City Council overrides mayor on living wage veto

by Cristian Salazar
Friday, June 29, 2012 06:26 AM - Last Updated Tuesday, June 04, 2013 02:00 PM

Quinn speaks to the Council about the budget at last night's stated meeting. Photograph by William Alatriste

The City Council overrode the mayor's veto of the living wage bill and adopted a $68.5 billion budget at last night's stated meeting.

The Council overrode three of Mayor Michael Bloomberg's vetoes, but perhaps the most contentious was the decision to buck the mayor on the living wage bill .

The bill would require companies that receive $1 million or more in city subsidies to pay $10 an hour with health benefits or $11.50 an hour without them.

Bloomberg has said he would sue to block the bill from becoming law, calling the proposal "a throwback to the era when government viewed the private sector as a cash cow to be milked, rather than a garden to be cultivated.

Speaker Christine Quinn said at a news conference before last night's meeting that she didn't understand "why the mayor would sue" but was confident the Council would win the legal fight.

The Council voted 46-5 to override the mayor's veto.

The lawmakers also overrode the mayor's vetoes of a banking measure that would require more disclosure of community investment by financial institutions and a collective bargaining law that tries to change how contract disputes are handled.

The Council also voted 50-1 to adopt the fiscal 2013 budget, which preserves funding for child care and after school programs and avoids layoffs.

Fiscal policy experts say the budget also makes the risky assumption that the the city will reap hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue from the sale of taxi medallions. The sale has been held up in court.

"I believe we will get the medallion money," Quinn said, but also added that the court ruling would only be one step in the process.