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February 28, 2024

Dr. Sean M. Decatur  
President  
American Museum of Natural History  
200 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10024

Dear President Decatur:

We are writing to request that the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) consider serving as an early voting location to help relieve the security and logistical concerns at the current early voting location, the William O'Shea Complex at 100 West 77th Street.

As you may know, the William O'Shea Complex comprises 1,500 public students at M.S. 247 (Dual Language Middle School), M.S. 245 (the Computer School), and P.S. 334 (the Anderson School). Since 2022, these three schools have served as an early voting location for the primary and general elections.

Unfortunately, the nine days of early voting impair school operations, restrict nutritional options for students, and compromise student safety. Numerous parents and faculty and staff from the William O'Shea Complex have reached out to our offices, detailing the burdens that early voting has posed. Because early voting is held in the cafeteria while school is in session, students are unable to eat hot food for that week. Students are also forced to eat in the hallways in unsanitary conditions, disrupting necessary lunchtime socialization.

Parents are especially concerned about the safety risks posed by early voting, as well. While voters are technically confined to certain areas of the Complex, teachers and students regularly encounter adults wandering the building and using the bathrooms.

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The NYC Board of Elections (BOE) is not equipped to closely police building access, on top of their immense electoral responsibilities.

Given the burden that early voting has placed on the children at the William O'Shea Complex and the dire need for large, centrally-located polling places on the Upper West Side, we request AMNH specifically to:

- 1) Grant the BOE access to inspect the location and evaluate its suitability as an Early Voting location; and
- 2) Serve as an Early Voting location for the primary and general elections, should the BOE approve the site.

In addition to improving conditions at the William O'Shea Complex, your decision to serve as an early voting location would continue AMNH's long-standing and deserved reputation as a hospitable neighbor for West Siders and improve our constituents' access to the ballot box. Thank you sincerely for your consideration and work on behalf of the West Side community.

Sincerely,

Brad Hoylman-Sigal



State Senator - 47th Senate District

Linda B. Rosenthal



Assemblymember - 67th District

Gale A. Brewer



Councilmember - District 6