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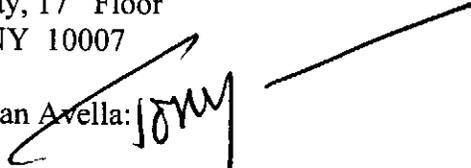
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November 16, 2009

Hon. Tony Avella
Chair, New York City Council
Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises
250 Broadway, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10007

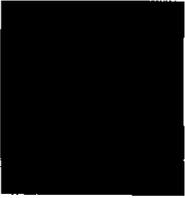
Dear Chairman Avella: 

On behalf of the New York Building Congress, one of the region's largest and most diverse coalitions serving the common interests of the design, construction and real estate industry and involving 1,500 members from 350 constituent organizations, please accept this letter in lieu of testimony at the November 17 hearing on the Kingsbridge Armory redevelopment project.

After lying fallow for decades, the Kingsbridge Armory stands ready to become the reinvigorated center of the Kingsbridge neighborhood in the Bronx. The Armory, which has never been open to the general public, has had a negative economic impact on the City, which has spent tens of millions of dollars on the upkeep and maintenance of this building. Its only function has been to serve as a homeless shelter during the 1990s and intermittently as a soundstage for film and television crews.

The proposed redevelopment promises 600,000 square feet of new retail, restaurant, community- and open space. The proposed developer will invest \$300 million in private capital in the project, spending money on materials, jobs and services, much of which will originate in the Bronx and New York City. When the project is complete, the Armory redevelopment will create thousands of jobs in a variety of sectors in the borough which has seen the worst declines in employment in the City during this difficult economic time. Moreover, the Kingsbridge Armory project will revive a landmarked facility by at last inviting the neighborhood within its walls to shop, eat, and participate in community events. Instead of being a black hole dividing the community, the Armory can become its center.

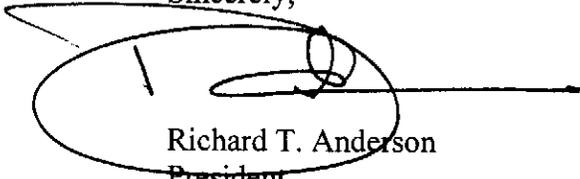
Today, it is more essential than ever that we encourage sensible development during this protracted period of economic uncertainty. By approving this project, the Council will create an opportunity for private investment in our City, in new jobs, and take a step toward reinvigorating our economy. Now is the time to complete the public review process so that this project will be ready to go the moment the conditions permit.



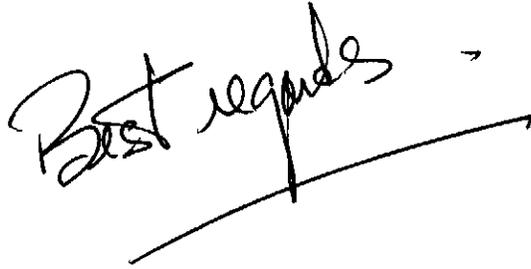
NEW YORK
BUILDING
CONGRESS

The New York Building Congress urges your support for the redevelopment of Kingsbridge Armory and we thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard T. Anderson", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is enclosed within a large, hand-drawn oval.

Richard T. Anderson
President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Best regards" is written above a horizontal line. The signature is written in a cursive style.

cc: Deputy Mayor Robert Lieber
Speaker Christine Quinn