



**Testimony by New York State Senator Brad Hoylman  
& Assembly Housing Committee Chair Keith L.T. Wright  
Before the New York City Council Committee on Public Housing  
Regarding a Resolution in Support of the “NYCHA Real Property Public Review Act”**

**May 17, 2013**

Our names are Brad Hoylman and Keith Wright and we represent New York State’s 27<sup>th</sup> Senate District and 70<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, respectively. Together, our districts include thirteen New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments, including Campos Plaza I and II, which have been targeted for infill development by NYCHA under the land lease proposal.

We would like to thank New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn and Committee on Public Housing Chair Rosie Mendez for holding this hearing, as well as Councilmembers Margaret Chin and Melissa Mark-Viverito for introducing a resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to enact our bill in Albany, the *NYCHA Real Property Public Review Act*. Your leadership on behalf of NYCHA residents, whose concerns are not always heard in the halls of government, is admirable.

As you know, NYCHA plans to lease fourteen parcels of infill land in eight developments to private developers for the construction of new high-rise apartment towers in which 80% of the units would be market rate. Our legislation will require that any disposition of land or buildings by NYCHA, including this proposed infill development, be subject to New York City’s Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), the same review process that city agencies must adhere to when redeveloping public land. Regrettably, despite calls by residents, elected officials and other community stakeholders for full transparency, NYCHA’s efforts to solicit public input on infill development have been woefully inadequate.

While the Authority will likely meet and even exceed the requirements for community consultation set forth by Section 18 of the Housing Act of 1937 – the only relevant requirements to which NYCHA is bound – this law is generically designed to apply to every state in the country and is clearly insufficient for a dense urban environment like New York City. We have introduced our legislation in order to address this problem and bring NYCHA into line with other mayoral agencies.

We recognize that NYCHA’s infill development proposal, based on current projections, has the potential to generate revenue to pay for some long-overdue capital projects, but the Authority will only truly benefit the communities it serves by listening to residents and advocates before

determining whether and how to proceed. Why should NYCHA residents be entitled to anything less?

Our legislation will ensure that any time NYCHA seeks to sell or lease its land or buildings, public housing residents and the broader communities of which they are a part can help shape the future of their neighborhoods through a fair and transparent process. It will also enable public housing residents to avail themselves of the same community planning resources that residents of private housing use to evaluate major land use actions in their backyards. In addition, it will require City Council approval for any privatization of NYCHA's publicly-owned land, which is a key part of the existing land use review process for private development.

It is important to note this infill development proposal and the eight targeted sites are likely only the beginning of a program that could spread to numerous other NYCHA developments across the city. According to an August 2008 report by Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer entitled "Land Rich, Pocket Poor," there are 30.5 million square feet of unused development rights in NYCHA developments throughout Manhattan alone. We must act now before a single square foot is offered up for lease or sale.

We would like once again to thank Speaker Quinn, Chairperson Mendez and Councilmembers Chin and Mark-Viverito for holding this hearing and for inviting us to testify on this resolution. Thanks also to our co-sponsors of the *NYCHA Real Property Public Review Act*, including Senators Parker, Serrano and Squadron, and Assembly Members Kavanagh, Barron and Rodriguez.