to talk about what was happening in America at the time, and here we are now, where we have a president of the United States who declared Juneteenth as a national holiday here in the City and in the State, declaring that and the history that Dr. Daughtry laid out for us means that we just can't have a celebration --

We must look at educating and resolving how we're going to root out racism. Speeches are good, proposals are good, but I've heard the Vice Chair say that we must come together to speak about the marginalized citizens that we have in our state and the work we need to be doing. I thought about something that intrigued me many years ago, that President Roosevelt as you know, have talked about -- Franklin Roosevelt proposed four freedoms and you know they are inscribed in the park on the Southern end of Roosevelt Island -- You may think that we've come a long way in New York State, but we have a long way to go in New York City. He talked about four freedoms and as we come to this part of the 21st century, I want us to think about those four freedoms again. Freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear. As we saw in this crisis that we had, the food and security here in New York City, lines of people just receiving bread -- I live at 135th Street by the Kennedy Center, and there were days when they were only receiving bread, there was no other commodities, there was no frozen, there was no canned vegetables -- They were only receiving bread and the line started at 135th street and went down Lincoln Avenue. Freedom from want, freedom from fear -- We are fearing for our people, our young people, especially men of color to be in our streets. City of New York, freedom for worshiping -- We've been shut down for 18 months and before then, as Reverend Dr. King said, on Sunday morning we see the most segregated area of worship in New York City as well as in the education system, and so for me, as I think about Juneteenth and the celebration that we are so grateful for, for those who have paved the way for us, to be here and as our Chair said, we've come a long ways, no doubt about it -- But we still have such a long ways to go and I believe that the Mayor of this City that put this Commission together and the people that he chose to do this work to get us to a new charter revision, when I think about the late Bill Lynch who was on the Charter Commission in back many years ago, and Phil Thompson, that bright young quiet legend who always put us in the right direction, I think that Reverend Daughtry said this is the beginning of the conversation but it should not just be a conversation with the elders as we would be called, we must bring in our children. I said to people out in Queens where they are having a big activity in Roy Wilkins Parks, we are bringing children there, they don't even know the name of Roy Wilkins, they know it's a park, I think we have to have teachings, we have to educate our persons on the right to vote, what voting means for them -- You've heard me being very disgusted by ranked choice voting, but here it is upon us -- we have to educate our community to where we've been, where we've come, and where we must go, and so with this conversation today and looking at the four freedoms that all of us on this zoom call today have been involved in, in our own way, some of us have been to the streets, others have been to the suites, some of you have sat on boards, corporate boards, to speak truth to power to make policy. Somehow, that policy and the kind of fortitude that you have used to do it have not trickled down to the masses, who still don't understand how we have come to where we are now. You'll hear, Reverend Scott said we've come this far by faith absolutely, but it's more than just faith that we must depend on now -- We must depend on the great minds that we have on this commission, good will, men and women from every race, and we must encourage our young people, our children -- Yesterday, when the Mayor announced that they were going to give every kindergarten child in New York a saving bond to learn about how you save, financial, what Dr. Bill Jones talked about, Operation Breadbasket, we gotta get back to those kind of things, to how we must eradicate poverty in our communities, how we must have education as a stone in it, that our children understand they don't have to go to Brown, they don't have to go to Harvard, but they must have a skill that they can become protective citizens -- That's what this Juneteenth means to me. After many battles that I have been in, many lives that have been lost, when I think about Medgar Evers, Fannie Lou Hamer was sick and tired of being sick and tired. It is time for us to come back together to have these conversations and have a map and a plan, not just this Juneteenth, but how are we going to measure next Juneteenth -- What is the goals that we want to reach, how do we prepare



ourselves now with this Commission, to look at the systemic racism that is in the culture of the workplace when people do not have the same opportunities, how do we prepare people to be able to defend as we have in the armies. We are soldiers in the army and we must prepare our next generation as we pass the baton to generations yet unborn, where will we take them and laying out a plan for just not the celebration of Juneteenth, but for those freedoms that we know that we have freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear -- We need to make a plan, how do we get there? And I believe with the leadership that is put together in this Commission and my sisters and brothers that you have today, who have been in this struggle for a long time and with the men and women, under the leadership of the Mayor, this City, I believe next year this time, we will have a report that will not be for just the celebration but for a resolve, how we move from yesterday, today, until tomorrow. Thank you so much for inviting me to participate and listen.

**JJA 44:41**

Dr. Dukes, thank you. There's so much like, you know, as was the case with Reverend Daughtry, that you said that I want to comment upon. But understand that we have to keep moving, I will just say though, you've given us a charge that you know we need to be accountable to where will we be one year from now. Needs to be a true measure of the success and efforts of this Commission, so thank you. The next person to speak that we'll hear from is Reverend John Scott and again by way of full disclosure, I have to share that I have a personal relationship with him that goes back to a time long before I even knew that I existed -- He was a comrade and a close brother and friend of my father's, but you know, more importantly, he's a lifelong civil rights leader and he's served in so many capacities in that regard across this country, and here in our hometown, his work has brought him many acknowledgements, and you know, one of them being from the White House. He continues to be a staunch advocate for people, the nation over and he's also the Pastor of Saint John's Baptist Church in Harlem, so I welcome him this time -- Reverend Dr. John L. Scott.

