

To: New York City Department of Buildings
Re: Written testimony in favor of Local Law 97

October 24, 2023

No matter who is in elective office, New York is really led by visionaries, people in multiple fields who propel the city forward with their ideas. Some visions become icons. This city has had many visionaries. Olmstead and Vaux with their grand parks, Roebling and his Brooklyn Bridge, the many who designed our water supply.

Propelling New York forward with a healthy, safe vision is what Local Law 97 does. The City Council of 2019 had visionaries who wrote this law. In its original wording, it will be an icon. Mayor Adams is not a visionary. His changing of the intent of LL97 - a 2 year implementation delay and unlimited RECs - is not a loophole, it is a sinkhole. A sinkhole large enough to take down the entire city. I urge the Department to stop thinking about costs and start thinking about investments - in building stock, in water and air quality.

In colonial times, amidst a Yellow Fever outbreak, the City Council legislatively altered business practices for the greater good, barring certain manufacturing that had been dumping toxins into the water supply. Local Law 97 does similarly by reducing greenhouse gasses while increasing energy efficiency. These are regulations that will increase buildings' values, thereby financially benefiting the owners. That means investing now, in today's dollars, not delaying for two years.

Much like the HighLine visionaries who transitioned an abandoned rail-line into an iconic park, is a community garden I belong to. Forty years ago it was a pair of empty lots into which trash bags were thrown over the fences and where the sidewalk was littered with drug paraphernalia. Local visionaries worked hard to turn these two lots into a community garden. It is now an official NYC Park. Concurrently, the neighborhood blossomed, became safer, more desirable. And realtors, who again had not had the vision nor did the work, have ever since been benefiting by listing the garden as an "amenity".

This vibrant city that thinks outside the box with eyes on the future, attracted me here all those years ago. It continues to attract people for these qualities. We do not live here to stand still. Delay is stagnation. To favor Mayor Adams' proposed changes to Local Law 97 is to be complicit in stagnation. To propel us all forward, **New York City needs the investment of a strong Local Law 97 as originally written and intended, without delay and without RECs.**

Thank you.
Betty Winkler
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