

Good morning Chair, Justin Sanchez and distinguished members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Dennis Schock, and I stand before you proudly representing the **Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association, Local 831**—the men and women who work tirelessly to keep New York City clean, safe, and moving, especially during its most challenging conditions.

On behalf of our membership, I am here to speak about critical operational needs that directly impact on our ability to serve this city effectively during snowstorms and emergency operations.

First, I would like to address the use of skid steers.

Skid steers are a force multiplier in snow operations. One skid steer can perform the work of up to sixteen sanitation workers over a twelve-hour shift. These machines are essential for clearing crosswalks, bus stops, and pedestrian pathways where public safety is most at risk.

However, we currently do not have enough trailers to transport these units quickly to the areas that need them most. Additionally, we need to expand training so more of our members are qualified to operate this critical equipment.

Local 831 strongly urges investment in additional skid steers, transport trailers, and operator training. This will allow our members to respond faster, work more efficiently, and better protect the public.

Second, I want to raise serious concerns about the quality of equipment and materials currently being used.

Our members work with traction chains, plow blades, and replacement parts made from inferior steel that is more prone to failure. This leads to frequent breakdowns during active operations, forcing equipment out of service at the worst possible times.

We have seen firsthand that higher-grade materials used in the past lasted longer and performed better under extreme conditions.

Local 831 calls for a return to higher-quality material standards. Investing in durability will reduce downtime, improve reliability, and ensure our members can stay on the street doing their jobs.

Third, I want to highlight the urgent need for increased garage staffing and enhanced training.

Our garage personnel are essential to maintaining our fleet, yet they are currently understaffed and overburdened. During snowstorms, equipment failures increase, and without adequate staffing and training, repairs are delayed.

Local 831 is calling for increased staffing levels in garages, along with expanded technical training for sanitation workers, especially in areas like plow repair.

When our members are properly trained and supported, they can get equipment back in service faster and maintain a stronger operational response.

Finally, I want to address payloaders.

Pay loaders are a critical asset in snow removal and emergency response. However, during a recent storm, nearly 49 percent of these

machines were out of service due to a lack of mechanics and insufficient repair supplies.

This is unacceptable during critical operations.

Local 831 is calling for increased investment in payloaders, expanded operator training, and the hiring of additional mechanics, along with ensuring proper parts inventory is available.

These machines are essential, and we must ensure they are ready when the city needs them most.

In closing, I want to be very clear:

These are not luxury requests—these are operational necessities.

The members of Local 831 show up every day, in every condition, ready to serve this city with pride and professionalism. They have proven time and time again that they will get the job done.

But they cannot do it alone.

They need the proper equipment, the right materials, and the support of adequate staffing and training.

An investment in sanitation is an investment in public safety, in quality of life, and in the resilience of New York City.

On behalf of the Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association, Local 831, I thank you for your time, your attention, and your continued support of the workforce that keeps this city running.

Thank you.