**Reverend John L. Scott (JLS) 46:08**

I want to say a good evening to all of you, President, I almost feel like I'm at Mount Olympus listening to the Gods speak from the orbit in which they sit. Listening to Dr. Daughtry and certainly to the Chairperson, Dr. Jennifer Jones Austin, and my respect for the Mayor and his wife and to all of you as Commissioners now, this is awesome -- This really is an awesome undertaking. Listening to Dr. Daughtry and then Dr. Hazel Dukes, I don't know that I have much to add other than it reminds me so much of Dr. King's preparation for the poor people's march on Washington, not the march on Washington but the poor people's march, and he was mapping out strategy as to where we go from there as he was speaking there at Memphis, that when he, in that I've been to the talk, speech, he laid out in the first two-thirds of his speech or kind of a plan for the future of America -- We never hear anything about other than just the fact that he said "I've been to the mountaintop" and without remembering that as we deal with income inequality, that that's devastating our communities because as I look at the working poor, be they Black, Brown, or White, they no longer can live in New York -- The income inequality is devastating -- For example, here in Harlem, they have us listed as a medium in average median income at 66,000, but that is not correct. The average median income in Harlem is 23.5 and that is why I fought against the Mayor when he did not want to raise the minimum wage to \$10. Now I'm glad to hear the President say that at least 15, but we have concluded through the Micah Institute which I'm sure you're familiar with at Riverside Church, we've concluded that to live in New York, you need at least a minimum of \$25 an hour, and so thinking about how awesome it is and you mentioned about January the 6th, the insurrection there at the Capitol, you're really talking about almost a reconstruction -- no, no, no, that I don't

see, ruling out racism is what really built the economy, current economy of this nation -- It was built on the backs of Black and Brown people, and to, with the arch of what you might call white supremacy. And so as they envisioned how to rather refashion the life of free, the freedom, the enslaved following the Emancipation Proclamation of Juneteenth, actually 1965 they came up with the picture of reconstruction, so Dr. Jones, I think that what you are undertaking is a reconstruction project. I don't see it happening anyway because I know in employment we have to deal with income, the inequity and the economic system -- The housing is driving our people out. For example, when I came here in Harlem, we were about 99% of Central Harlem, with 99% African-Americans, is now 44% because we can't afford the state to live here any longer. Here on the West side, it was around 98%, now it's down to 29% demographically speaking, and declining. Now the educational situation that we're always dealing with, the quality of life as we deal with equity, the educational system is inequitable. It's not when you look at the private schools and the public schools, I mean, the debt is stacked against Black and Brown and poor people, it's stacked -- And so we're talking about a kind of reconstruction whereby you have an even playing field and what pops in my mind, you're talking about a new utopia, if we ever had one -- I'm not talking about what number 45 said, make America great again, but I don't want to see that kind of America that he was talking about -- But you're talking about almost what Adam although Huxley once talked about, a brave new world and I do think that the Mayor is to be commended. Really, this is an awesome undertaking where you have freedom and equality for all, so I have to bring to an end when I have another meeting, a very urgent meeting at four o'clock, but I mentioned the idea of employment, of a housing, we got to find some way whereby the housing is accessible to our people. No longer, I can't even live next door to my own church because of the rent. Educationally, it's not fair that kids who are gifted -- If my children were gifted or gifted were unable to navigate the educational system because the economic inequality homes be headed by single parents, and we just have to oh my god, revamp and remap, redesign and I don't see us developing the beloved community. One of my professors talked about that talk -- Dr. Jones in Christian Ethics, he talked about creating the beloved community but I'm grateful for the mayor and for the President signing the legislation of Juneteenth and all, it's all that it's for both because really, I mean it's, it is a horrible horrible history that we have, we've suffered. Greenwood is just one of many and the many experiences, how to turn that around, I'm not, it's, I'm really inspired by the honorable Deputy Mayor Hazel Dukes, as to how optimistic -- I'm optimistic but it's going to take something supernatural.

**JJA 54:42**

Dr. Scott, as I listen to you, I can't help but think that it is because of all that you've seen over the course of your life that you're able to help us pinpoint you know, what must be done and you continue to see so much of what is not right, and we're just going to keep sitting at your feet and trying to learn as much as we possibly can because you have extensive experience that's going to you know, teach and inform us all, but yeah, can't thank you enough for all that you've done and all that you continue to do. You're not slowing down in the least bit and thank you for that and the man who you were commending for bringing us together has joined us and you know we wouldn't be in this moment right now talking about racial justice and racial equity and not just talking about it but seeking to do something about it in a meaningful way, but for Mayor Bill de Blasio, so he's here with us and I'm going to ask him to share a few words with all of us at this moment, as many words as he'd like, there you go.

