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THE COUNCIL  
OF  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
**SANDY NURSE**  
COUNCIL MEMBER, 37<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, BROOKLYN

SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE  
MANAGEMENT CHAIR

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COMMITTEES  
CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR  
CONTRACTS  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
RESILIENCY AND WATERFRONTS  
VETERANS

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SUB-COMMITTEE  
LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS,  
AND DISPOSITIONS

**NYC Council Member Sandy Nurse's Testimony to the Charter Revision Commission**  
July 22, 2024

Dear Chair Scissura,

I represent the 37th Council district in Brooklyn, New York. We are a district with low voter turnout, often with just over 5% of all registered voters participating in municipal elections. For our communities to be adequately engaged on something as significant as ballot questions for changing the charter, I urge the Commission to take more time and caution to ensure voters in communities like mine have time to raise their voices.

It is deeply concerning that the motivation to start this Commission is because Mayor Eric Adams does not want New Yorkers to vote on an existing proposal that the Council passed this year. The New York City Council is elected by millions of voters to legislate on their behalf for a better city and a better government. Any effort to thwart the democratic process of New Yorkers voting on this proposal in November is an attempt to rob the voters of this city of their right to decide. This move undermines our local democracy at a time when we are fighting nationally to keep it.

The Mayor asserted in a meeting on May 2, 2024, that the public does not have access to testify and shape City Council legislation. As the former chair of the Sanitation Committee and now the chair of the Criminal Justice Committee, I wholeheartedly reject this inaccurate statement. Perpetuating this false claim is an affront to the hours of testimony my colleagues and I have listened to and read while in office. If the Mayor is confused about the process, perhaps he should spend more time understanding it instead of repeatedly working to undermine it.

I want to underscore the obligation of any Charter Review Commission to protect and defend our local democracy. Rushing new proposals in less than two months can erode our ability to conduct

oversight and provide the appropriate checks and balances that our local government provides against the sweeping powers of the city's executive.

A Charter Revision Commission is a vital constitutional process that should provide legitimate ways to improve the City Charter, good government, and democracy through a thoughtful process and meaningful public engagement. Representative democracy and good government are critical to our city, and a rushed process, with limited public engagement, undermines both.

The Mayor's Commission should give New Yorkers ample opportunities, time, and the ability to thoroughly engage in proposals that advance to the General Election ballot, and that cannot happen if it cuts short its full term to rush proposals to the ballot in 2024. I urge this Commission to take this process seriously and use the necessary time needed to do a thorough, democratic process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sandy Nurse", followed by a long horizontal flourish line.

Sandy Nurse  
Council Member, District 37