



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
SCOTT M. STRINGER**

TESTIMONY OF NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER
SCOTT M. STRINGER

IN SUPPORT OF INT 0226-2014

A LOCAL LAW TO AMEND THE ADMINISTRATIVE CODE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, IN RELATION TO REQUIRING SNOWPLOWS TO BE FITTED WITH LIGHTS AND AUDIBLE WARNINGS TO PREVENT PEDESTRIAN DEATHS.

BEFORE MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
OF THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

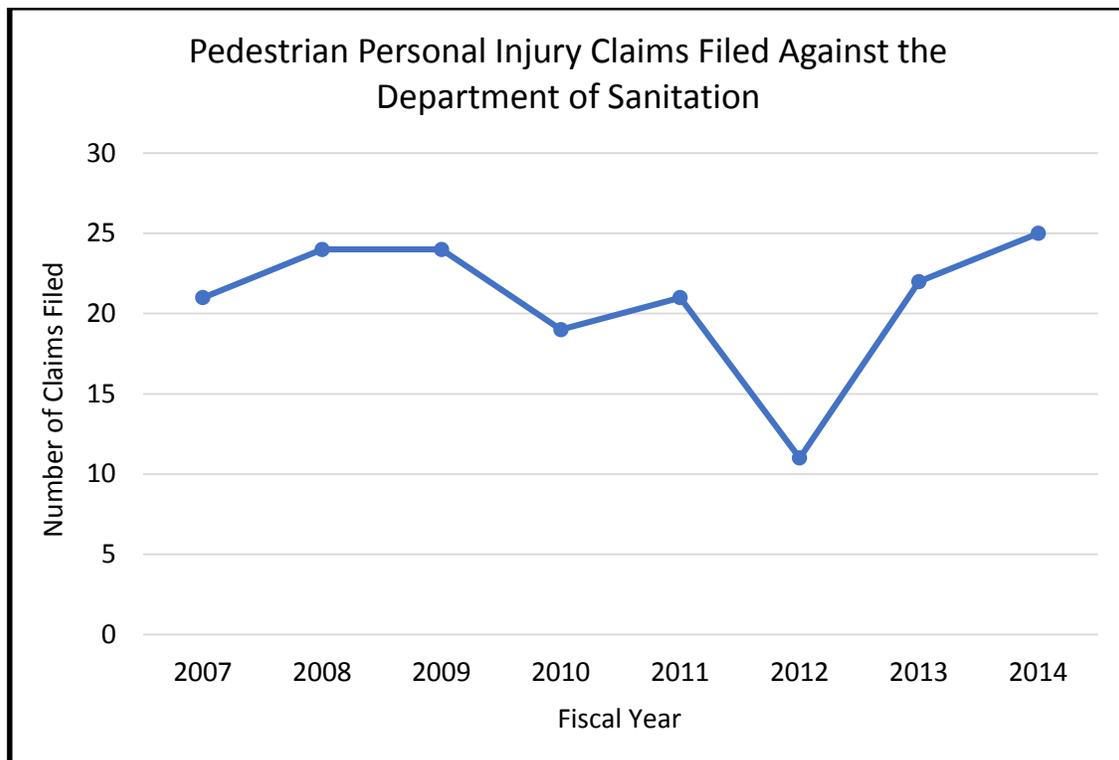
OCTOBER 28, 2014

Thank you Chair Reynoso and the members of the City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management for holding this important hearing today which includes Intro 226 sponsored by Council Member Treyger. I urge the Council to pass this bill, which will make the City's snowplows safer, reducing the risk to pedestrians and cyclists throughout the City of New York.