**Mayor Bill de Blasio (BDB) 55:48**

Thank you, now I'm going to keep it -- I'm going to keep it brief and hopefully very very pertinent. First of all, thank you Dr. Scott, I appreciate everything you've done, I appreciate the passion with which you spoke and we have got to, I think this is what this moment is all about,

feel the history fully, deeply, to get us inspired to a higher-level action. It's not enough, I don't think anyone here in this gathering wants to talk about history in abstraction or in a mournful manner without a sense of purpose and transcendence. I guess the whole idea of the Racial Justice Commission is to be a transcendent force, to look at the very laws, the very foundation of our city, our Charter, our Constitution, and then everything else we do -- Our policies, our laws across the City of New York, our institutions, and question them in a noble and positive and productive and pointed way in the sense that we will make change in the here and now. To question what is the legacy of the racism that we've all lived with for generations and how it plays out right now in our city, in our institutions, in our government, and to change it and to me, as we went through last year, which was a revelatory year, it became clear and clear that we should shine the light inward on the City of New York and I think with the right people and the right people of those gathered in this Commission, fearlessly look at what is wrong and needs to be fixed and then how to fix it and name it, and present the specific tangible ways to make change. Jennifer, thank you, you've been leading this commission with a tremendous sense of purpose and energy as with everything you do, and to all the commission members, there's going to be a lot of work, I know you took on, I talked to all of you before you accepted the assignment -- You all understood you were doing something unprecedented for the history, of in the history of this city, you were doing something unprecedented actually in this nation, you know we have all heard powerful discourse about Juneteenth -- Powerful discourse about reparations, about Tulsa, so many things that are coming for the fore, but I don't know anyplace else in the country that has formalized a commission for leaders to say now, we are going to name the very specific institutional racism that must be stopped right now -- The practices and laws that are wrong and can be fixed here and now, and then the actions that will change them, that what you're doing to me is sacred and it is going to set a pattern for this City, this State, and this Nation. I don't need to patriotically tell you that when New York City does something, the rest of the country watches, the rest of the world watches -- That's something we're all proud of as New Yorkers. I can tell you that in this year 2021, this year that must be about rebirth and recovery, and a sense of profound change that you have an opportunity to imprint on this city, a pathway forward, and then that will be a shot heard around the world because what you do will become a template. I think people will ask themselves in every City, in America, in every County and every State, even to the National level, where is our equivalent Commission, where is our process, where is our pathway of change. I want to especially thank you today that as you thought about Juneteenth, you thought about some of the greats of the movement here in this City, in this State, and I see Hazel Dukes and I see Una Clarke was with us, I see Reverend Daughtry, Reverend Scott -- People who have made a life's work of creating change and so many others. I'm not seeing everyone on the screen and forgive me, but I know you're out there, others who have made a life's work of fostering change and who had to do it bluntly in much more difficult conditions than what we're experiencing now, and now is not a walk in the park but the folks who did this work 20 and 30 and 40 and 50 years ago opened up many many doors for what we need to do now, but I call upon all of us now to walk through the door and reset the equation and go farther. In that vein, Jennifer and I talked earlier today about the need to codify, the need to take the changes that we've been making and make them permanent. And then look beyond the changes we made to the others that need to be made and make them permanent and not allow the backsliding, the history is filled with backsliding. Juneteenth could be in addition to its noble and positive elements that we honor, it could be a painful lesson in backsliding too. People told they were emancipated only to be in a different way, put through a system of oppression, losing what they had, having their rights stripped away -- Juneteenth, I don't think I have to say to anyone here, is a beautiful yet bittersweet holiday and I think in that vein, the notion that this Commission is a Commission of justice, it's a Commission to ensure that there isn't greatness and progress that slips away from us, but that we codify it in a way that

