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**Prepared Comments of State Senator Daniel Squadron to The Brooklyn Bridge
Park Corporation Board
June 7, 2016**

Thank you to the Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation Board for the opportunity to provide public comment.

I represent the entirety of Brooklyn Bridge Park in the State Senate, and have been a strong supporter of completing and funding it. I am proud of all that we have accomplished when we work together, from additional capital dollars to getting the park built more quickly, to expansions of parkland around the Tobacco Warehouse, to the enormously popular Pop-Up Pool.

Today, I strongly oppose the Board moving forward with the proposal for luxury housing development at Pier 6.

For more than a decade, there has been a debate about how to pay for the park. Many of us believe that funding the park with luxury housing within the park perpetuates inequities in park access and park decision-making.

In addition, broad opposition to luxury housing at Pier 6 has existed since it was first proposed. Virtually every local elected official, myself included, and every local civic organization is against it. While the addition of high income, cost controlled units and union labor is the best part of this bad plan, it does not make it good, necessary or allowed.

As terms of a settlement agreement, the City itself sought modifications to the Empire State Development Corporation's (ESDC) General Project Plan governing the project to allow this plan to move forward. When approval was not granted, the City quit the process. An 11th hour letter from the ESDC Chair does not supplant that.

Unfortunately, quitting that process means hundreds of comments and hours of testimony from community members have been ignored by this Board. There will be no responses provided, no consideration given. In fact, the members of this Board never even received those comments – they were delivered to ESDC.

To add insult to injury, the Board has not committed to public comment until after the vote today. There could be no more clear a message that the Park does not think the public has a role in this important public space.

In the public comments the Board has not received, legitimate questions were raised about how much funding the park will receive from existing developments. In addition, alternatives, such as

bonding, have been suggested and summarily dismissed by the Park, without substantive explanation. Just yesterday, Comptroller Stringer urged a delay of this vote. Further, the public comments pointed out significant changes in the project's impact since it was first considered a decade ago: significant newly proposed development in the surrounding community; reduction in local healthcare services; a local school capacity crisis; revised flood maps; overburdened transportation. The list goes on. And yet, none of it gets due consideration or public engagement.

The Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation has erred with this plan. Perhaps deafened by the volume of the opposition, the Board has failed to consider the community, local elected officials, the best interests of the park and the rules that govern it.

I urge you to reconsider. Thank you.