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TESTIMONY BY NEW YORK STATE SENATOR THOMAS K. DUANE
BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGARDING THE ULURP APPLICATIONS
RELATED TO CLINTON COMMONS

January 26, 2011

My name is Thomas K. Duane and I represent New York State's 29th Senate District, within which lie the proposed Clinton Commons development and the surrounding neighborhood of Clinton/Hell's Kitchen. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is seeking Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) Applications C 110125 ZMM and C 110126 HAM to facilitate the development of Clinton Commons, an 11-story, 89,863 square foot building at 533-543 West 52nd Street that will create 103-units of permanently affordable cooperative housing for individuals and families earning between 80 and 165% of Area Median Income (AMI). HPD is also seeking approval for disposition of the property, which is owned by the City of New York, to West 52nd St. Affordable Developers, LLC, a joint venture between Clinton Housing Association and Monadnock Construction.

As a longtime advocate of affordable housing and an elected official representing a district with one of the most cost-prohibitive housing markets in the nation, I am particularly pleased that this proposal will increase the West Side of Manhattan's permanently affordable, moderate- and middle-income housing stock. I appreciate that during its review process, Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) advocated strongly for the developers to identify and adopt a mechanism that would preserve the development's affordability in the long-term and I applaud the developers for heeding CB4's call. It is noteworthy that both Clinton Housing Association and Monadnock Construction have considerable experience in the community and have proven to be both trustworthy and invested in working with their neighbors. Clinton Commons' progressive cooperative housing structure will open the door to home ownership for countless generations of middle-income New Yorkers for whom there are currently few adequate housing options, and will help keep Clinton/Hell's Kitchen a diverse, dynamic and vibrant neighborhood.

As you know, in December 2010, CB4 passed a resolution recommending conditional approval of the ULURP applications in question. The developers subsequently worked with the City of New York to ensure that these conditions were met and I am thus pleased to offer my full, enthusiastic support for these applications' approval.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to comment on the Clinton Commons proposal. I look forward to the completion of this exciting project.