no one can assail and no one can undermine -- I think we can do that in this city, especially in this moment of history, but it will take really good minds and good hearts, putting together the ideas for change. Now, even in the creation of this commission, ideas started to flow and I want to thank a number of you I know of care deeply, especially special shout out to Darrick Hamilton, for promoting so deeply, the baby bonds idea and our Task Force on Racial Inclusion and Equity -- Looked at that and a number of other ideas of what we could do here and now with city investment. In honor of Juneteenth, the Task Force and I want to thank Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson because he's a part of both these crucial elements of the equation -- The Task Force, Leaders of Color and administration who are working on right now, changes complementing the work of this Commission that's going to work on the big strategic and structural changes for the city. The task force looked at the options of what we could do to honor Juneteenth and came back with three ideas. We announced them yesterday -- A recovery task force based at Medgar Evers College, our one historically Black college recovery core of young people who are going to get opportunities, paid opportunities to make an impact on their community and the recovery and to learn and grow as leaders and professionals in the process. An initiative to provide four-year CUNY scholarships for thousands of young African-American students so they can create an opportunity to get through CUNY and succeed and have the resources and support all the way through. And then most powerfully, the opportunity, scholarship accounts for individual children and this idea we decided to go big and go fast -- I'm you know, properly known as baby bonds, we said we need to start right now in this year of revelation and change, 2021. Starting September 2021, every New York City public school student goes into kindergarten, we'll get a savings account open for them. Every single one, we're going to have a process of building those up with contributions from foundations, non-profits, business communities, and local communities, to build that into a powerful force. Those accounts will grow rapidly so that those young people will know by the time that they leave high school, they have a direct clear pathway to college and to the creation of generational wealth, which is the crying need in this equation, the economic justice part of this equation is the crying need and what I really hope everyone will focus on on Juneteenth. So, I have said enough, I just want to thank everyone. I don't think any of the folks who have been around for a while will mind if I call them the elders, the folks who have really fought the struggle and created this opportunity for all of us. Thank you, the members of the Commission, for taking on a historic task and you are up to it, and then some to create profound change and everyone is going to participate because one thing you know if you ask New Yorkers, do you have an opinion on how we make change -- The answer will be "yes" every single time. You will not lack for strong views and good ideas, but in the course of this year, I think you're going to really profoundly change the course of New York City history and I want to thank you and I can't think of a better thing to think about and talk about and do to celebrate Juneteenth, than the work of this commission, so thank you everyone.

#### **JJA 64:57**

Thank you, thank you Mayor de Blasio and again, thank you for your vision. But for your vision that we can be better, we wouldn't be here so we thank you for this, we really do. I'm going to turn to Deacon Maurice Reid and what I'll share with you is that I first came to actually know them through one of his sons, but the work that he's done throughout the community certainly has impacted me and my family and others, so many others in tremendous ways. He's got a rich legacy of advocacy, advocacy spanning sectors from community-based organizations to academia and academia including the Center for Law and Social Justice here in Brooklyn at Memphis College. And in government, he chairs many advocacy and coalition groups that are focused on health and child development. I recently, I guess maybe about a year ago, a little bit a year ago, I had the pleasure of seeing him where he serves as Deacon at the First Baptist Church of Crown Heights, but just a tremendous leader in our community. He runs a

consultancy, centered on primary health care advising, just a tremendous individual with a huge contribution, several contributions here in New York City that have extended even beyond. So welcome Deacon Maurice Reid.

**Deacon Maurice Reid (MR) 66:18**

Good afternoon and thank you so much Madam Chair for that wonderful introduction. I feel so special to be involved with this panel and thank you for this opportunity to really place in context with the history of Juneteenth and New York City's recent acknowledgement of the racial and structural economic inequalities that are exposed as a result of the COVID pandemic, but first, let me say a few things about my background that you have just so honestly provided. I will skip through the part where I'm currently serving as a member on the board of the one Brooklyn Health System and Co-Founder of the Citizenship of Brooklyn, and the community collaborative. And those organizations you will see provide a clear template for us for activities that can be used by this commission going forward to set the table for my recommendations. It's important that I include this personal experience, I was born in Jamaica and arrived in this country on my 10th birthday. During my high school and college career, I was often referred to as being different on several occasions, when I questioned as to what was different or who or what, the question was never really responded to by those who made the declarations. I eventually learned that it wasn't just me, the ongoing actions of the majority-wide community continue to clarify that they were referring to a difference from what their expectations, upbringing, and worldview of a person of color was supposed to be. Most importantly, it clearly meant that it was different for them, this goes directly to the core of the issue of racism -- The view of many White Americans that they are different means to them, that they are inherently better than or superior to people of color. This view of themselves has been complementary to the profit motive, that is the core of the capitalist system that supports the economic undergirding of the predominant concept of what this experiment in democracy is all about. Why America is often intolerant of differences such as color, language, religion, or culture, unless there is a direct financial benefit which they control -- The racist system, was created to make slavery profitable and to support the intolerance of differences in education. The 1968 school strike in Ocean Hill Brownsville, is a good local example of the extent to which the demand to control influenced the actions and decisions in regards to a people of color. The UFT was willing to risk the shutdown of the entire school system as it waged its battle because it feared the potential impact of not having control of the system of educating Black and Brown children. This struggle continues today as the school system remains predominantly segregated with integration virtually unachievable. Change in the racial dynamics of the school system is essential to creating a truly multiracial quality education system. The failure of the education system has a negative impact on many other aspects of life in this society, especially healthcare and economic opportunity. The recommendations that will emerge from this august body has to incorporate remedies in education, housing, health care, voting rights, and economic opportunity. In our current education system, there is a need to have required ongoing conversations about race and bias in school. School equity teams must also be given the resources required to evaluate school-level data to create action plans to address disproportionality. These resources should include the funding to expand the hiring of paraprofessionals from the local community to assist in the classrooms and with outreach and support for parents. These activities should be transparent to the school community and held accountable by local school superintendents. We also need to provide guarantees for free tuition to college and or professional internships for all students, and I'm glad to hear that the tree activities have already begun to move in that direction. In housing, the history of redlining and local ordinances to exclude Blacks continue to impact opportunities for people of color. To provide truly affordable housing, we

