

## Searchlight: Sweeping Away Arcane Regulations for Small Businesses

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A tangle of obsolete, overly complex or confusing regulations that frustrate small businesses will be swept away or made less punitive under measures being proposed by elected officials.

City inspectors would also be trained to be more customer-friendly under the proposed bills.

The measures announced today by the mayor's office and City Council aim to remove barriers to doing business that supporters say can impede growth and slow job creation.

DNAInfo.com [reports about one restaurant owner's frustrations](#) with the city's red tape:

For more than 30 years, Vinnie Mazzone has been a staple of the Sheepshead Bay restaurant scene, luring hungry diners with his legendary Chicken Masters™ fried chicken.

But two weeks ago, he shuttered his doors for good — blaming what he described as stifling government regulations, including hundreds in fines for petty violations, endless hoops to jump through and crushing tax rates.

“There are so many rules and regulations,” complained Mazzone, who said he'd half-jokingly changed his title from CEO to CCO: “Chief Compliance Officer.”

“It’s like I’m a government employee without the benefits. It’s not possible for me to run my business the way I’ve been doing 30 years,” he said.

In a statement, Council Speaker Christine Quinn said that government "needs to be doing everything in its power" to break down barriers to small business growth.

The five measures (some of which will require bills that are expected to be introduced at next week's Council hearing) would identify violations where less serious penalties should be levied; eliminate obsolete violations; streamline regulations so that businesses don't interact with more than one oversight agency; standardize customer service training for city inspectors; require city agencies to designate a liason for each regulated industry.

The measures came out of a regulatory review process between the mayor's office and the Council, with participation from the public and businesss community. The new measures are in addition to 14 others announced following the release of [an April 2010 report](#) .

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*Photo by William Alatraste, Courtesy of the City Council.*

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