Denise Patel

Testimony on Local Law 97 – Proposed Rules Annual Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Limits for Buildings

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My name is Denise Patel and I am a Co-op owner in a Brooklyn building. We look forward to the changes LL97 brings to my nearly 100-year old building. I am also a Climate Campaigns Advisor for NY Communities for Change and a climate activist who fought for the passage of Local Law 97. Over the past decade, we have all witnessed major storms devastate parts of the city, frequent and intense flooding repeatedly damaging homes, and now smoke from distant wildfires completely envelope our city on top of the high levels of pollution we all suffer from – but especially our environmental justice communities. For each of these disasters there are thousands of individuals and families whose lives are endangered.

Local Law 97 is our city’s landmark climate and jobs law. If fully implemented and enforced, it will lower utility bills, cut pollution, and create tens of thousands of jobs. Our members at NYCC are New Yorkers who are struggling to choose between paying rent and electricity bills and paying to address their health needs. New Yorkers who are looking for good paying jobs – the type that are promised by Local Law 97. New Yorkers who have done little/nothing to cause the pollution that harms them but suffer from the highest rates of asthma and cardiovascular disease in the city. New Yorkers who are at the highest risk of losing their homes – in a climate disaster or in an economic crisis as they try to make ends meet.

This is why it is imperative that Mayor Adams stand up for the New Yorkers who need it most. Instead, he has chosen to reward his real estate donors. Owners who have not taken action to reduce their emissions when the law takes effect next year should not be rewarded. They should be required to make additional cuts. The Local Law 97 Advisory Council recommended limiting renewable energy credits. Again, owners should not be allowed to buy their way out of pollution reductions. The goal of Local Law 97 is to reduce emissions. Mayor Adams must follow through to meet that goal. The proposed rules fail to do so and must be amended before they are finalized.