must start with a requirement that the area median income be reflective of the income level within the zip codes in the local neighborhood. We should also take advantage of the new opportunities to use the federal section 8 program to subsidize home ownership in addition to rental apartments, and we must criminalize the racist practice by enforcing the fair housing act. In addition, it is necessary to ensure the continued ability of every resident to be able to freely exercise their right to vote. As we observe Juneteenth as an historic event around which iconic African-American ancestors in the past and contemporary African-Americans in New York celebrate the end of slavery. We must also acknowledge that the abolition of that unjust institution did not end the systemic racism and structural inequality that continues to plague our nation and our city. Your theme, "Honoring Juneteenth: Reflections on the Legacy of Racial Justice" speaks to this ongoing reality. In fact, history teaches that as Juneteenth was celebrated by the newly freed Africans, these joyful people were acutely aware of the fact that they were stateless. They did not enjoy the status of citizenship, they did not have the right to vote -- Moreover, the stateless condition contributed to the greatest health crisis that impacted the United States until the current COVID pandemic. Africans included the horrific and tragic outbreak of smallpox that led to a quarter of the four million stateless African-Americans, either died or suffered from chronic illnesses between 1862 and 1870, a time period that historians refer to as reconstructions. So historians and medical anthropologists believe that this crisis represented the largest biological and medical crisis of the 19th century. The crisis moved one military official to say, the former slaves are dying by the scores that sometimes 30 per day die and are carried out by wagon loads without coffins and thrown promiscuously like brutes into a trench. So, in response to this crisis, the newly freed African men and women demanded citizenship and the right to vote. This demand enabled them to elect the first cohort of Americans elected, Black African-Americans elected officials. During the reconstruction period, these newly empowered African-Americans elected officials working in coalition, believe it or not, with radical Republicans, enacted the Freedmen's Bureau and within the Freedmen's Bureau, created the first national healthcare program. Yes, you heard right -- The first national healthcare program was created by the newly freed and empowered African-Americans after they celebrated Juneteenth. In this spirit, our Health Justice coalitions that I belong to propose that we need to enact a public policy here to the Freedmen's bureau in New York City and to make this new initiative a model for racial and economic justice. To this end, our local healthcare coalition, which includes citizenship, Brooklyn envisions that we must launch a new Freedmen's Bureau and Marshall Plan that we propose to entitle the Thurgood Marshall Plan. As envisioned, the Thurgood Marshall Plan for racial and economic justice will honor the moral imperatives that the late Justice Thurgood Marshall aspired to achieve for communities of color. As we commemorate Juneteenth, we must acknowledge that the COVID pandemic exposed the traffic tradition of abject poverty, relative poverty wage, stagnation, and wealth inequality -- These are the toxic triggers that contribute to the comorbidities -- The treatments short, debts, and the chronic illnesses that disproportionately harm communities. Our coalition believes that our municipal and voluntary hospitals and local community health centers can make a major contribution toward reversing this ongoing crisis. To support this contribution, healthcare funding has to be provided to bridge the existing gap between the cost of service, and the amount reimbursed by Medicaid. In addition, we believe that the purchasing power inherent in our community hospitals, teaching hospitals, and nursing homes must be redirected to address the social and economic distress found in far too many communities of color. Here's the fact -- The misdirected chain of the supply chain of the New York City healthcare sector is valued at about 20 billion dollars. Their purchase orders for everything from laundry to toilet dishes, from furniture to pharmaceuticals are outsourced to corporations who exploit unprotected labor in the global south and in the right to work for less regions in the United States. Here's

another tragic fact -- for frontline healthcare workers and their parents and their patients died and others suffered from disproportionate chronic illnesses because the New York City healthcare sector did not have a localized supply chain that could produce and equitably distribute PPEs and other essential products during a healthcare crisis and drew in regular times. We can build on the shoulders and traditions of the courageous ancestors who launched Juneteenth and Freedman's Bureau of Health by supporting the Thurgood Marshall Plan. This plan includes the co-creation of a network of health enterprise hubs that will anchor the redirection of 20 billion dollars originating from our hospitals to enterprises and workers residing in the communities of color. We believe this will challenge the structural, racial, and economic inequality here in our communities -- People of color contribute our tax dollars to the healthcare sector and its supply chain. On this Juneteenth, we deserve a citizenship to which we urge you to support the Thurgood Marshall Plan. The African-American struggle for freedom and the recent tragedy originated from the COVID pandemic should move us to embrace this plan. To further the quest for equality, there has to be a realistic effort to compensate in real terms for the racism of the past, the ability to accrue generational wealth has to be supported by a realistic system for reparations. The proposals presented before the City Council and recently passed by the New York State Assembly are first great steps. Thank you for this opportunity to present my views on this very important issue of racial justice. Thank you.

