



THE COUNCIL of the CITY OF NEW YORK
MARGARET S. CHIN
COUNCIL MEMBER, DISTRICT 1

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November 10, 2012

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

I am writing to you on behalf of small business owners in my district who have been absolutely devastated by Hurricane Sandy. I have heard from dozens of restaurants and other shops that are looking at being unable to return for months. Many are businesses that struggled through 9/11 or were encouraged to move down to contribute to the revitalization of the community – and they were only just recently paying off their loans and breaking even. Many have already persevered through years of public reconstruction projects of our streets.

Our Historic Front Street is still without power and is a ghost town at night. Brand name stores there that have historically drawn traffic to the area for restaurants remain covered with plywood. Tribeca restaurants experienced severe flooding and many did not have flood insurance. Financial District, Chinatown and Little Italy businesses have soldiered on for more than a week with limited electricity, heat, and hot water, and have been bereft of the normal high volumes of tourist traffic.

Currently, the City, Red Cross, and other emergency response organizations have been providing food and other goods for our many constituents without electricity or heat. I know that similar operations are ongoing in other parts of the city impacted by Hurricane Sandy, and all of these donations have been very much appreciated. However, I urge you in the coming weeks to begin relying more on local small businesses to provide these meals and other goods instead of using wholesale, prepackaged goods from elsewhere. Our small businesses are hurting. There are wonderful, inexpensive restaurants in our district – and in other districts affected by Sandy – that could really benefit from the business, and the food would probably be more nutritious and heartier than what we have been serving. For our small businesses that have been able to open again, this could also mean the difference between survival or not.

If your schedule permits, I would also be very happy to take you around to some of the small businesses that have been affected in my area. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret S. Chin".

Margaret S. Chin
Council Member, District 1
New York City Council