



## OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

**ANTONIO REYNOSO**

Brooklyn Borough President

### **DSNY Rules Hearing: Use of Certain Receptacles by Certain Entities that Receive Department Collection Service August 8, 2024**

Good morning and thank you to the Department of Sanitation for holding this hearing today. My name is Lacey Tauber and I'm here representing Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso. Borough President Reynoso agrees that containerization is smart and necessary policy and has been advocating for it since he was Chair of the Council's Sanitation Committee. However, he feels that this proposal in particular is too broad, was rolled out too quickly, and has the potential for unintended consequences that will impact our streetscapes and quality of life.

In April of last year, DSNY released its *Future of Trash* report, prepared by consultancy McKinsey. The report stated that, "containerization is not a one-size-fits-all solution." It reported that 50% of the city is appropriate for individual bins, particularly lower-density areas such as Staten Island, Eastern Queens, and Southern Brooklyn. The report recommended a block-by-block approach to determining the appropriate method of containerization, considering elements such as available curb space, anticipated waste output, and street width. Yet the proposed rules will apply based on building size rather than geography, and do not take the suggested considerations into account.

To be clear, everyone agrees that the current situation is a mess. However, nearly 20% of 1-9 unit buildings have storefronts on the ground floor, according to the Center for Zero Waste Design. They simply have nowhere to store the bins, and the accompanying commercial businesses (which are also required to use bins) often do not, either. This means these bins will become permanent fixtures on our sidewalks, blocking storefronts and ground floor windows while obstructing pedestrian walkways.

Instead, DSNY should reconsider these rules and take a geographic approach, as suggested in the report. In low-density areas where bin storage is available, the bins are an appropriate solution. Outside of those areas, DSNY should fast-track the rollout of stationary, on-street, shared containers, which the report called "the only path to high-density residential containerization at scale." This is the right solution for dense parts of the city for both residential and commercial waste, and DSNY should not shy away from removing free public parking spaces for what we all agree is a public good – making our streets cleaner and getting rid of rats.

The new containerization programs should also include recycling and organics. As designed, these rules do not incentivize recycling, and failing to include shared containers for recycling and organics in a future program won't either. A smart containerization plan would be tied to a save-as-you-throw model based on bin or bag size to help increase our diversion rates and meet our zero waste goals. Additionally, it is wasteful to have homeowners buy bins now only to give them access to shared containers later, and rolling out new and different policies in a short time can be confusing. This will disincentivize use of the shared containers if and when they come.

In conclusion, Borough President Reynoso calls upon DSNY to rethink these rules and to take a more fine-tuned approach that fast tracks shared, stationary, on-street containers as the preferred option for dense areas and prioritizes waste diversion and sustainability in addition to cleanliness. According to the report, the vast majority of major cities surveyed internationally are using shared stationary containers. It's time for New York to join them. Thank you.