



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Letter in Support of W42ST's Visa Application

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL December 3, 2022

| ISSUE: **LOCAL NEWS, W42ST**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in strong support of the above-referenced application.

KOB Publishing does business as W42St, one of the most popular websites and newsletters serving my constituents on the West Side of Manhattan.

Phil O'Brien and his team have revitalized local journalism in Manhattan. Over the last several years, many local publications have shuttered in my district due to printing costs, competition from online news and social media, media consolidation, and of course, the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors have made it far more difficult for small businesses like local news outlets to attract advertisers.

I think Mr. O'Brien's publication, W42St, is an outlier, however, and is successfully bucking this trend. His business has transformed itself from print to digital and survived the pandemic. At the same time, he has increased local news coverage while supporting local small businesses in the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood. His website newsletter alone has a subscription list of over 6,000 New Yorkers (over one-half of whom open it every day), which is in addition to the thousands of hits W42St receives on its website every week.

I strongly believe Mr. O'Brien's model represents the future of local journalism, which is so important to the social and political fabric of New York City. Based on its widespread popularity and readership among civic and neighborhood leaders, too, I have strong confidence that KOB Publishing, the parent company of W42St, will soon transition from a "marginal enterprise" to one that has the capacity to meet the requirements for E-2 Treaty Investors under the guidelines of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

I greatly appreciate your consideration of my comments as you consider the supervisory review of this application. Please contact me if you have any questions at 212-633-8053 or hoylman@nysenate.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Brad Hoylman

NYS State Senator

27th Senate District