



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## Stop the Land Grab! Senators Hoylman, Jackson & Krueger Held Press Conference on New Legislation Requiring Community Input on Empire Station Complex Project

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| ISSUE: **SENATOR BRAD HOYLMAN, SD 27, ULURP, EMPIRE STATION COMPLEX**

NEW YORK — Today, State Senators Brad Hoylman, Robert Jackson and Liz Krueger, along with planners, preservationists and community activists including Eugene Sinigalliano (resident of a block that will be demolished), Lynn Ellsworth (co-founder of Alliance for a Human-Scale City), Liam Blank (Tri State Transit Campaign), Simeon Bankoff (Executive Director of the Historic Districts Council), held a press conference in front of the Hotel Pennsylvania, to rally against current plans for the Empire Station Complex and in support of new legislation that would subject the plan to community input through the NYC Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) ([S.6556](#)).

After the press conference, the Senators handed out slices from Pizza Suprema, a beloved local mainstay at risk of being demolished.

*[Head here to watch full video of today's press conference.](#)*

**Senator Brad Hoylman said:** “The Empire Station Complex would dramatically transform Midtown, allowing up to nine new super tall towers of commercial office space to be built, as well as demolishing rent stabilized housing, small businesses and historic buildings. With a

project this consequential, it's imperative that New York City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) be utilized to have an extensive public discussion and vote on the future of this neighborhood. I'm proud to work with Senators Robert Jackson and Liz Krueger to pass S.6665 and mandate a ULURP process for the Empire Station Complex Plan."

**Senator Robert Jackson said:** "It's ridiculous that the governor's pet project for revitalizing Penn Station has the potential to go through a so-called public review process that actually doesn't need to account for any public feedback. I stand with Senator Hoylman in calling for this project to be subject to our homegrown Uniform Land Use Review Process, or ULURP. With some of the largest real estate corporations in the world already at the table, this is the only way we currently have to ensure that our constituents have a say."

**Senator Liz Krueger said:** "The Empire Station Complex plan is an immense undertaking, bigger even than Hudson Yards, and targeted for one of the busiest and most crowded parts of Manhattan. Of course we need a better Penn Station, with room for more trains – but that's not what this plan does. Instead, it is a land grab by the Governor and a giveaway to developers with no input from or consultation with the community or city government. That's not the way it's supposed to work. It is critical that a project with such significant impact on our city, our businesses, and our residents should not be forced through without appropriate review. Allowing the state to unilaterally override the local land use process is unacceptable."

While site selection for city capital projects and acquisition of property by New York City are subject to ULURP, as a project being executed by the state under a General Project Plan (GPP) that overrides local zoning, the Empire Station Complex Project is exempt from this review, robbing community members of the important opportunity to participate in a rigorous input-seeking process.

In January 2020, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced the “Empire Station Complex” and a blueprint for a reimagined and expanded Penn Station. The proposal demolishes full city blocks in which are historic sites, small businesses and residential tenants, including rent-stabilized tenants. The plan has targeted eight sites in which super tall towers will be built to supposedly fund new entrances to Penn Station, and underground transportation improvements, which to date have not been presented in detail to the public.

Despite calls by residents, elected officials and other community stakeholders for full transparency and accountability, Empire State Development’s initial plans for engaging public input on the development of a new Penn Station and surrounding area are woefully inadequate. To date, the public engagement process has suffered from poor outreach for hearings and comment periods and incomplete information about ESD’s proposals and transportation improvements.

Demolishing full city blocks and working to build a robust transportation hub requires robust public deliberation and consultation, which is why site selection for capital projects and the acquisition of property by every New York City agency is subject to ULURP. The "Empire Station Complex Public Review Act" would require the state to follow New York City’s land use procedures and ensure that residents, commuters, small businesses and other community stakeholders have meaningful opportunities to provide input and recommendations.

Hotel Pennsylvania, which has stood at the corner of 7th Ave. and 33rd St. for over 100 years, is one of the hundreds of businesses and residences which would be demolished in this plan.

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