**RHD 76:49**

Hearing -- Am I being heard --

**MR 76:52**

Yes

**RHD 76:53**

I'd like to make, be bold to make a suggestion if I may --

**JJA 76:55**

Sure

**RHD 76:56**

And keep in mind, I'm 90 years old so you can't do too much to me, but I mean, I was told at the beginning that we had five minutes. Of course, I took seven, and may I just suggest that if we have material, written material recommendations -- I brought some books that I'd like to submit to the Commission and that we just -- Do you know they told me, when I was a young preacher, you don't have to try to tell it all at one time -- You get another time, so I'd like to stay to the end and hey everybody --

**JJA 77:39**

We've got one more person coming on and yeah, we're almost there, and we're running over because we weren't able to begin on time -- We just didn't have our forum and we weren't here everywhere.

**RHD 77:51**

Forgive me --

**JJA 77:52**

No, no, no, but I appreciate your suggestion, no, no, I appreciate your reason that and I appreciate all that has been shared by everyone and giving everybody an opportunity to be heard -- We have taken note of your books Reverend Daughtry and I anticipate that Deacon Reid will submit to us the plan that he just gave us, the highlights of -- So we have one more person from whom we desire to hear right now, and that is the honorable Una Clarke, who for many of us needs no introduction but there may be some people who are joining us who are at a later point here and need to know all about her. She's the former New York City Council Member of the 40th district in Brooklyn. She was the first Caribbean born woman to be elected to the legislature. She currently runs Una Clarke and Associates, she's a Progressive Democrats Political Association president, serves on the Board of Trustees for CUNY and you know, just so many other titles and accolades that go hand in hand with who she is, but most of all, I know her to be a proven and dedicated leader whose hard work and tireless advocacy has brought remarkable changes for the community, specifically, I'm going to speak to the community in which I live -- But even beyond and I never tire of hearing her just speak the truth in the way that it needs to be spoken, and so please come forward honorable Una Clarke and share with us your thoughts in this moment.

**Una Clarke (UC) 79:22**

I am honored to be among such distinguished leaders, all of whom I know and from some and have done work together. Certainly, to be participating in this groundbreaking event -- Hazel Dukes has been a mentor and a friend, we sat side by side at almost all the conventions we go so that we could make good trouble. Maurice Reid who just ended, his wife was my daughter's elementary school teacher at PS138 and I go far back with Maurice Reid and Major Owens so I know the work that Maurice has done in our community. Certainly, as probably the only member and now that I know that Maurice, I am probably the only other foreign-born member on this panel and came to the United States just before the Civil Rights Movement and because I didn't know better, I went on all of the bus tours, I was a part of the Student International Association that Riverside Church had put together and I was unaware that I was not supposed to travel the country with a British passport, but it helped a lot so that I was able to have my passport and when the bus would stop, and I gave my passport, I would say to the other students don't say anything. I speak another language that they won't know what I'm saying, and I've met my Jamaican partner -- so I would say to them, and I would hand them the British passport and they would read the message from Her Majesty, The Queen. Because Jamaica was not an independent nation then, they would when they stopped the bus, they would say she looked like a-- But I don't think -- She got a message from the queen and they would read what is in front of my passport, so I understand our struggle and the struggle is all of our struggle, and none of us should sit on the sideline and not be a part of making life better for all of us. I was lucky to meet Harry Belafonte early and as well as Cleveland Robinson, both of whom taught me and told me what the movement was all about and was very happy to participate. Harry is probably 95, so would you please tell Reverend Daughtry that I know someone that's older than he is that is still remaining in the struggle. Cleveland Robinson, who was a blind leader in the Civil Rights Movement, was the one who had me struggle with them on all of the bus outings and I am just so grateful that over the years, I have been able to participate to make sure that my voice is heard, that I made sure that education was a priority. Especially early childhood education and to the Commission, I just want to say an emphasis on early education has to be a key recommendation that you make, and now that we're coming out of the pandemic, mental health combined with early childhood education must be a way in which we help our families to recover from this pandemic. And I won't take up a lot of time, you can ask all the questions you want, especially as just to say that I am in tune and lockstep with whatever must be done



