

PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY

Understanding the City's Proposed Rule for General Vendor License Waitlists Veteran Street Vendors, Local Law 54, and the Missing Data We Cannot Ignore

August 19, 2026

Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

My name is **Dondi McKellar**. I am a disabled United States Navy veteran, a New York City veteran street vendor, and a community advocate. I serve on the **Bronx Borough President's Veterans Advisory Council, representing approximately 30,000 veterans in the Bronx**, and on the **New York City Veterans Advisory Board, representing approximately 205,000 veterans citywide**.

Today I am speaking first as a veteran street vendor.

As the City implements **Local Law 54**, I have a basic question: **How many licensed veteran street vendors do we have today?** How many hold White General Vendor licenses? How many disabled veterans hold Yellow Citywide Specialized licenses? How many hold Blue Midtown Core Specialized licenses?

The City's public information explains eligibility. It confirms that Yellow and Blue licenses are for eligible veterans with service-related disabilities, and that Blue licenses are capped at 105 while Yellow licenses are not numerically capped.^{[3][4]} But I could not find a current public accounting showing how many veteran vendors actually hold each license.

That data gap is unacceptable as Local Law 54 is being implemented.

DCWP states that **10,500 additional General Vendor licenses** will become available beginning January 15, 2027.^[2] If the City is expanding the system by thousands of licenses, it must know and publicly report where veteran vendors stand.

You cannot measure equity without a baseline.

This matters because excessive ticketing can contribute to **blocked license renewal, loss of income, debt, stress, and reduced civic engagement** for disabled veteran vendors.^[6] Behind every missing number is a person trying to remain independent and make an honest living.

I respectfully ask DCWP to **publish current counts for veteran White, Yellow, and Blue license holders; report how many of the 105 Blue licenses are active and how many veterans are waiting; track veteran-license outcomes during Local Law 54 implementation; and create a dedicated Veteran Vendor Navigation pathway** for licensing, renewal, and ticket-related barriers.

I am not asking the City to choose veterans over other vendors. I am asking the City to make veterans **visible in the data, visible in the policy, and visible in the implementation**.

We served our country. We came home. We built businesses. **We are still serving.**

Please do not allow veteran street vendors to disappear somewhere between the law, the waitlist, and the data.

Thank you.

SOURCES & SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Active links for the public record and follow-up review

- [1] NYC Rules - General Vendor License Waitlists (Proposed Rule).
<https://rules.cityofnewyork.us/rule/general-vendor-license-waitlists/>
- [2] NYC Department of Consumer and Worker Protection - Street Vending in NYC.
<https://www.nyc.gov/site/dca/businesses/street-vendors.page>
- [3] NYC Department of Consumer and Worker Protection - Specialized Vending License / Midtown Core Waiting List Application Checklist.
<https://www.nyc.gov/site/dca/businesses/specialized-vending-license-midtown-core-waiting-list.page>
- [4] NYC Department of Sanitation - General Vendor Licensing Law: Educational Highlights and Tips.
<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/downloads/what-we-do/cleaning/street-vending-enforcement/general-vendor-educational-highlights-tips.pdf>
- [5] NYC Business - General Vendor License.
<https://nyc-business.nyc.gov/nycbusiness/description/general-vendor-license>
- [6] **Submitted Supporting Exhibit:** *The Impact of Excessive Ticketing on Disabled Veteran Street Vendors*. It highlights blocked license renewal, loss of income, a cycle of debt, stress and health burden, and reduced civic engagement.
<https://bronx-veterans-street-vendors.1eyu.gamma.site/>

Data-gap note: The reviewed City sources explain eligibility, license types, caps, and Local Law 54 implementation, but do not provide a current consolidated public count of active veteran General Vendor (White), Citywide Specialized (Yellow), and Midtown Core Specialized (Blue) license holders.

Prepared for the August 19, 2026 public hearing | Web links are embedded and clickable

THE IMPACT OF EXCESSIVE TICKETING ON DISABLED VETERAN STREET VENDORS

Why ticket debt threatens veteran livelihoods, stability, and civic participation in New York City

★ BACKGROUND

At the New York City Council Committee on Veterans hearing on Increasing Veteran Civic Engagement, held on September 18, 2024, at 250 Broadway, 14th Floor, testimony highlighted the harmful effect of excessive ticketing on veteran street vendors. Many disabled veteran vendors are unable to renew their street vending licenses because of outstanding tickets, creating a cycle of financial hardship and legal complications.

