

May 20, 2022

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor, New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins
President Pro Tempore and Majority Leader, New York State Senate
172 State Street, Capitol Building, Room 330
Albany, NY 12247

The Honorable Carl E. Heastie
Speaker, New York State Assembly
198 State Street, Legislative Office Building, Room 932
Albany, NY 12248

Subject: Support from New York City Council Members for New York Senate Bill S4937C and New York Assembly Bill A6262A regarding hotel conversion to affordable housing

Dear Governor Hochul and Speakers Stewart-Cousins and Heastie,

We write in strong support of the sister bills currently being heard by the New York State Senate (S4937C) and the New York State Assembly (A6262A) which would facilitate conversions of hotels to residential uses.

These bills would amend Section 103 of the Multiple Dwelling Law to add a new subdivision 7 allowing Class B hotels to be used as permanent housing while retaining existing status and certificate of occupancy. This bill would not negate any other existing provision of law that would otherwise prohibit residential use, provided that such occupancy:

1. Shall be subject to the approval of the local housing agency;
2. Shall be within or close to a residentially zoned district;
3. Shall be in agreement with the local hotel union where applicable; and

4. Shall be either financed by the state or by the local housing agency for the purposes of affordable housing for residents making no more than 60 percent of the area median income. Such residential units must also be operated by a nonprofit organization and must be rent stabilized with permanent affordability restrictions upon completion of conversion.

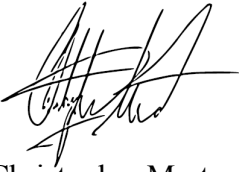
These bills will drastically increase the stock of affordable housing in New York City and State. The economic toll the COVID-19 pandemic has had on working people has brought our city's affordability crisis to a breaking point. It is crucial that our land use strategies are flexible and adaptable enough to combat this current crisis, and to meet the most basic needs of our most vulnerable neighbors. The oversaturation of hotels left many sitting empty even prior to the pandemic, and now we can match the existing supply of these buildings to the unmet demand for permanent affordable housing.

This pivot to residential use mutually benefits the needs of communities and hotel owners alike, providing new opportunities for both housing and economic development. These bills create an innovative option for properties that are already well-positioned for safe and quality affordable housing.

This is a statewide issue and is therefore a statewide opportunity. Union agreement and agency approval will hold these conversions accountable, while this decisive action at the state level meets the urgency of our affordability crisis.

We urge you as legislators and elected officials to seize this opportunity and to vote to approve S4937C and A6262A.

Sincerely,



Christopher Marte
NYC Council Member, District 1



Eric Dinowitz
NYC Council Member, District 11



Erik Bottcher
NYC Council Member, District 3



Kristin Richardson Jordan
NYC Council Member, District 9



Keith Powers
NYC Council Member, District 4



Kevin C. Riley
NYC Council Member, District 12



Julie Menin
NYC Council Member, District 5



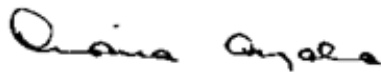
Marjorie Velázquez
NYC Council Member, District 13



Shaun Abreu
NYC Council Member, District 7



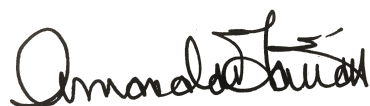
Pierina Ana Sanchez
NYC Council Member, District 14



Diana Ayala
NYC Council Member, District 8



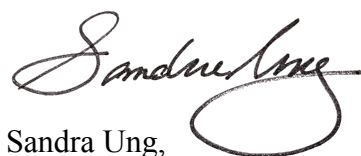
Oswald Feliz
NYC Council Member, District 15



Amanda Farías
NYC Council Member, District 18



Lincoln Restler
NYC Council Member, District 33



Sandra Ung,
NYC Council Member, District 20



Jennifer Gutiérrez
NYC Council Member, District 34



Shekar Krishnan
NYC Council Member, District 25



Chi Ossé
NYC Council Member, District 36



Julie Won
NYC Council Member, District 26



Sandy Nurse
NYC Council Member, District 37



Nantasha Williams
NYC Council Member, District 27



Shahana Hanif
NYC Council Member, District 39



Lynn Schulman
NYC Council Member, District 29



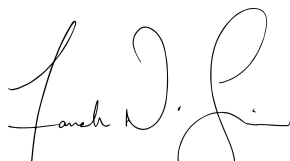
Rita Joseph
NYC Council Member, District 40

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Darlene Mealy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

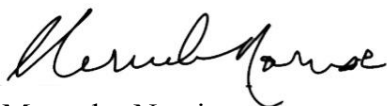
Darlene Mealy
NYC Council Member, District 41

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Justin Brannan". The signature is cursive, with the first name being more prominent than the last.

Justin Brannan
NYC Council Member, District 43

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Farah N. Louis". The signature is cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Farah N. Louis
NYC Council Member, District 45

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mercedes Narcisse". The signature is cursive, with the first name being more prominent than the last.

Mercedes Narcisse
NYC Council Member, District 46