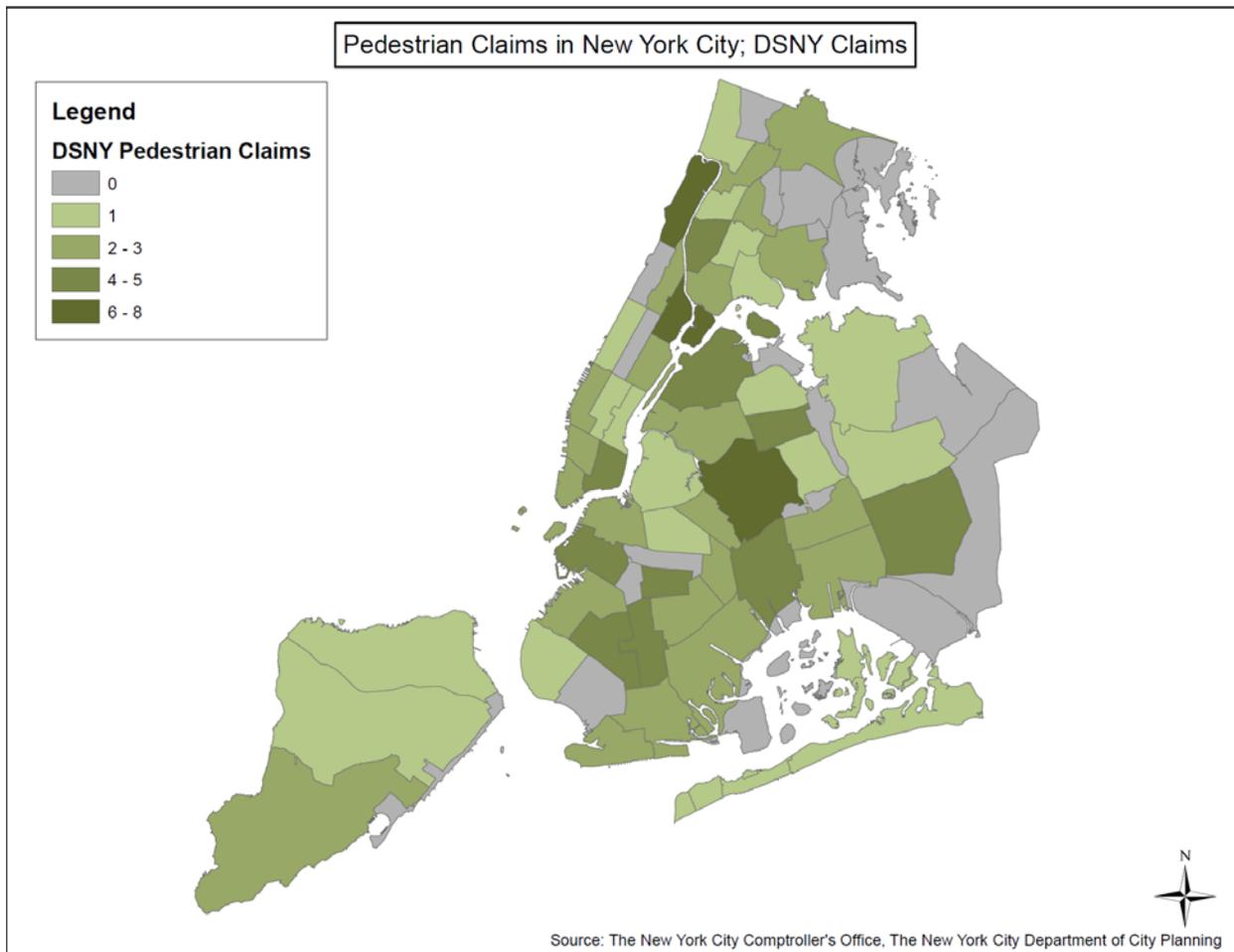
New York City's municipal fleet is the largest in the nation, with over 28,000 vehicles and over 85,000 certified drivers. The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) has the second largest number of vehicles (NYPD) at 5700.

While most injuries and fatalities on our streets involve private vehicles, City-owned vehicles are not immune from these tragedies. As detailed in my latest ClaimStat Alert, from FY 2007-FY 2014, there were 1,212 pedestrian personal injury claims filed against the City, including 22 pedestrian fatalities. In addition to the human cost associated with these claims, taxpayers pay millions of dollars a year in settlements and judgments for personal injury claims by pedestrians—a total of \$88,134,915 over the same time period.

While the total number of claims has been relatively flat over the last eight years, the number of pedestrian claims at certain agencies, including DSNY, spiked in FY 2014.



Furthermore, our analysis showed that claims against DSNY were more likely to come from certain neighborhoods, including East Harlem, Inwood, Washington Heights in Manhattan and Maspeth, Glendale, Middle Village and Ridgewood Queens.



New York is a city of pedestrians. Claims come from every corner of our City and affect New Yorkers of every age. We must not accept a status quo that each year leaves hundreds dead, thousands injured, and millions of dollars in claims against the City. Instead, we must make our City fleet as safe as possible, for workers and pedestrians alike, in line with Mayor de Blasio's Vision Zero initiative.

While NYC Fleet—the entity within the Department of Citywide Administrative Services tasked with issuing rules governing fleet operations—announced that it would advance a series of reforms in line with Vision Zero, more can and should be done to press agencies to take advantage of existing technologies and improve training. Intro 226 will do just that and I strongly support its passage.