

Good afternoon. My name is Vicente Veintimilla, I am a street vendor on Fordham Road in the Bronx, and I live at 2420 Grand Ave, Apartment B1, Bronx NY 10468. In the past, I have sold coins, bills, postcards and books and now I sell things like shoe charms and face masks. I have been in business for six years at Fordham and 35 years in total. I'm here today to solicit your support to include a one-time \$19 million request in this year's budget to formalize the street vending industry in cities with a population of one million.

Not having a permit to legally sell on the street has affected me because I am not limited to carrying out this activity in a legal way and nevertheless I have to be aware of the regulatory authorities to avoid unpayable fines and parallel to this is the frustration that this entails. If I could obtain a license, it would positively change my life and that of my family, since the commitment that being a legal merchant implies gives me the opportunity to open new projects for this wonderful state, contributing to economic development and well-being of the general environment.

We small businesses consider ourselves the showcase of large companies and legally established businesses, we protect the popular economy and stimulate trade in general, which results in a valuable direct contribution to the fiscal coffers of the city and the country.

Now is the right time to legalize the industry because the pandemic has displaced so many people from their workplaces, and many of them see an incentive in street vending, replacing unemployment and raising the self-esteem of those of us who have no other income. However, the members of the Senate need to prioritize this single contribution of 19 million, which will be a very fruitful social investment that will pay back more than the allocated amount. Thanks for your time.