to improve the quality of life for African-Americans, all Black people in the United States of America, and I would remind people that when you ask me who I am, I always say I'm a Maroon because I know where in Kenya my forbearers come from, as a Jamaican, and so I just want to say I didn't come to discover myself -- I came knowing who I was and I know where I needed to put my lot and make sure that the work that I do speaks for itself. So, to all of the Commissioners, please know that in me, at 86, I forget, I know, I heard Reverend Daughtery, I'm telling his age, I'm right behind him at 86, and I'm not giving up the fight until the final breath goes and I am able to make a contribution to our people, to our community, and to the improvement of the quality of life for all of us. I am always going to be there so again, Madam Chair, I am honored and privileged to be on the panel with you and to your Co-Chair from DC37, I know him as a youngster and here he is as a big leader of so many members of DC37 -- And please know that what, wherever, and whatever contribution I can make to make sure that we're all moving lockstep, the quality of life and the improvement, especially educational and economic improvement in our communities, we have to be right there and make sure our voices are heard and that we make that contribution. I know you want to have questions and answers and more participation from the audience so I'll just stop and let everybody know my name and number is all over the place if you need to call me. Thank you very much.

**JJA 85:07**

Thank you so much Council Member Clarke -- I appreciate all that you said and I appreciate your brevity as well. Let me just share with everybody that you know, we said that we would end by 4 PM. We started late, we're not going to keep you much longer, except we will ask that if we can come back to the well and perhaps have another follow-up meeting where we can talk and converse, the Commission members with you about many of the issues that you brought forward, the points that you made -- You know, I'm holding on to several, Dr. Daughtry, speaking about the importance of protecting the gains, I think is very very critical because we see how quickly people want to undo the good that has been done that advances us -- He said so much more but I mean, I just really centered on that. You know, when Dr. Dukes talked about true poverty eradication and you know, really ensuring real opportunity, that's first and foremost in our minds and in our thoughts and yeah, and again, said so much more. I'm just speaking to you, some of the things that ring true at this moment for me, but there's so much more. Very much appreciated Dr. Scott's emphasis on income and equity and how that's playing out across the city. When we look at housing and education and specific things that we need to do in those spaces but overall, looking at how income and equity just you know, just right off the bat, makes the playing field bad, you know, so unlevelled, and it's not -- We're not going to get ahead just by making specific education change or housing change. If we don't look at income inequity itself, and I can't thank you enough, you can read for the plan that you presented to us, we'll take that, we'll take a look at the conversation or the discussion points that you all have raised here today, but I'd like to have that plan in hand to pay a close attention to it and then come back to the table with the Commissioners and you, honorable Clarke, early education is critical and we all know that early education foundation is what sets us up for the future for future learning and we need to center on that because the playing field has been unequal there for so long and mental health, something that this nation has not centered on but we know that we've got descendants of slavery, and you bring it forward through you know, Jim Crow and reconstruction, Jim Crow and the war on poverty, the alleged war on poverty I should say, but the war against crimes and how it's been fought in our neighborhoods, the criminalization of poverty and racialized policing, has produced so much trauma in black and Hispanic communities and immigrant communities -- We have to as a Nation, we have to as a City, but

that first and foremost, if we are to achieve true equity and so I thank you all for the points that you've raised. I'm going to just very quickly give the floor to Vice Chair Garrido -- If there is anything that he'd like to add and quickly to our other Commission Members if they just would like to chime in. We're going to try to wrap this up in the next like six to seven minutes. As long as we can bring you back and we can have a full discussion where we can engage in this actual discussion with you about the issues that you've surfaced, the points that you've made, so if I can get that commitment from you all, then we'll turn to the Commission Members and we'll wrap this meeting up. I see that heads are nodding and someone, take that as a yes -- And I'm just going to assume that Dr. Dukes and the honorable Clarke and Dr. Scott are in agreement as well. I'm hopeful for that. Henry.

**HG 89:06**

Yes, thank you very much. I just want to say something that I think for the members of the panel will be incredibly valuable for me as we move forward. One of the recurrent themes that I saw was the theme of education and inequitable education we've seen since Brown versus the Board of Education -- You know, attempts to not only chip away but actually to not implement what the principles behind the various you know, multiple lawsuits who have demonstrate this and you know, forgive me, but Dr. Dukes -- Dukes and I joined in a lawsuit on an equitable distribution of resources right here in New York City back you know, a few years back successfully, and as we did with the Council Member Clarke and I, we fought over the issue of an education right here in the City of New York. What would be helpful for me as a Commissioner as you look forward is that if you in the materials that you submit for our consideration, that you pay a particular interest or point on equitable distribution for resources or education and segregation of educational systems because that goes not just to the issue of you know, geography, as someone like it to say right, but it goes to the issue of poverty, it goes to the issue of you know, the kind of nation that you're raising and it's probably the trickiest because in my opinion, a lot of times, they convince our own people that the way to get out is not to improve education, but to privatize education or to bring in a few, a chosen few into a system that is better, and it's not a fault, it's not bad or is not different you know, it's the same argument that we hear from charter schools, which here for privatization of a lot of the stuff, but I would be very interested to see, especially with the breadth of experience that we have with the panel, what that would look like and what kind of applications you've seen that would be worth us pursuing to remember the voters have to vote on this and a lot of this is really charged so if you have any information, or any emphasis on that, I would really welcome that.

