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NY Senate to Hold Hearings on WTC Delays

State Senator Bill Perkins (D-New York) Chair of the Corporations, Authorities and Commissions Committee announced a Senate hearing next month on the stalled redevelopment of the World Trade Center. The impasse between the Port Authority and Silverstein Properties, a commercial developer threatens further delays.

“This is an outrage,” said Perkins. “Eight years later Ground Zero remains an open wound. Where are our skyscrapers, transit hub, and Memorial already? Families are waiting for closure.”

Larry Silverstein holds a lease to the site, but wants the PA, which owns the land, to guarantee financing of two office towers. The developer argues Authority delays led to having to seek financing in a down economy. The Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center predicts the PA’s timetables will not be met.

“The whole world watches as Ground Zero becomes an argument over money,” said Perkins. “Instead of a statement about democratic ideals and the resilience of the human spirit, we have an empty pit, a Memorial held hostage, blown deadlines, cost overruns, and construction workers and others out of work.”

Silverstein requested arbitration regarding the PA’s performance, which will cause further delay. New York Governor David Paterson threatened to proceed without the developer. Mayor Bloomberg failed in his attempt to broker an end to the stalemate.

“This is unacceptable,” said Clyde Frazier, Sr., whose son, Clyde, Jr. was killed on 9/11. “The World Trade Center is a symbol of America. It must be restored.”

“The World Trade Center needs to return to the epicenter of the financial community,” said State Senator John Sampson (D-Brooklyn), Senate Majority Conference Leader. “I call on Mr. Silverstein and the PA to come back to the table and negotiate in good faith because the people across the state of NY and the country have waited long enough. I am hopeful the state senate hearing will lead to a more accountable and transparent path to the redevelopment of the World Trade Center.”

“As the Senator representing Lower Manhattan, I have long advocated for clear goals and deadlines for progress on the World Trade Center site. This hearing is another step toward realizing the vision of a fully constructed, thriving Downtown,” said State Senator Daniel Squadron (D-New York).

“The public needs this hearing,” said Senator Perkins. “They do not understand how we can still be at a literal ‘ground zero’. The people are entitled to answers, and an opportunity to weigh in.”

The Corporations, Authorities and Commission Committee has oversight over the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center, three state entities involved in the World Trade Center redevelopment.

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