★ KEY IMPACTS



- 1. Blocked License Renewal** – unpaid tickets can prevent disabled veteran vendors from renewing their licenses and continuing to work.



- 2. Loss of Income** – repeated fines reduce already limited earnings and threaten economic stability.



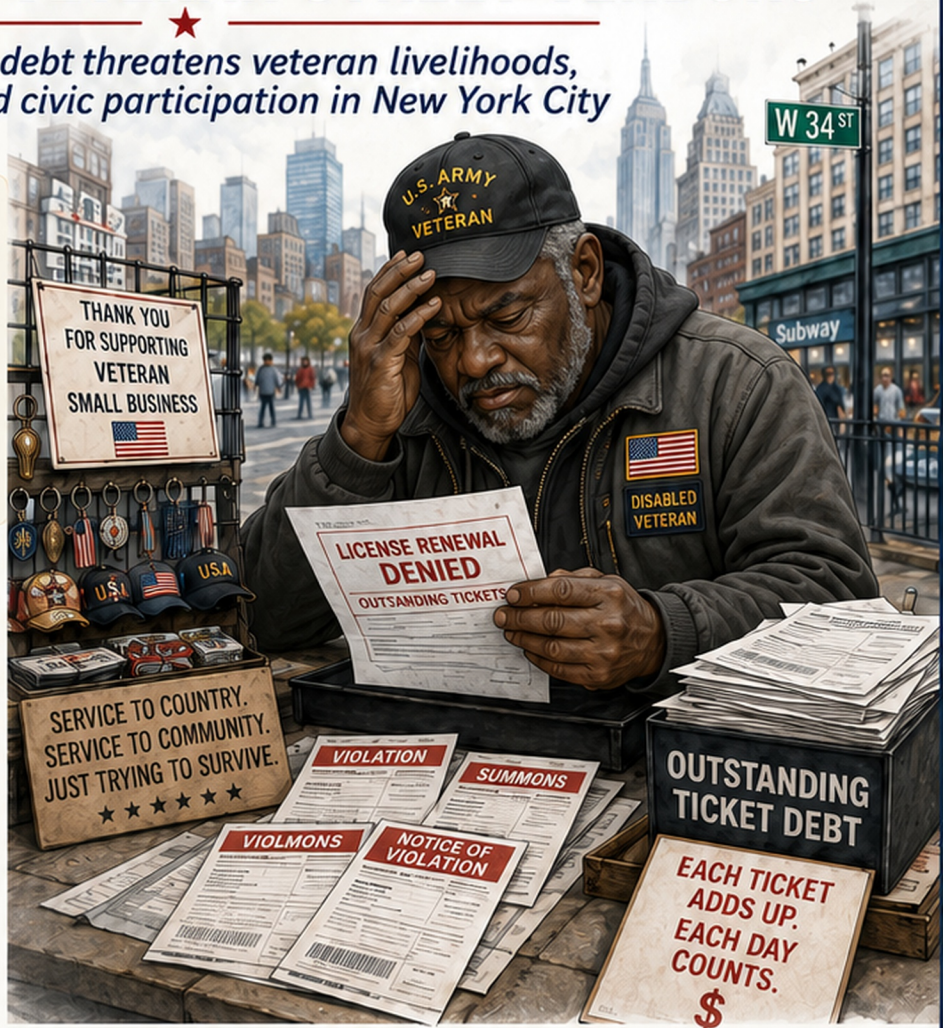
- 3. Cycle of Debt** – ticket debt compounds over time, making it harder to recover financially.



- 4. Stress and Health Burden** – legal pressure and financial strain can worsen disability-related and mental health challenges.



- 5. Reduced Civic Engagement** – when survival needs come first, participation in community life and civic processes becomes harder.



★ WHY THIS MATTERS



Veteran street vendors have served their country and continue to serve their communities. Excessive enforcement can push disabled veterans deeper into hardship instead of supporting self-sufficiency, dignity, and stability.

★ A SOLUTION-BASED APPROACH



Targeted ticket relief or amnesty for eligible disabled veteran vendors



License-renewal assistance and case management support



Policy reforms that balance enforcement with economic justice and veteran well-being



VIEW DONDI'S SLIDE PRESENTATION

<https://bronx-veterans-street-ve-zdy1eyu.gamma.site/>