**JJA 91:29**

Very helpful and perhaps we can take that up as like one of the first points that we consider when we can, you know, ask people to reconvene with us.

**UC 91:31**

Madam Chair, I would hope that during your time and you guys have just got an awesome responsibility here, that maybe we could get into settings on education, economic development, all of it is under equity and how we go about it. I think Henry is absolutely right. I sued so many times under the Bloomberg Administration, I think the NAACP brought about five suits, I brought so many but I really think that we should have some time face to face on dividing this work up at some point. I would like to submit, I didn't give all the minds as Reverend Daughtry said, because we weren't given no more than three minutes each -- I would like to submit some of the things that I had -- I would submit my whole thing to you all

but I think that would be really great if we could, if you all have time. I don't know what your timetable is to have a report for the mayor --

**JJA 93:01**

We do have time; the report will be presented at the end of December --

**UC 93:02**

Okay.

**JJA 93:03**

To the mayor and to the voting community at large. The New York City Community at large. And we are looking at issues from a topical subject or disciplinarian, discipline matter level --

**UC 93:17**

Okay, Yes

**JJA 93:18**

And there will be more time to engage.

**UC 93:20**

Wonderful

**JJA 93:21**

More opportunity. Thank you, thank you so much. Are there any Commission Members who would like to share a word, give reflections, you don't, if you want to, you're more than welcome.

**Fred Davie (FD) 93:39**

Madam Chair, I'd just like to thank our panelists. As with you in a different way, I've known them all in various manifestations over the decades, and just really appreciate not only their contributions today, but obviously the contributions they made with their lives over the course of history. So, a big and hearty thank you to them, and a happy Juneteenth --

**UC 94:08**

Is that Reverend Davie

**FD 94:09**

Yeah, yes. Council Member Clarke, how are you?

**UC 94:10**

I am okay, I know that when I saw, when I was on, I could see Reverend Fred Davie and we go back many years -- His work with Carl McCall and especially shout out to Deputy Mayor Thompson who with the late Bill Lynch struggles midnight, we have gone over proposals and many things so you do have people here with knowledge that you don't have to reinvent the wheels. I think we just have to put it back as well, and Daughtry said and I hope that you would take my recommendation, that even after we presented to the broader New York that we have some milestones that we can't feel wrong, wrong was not dealing a day but let's look at some milestones and achievements

**JJA 95:11**

Good deal indeed

**RHD 95:19**

I said I was going to say anything until Fred Davie spoke up -- That man, you know what he did, he fired my baby daughter -- I got her a job with him in a summer program and he had the audacity to fire my baby daughter so anytime, whatever, whenever he is, let me know in advance -- However, I have nothing but the greatest admiration for him, for having fired my baby. Now Madam Chair, is that, is there a point at which your report is doing and what --

**JJA 96:04**

Yeah.

**RHD 96:05**

The reason I'm asking the question is that, there's something I'm working on you know, over these years -- Somebody paid me a compliment when I'm in the street, making noise, I have a solution -- I don't just make noise, disrupt just to be doing so, so I've had many solutions over the years and so we have a volume that's going to the publisher that suggests all the solutions, all of the answers, across some 65 years of struggling on every kind of front and some front mentioned and some I shouldn't mention. Thank you very much Madam Chair.

**JJA 96:44**

Absolutely. So whatever you have that you can provide to us to help us in our work and again, this is, we intend this to be the first conversation we will be coming back to -- well, if you're so inclined, but if you have anything in writing that you want to share with us as soon as you're able to do so, that's great. We will keep whatever you have that is not public, confidential, if you so choose. We have to think about how but let me put it this way -- Legally, what you give to us becomes part of the Commission right, so then just think about whether or not they're things that you have not yet put forward publicly that you choose not to -- We should talk about that. But let me just say that you have until essentially, our draft report will be written in September and then it will be put to the public for consideration, and then the final report will be due in December, so we can talk through some issues and we will bring you back to the table. Like Fred said, I'm so grateful, thankful to you for the time that you've given us today. And again, if you're so inclined, we're going to come back. Just want to quickly look to see if there are any other commission members who would like to say a word -- If we're good, then we will adjourn at this point and again, I just quickly want to briefly again, I could go on expressing my gratitude, my appreciation -- Our appreciation and our gratitude to all of you, for all that you've done through the years, for your willingness to stay in this fight with us you know, to not retreat from the battlefield, but to stay and be ever determined to bring about the change that is so critically necessary. We will be in touch again; I thank you for your time this afternoon. And the meeting is adjourned. Thank you.