

**CORDELL CLEARE**  
**30<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT**

ALBANY OFFICE  
ROOM 905  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247  
PHONE: 518-455-2441

DISTRICT OFFICE  
Harlem State Office Building  
163 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street  
Suite 912  
New York, New York 10027  
PHONE: 212-222-7315

EMAIL: [CLEARE@NYSenate.GOV](mailto:CLEARE@NYSenate.GOV)



**THE SENATE**  
**STATE OF NEW YORK**

**CHAIR**  
**AGING**

**COMMITTEES:**

CITIES 1  
CORPORATIONS, AUTHORITIES & COMMISSIONS  
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INVESTIGATIONS & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
SOCIAL SERVICES

Apr. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

**Re: The Untimely Passing of Ms. Excenia Mette**

I express my sincerest condolences to the family of Ms. Excenia Mette, who was such an important part of the Harlem community. Ms. Mette or 'Zeenie' as she is known in Harlem, was known for her warmth, bringing together people through her cooking, and for preserving generations of Harlem's Black culture.

In 2018, Ms. Mette opened "Mama Zees" on 123<sup>rd</sup> and Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd, the only Black woman owned bodega in all of New York City. The first to exist in the city since 1987. She served traditional soul food dishes including fried catfish and Chicken & Waffles, building off of the recipes she was taught by her grandma also named Excenia. On Sundays, Ms. Mette would host worship services outside of her deli to share her relationship with God with the community and continue to bring people together. Her impact and visions for Harlem will forever be remembered.

Ms. Mette was also a longtime member of the National Action Network, helping advocate for the advancement of Black Americans in Harlem and nationwide.

Ms. Mette was an inspiration to the community and an example of Black women leaders in this community. She will be missed by her family and by us all.

Sincerely,

*Cordell Cleare*

Senator Cordell Cleare  
NYS Senate | 30<sup>th</sup> District  
(212) 222-7315