



DANIEL SQUADRON
SENATOR, 26TH DISTRICT

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK

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**TESTIMONY OF STATE SENATOR DANIEL SQUADRON REGARDING THE CITY
OF NEW YORK'S PHASE 1 APPLICATION FOR U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL DISASTER RESILIENCE COMPETITION**

March 16, 2015

My name is Daniel Squadron and I represent the 26th District in the New York State Senate. My district includes the Manhattan neighborhoods of TriBeCa, Battery Park City, the Lower East Side, Chinatown, the Financial District, Greenwich Village, Little Italy, SoHo and the East Village and the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Greenpoint, Williamsburg, Vinegar Hill, DUMBO, Fulton Ferry, Brooklyn Heights, Cobble Hill, and Carroll Gardens.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on New York City's Natural Disaster Resilience Competition Application.

As I have said before, like other parts of the city, my Senate district was severely impacted by Hurricane Sandy in the fall of 2012. Thousands of my constituents lost essential services like heat, water, and electricity, and other basic services like transportation and telecommunication. My office, like other elected offices and neighborhood organizations around the city, engaged in a variety of outreach efforts to help residents and businesses both prepare for the storm and then to recover from the damage and disruption it caused. From this experience, it was evident that better long-term and short-term planning was needed to mitigate the impacts of future disasters.

It is important that the City's application identifies housing as an urgent unfunded need. It is also critical to address broader resiliency measures, particularly in Lower Manhattan. Community Board 1 faced disastrous flooding which led to two fatalities among other severe consequences, as well as significant long-term impacts, particularly at the South Street Seaport. Our community is still vulnerable.

East Side Coastal Resiliency, a project that came from the BIG U proposal, is funded by federal disaster aid. This project is an exciting and notable step, leading toward a more resilient New York. So far HUD has contributed \$335 million to East Side Coastal Resiliency of the \$920 million allocated for six projects throughout New York and New Jersey in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. I look forward to achieving a greener, more resilient Lower East Side in partnership with Community Board 3 and community advocates as this project comes to fruition on Pier 42 and beyond.

In addition to fortifying the Lower East Side, we must also focus attention on Lower Manhattan's resiliency needs from Montgomery Street to Battery Park City. Since 9/11, Lower Manhattan has come back in a big way thanks to the persistence of local community, advocates, and elected officials. This residential and commercial neighborhood at the heart of our city

cannot be left vulnerable to another storm. The city's recent acknowledgement of Lower Manhattan's resiliency needs as part of its massive citywide plan is a great sign of its responsiveness. This plan includes \$8 million in City capital funds for Battery Park flood protection design and implementation. It also includes \$6.75 million from the City and State for comprehensive flood protection planning below Montgomery Street and around the tip of Lower Manhattan to the west side. We truly hope this funding below Montgomery Street is a building block for additional steps to complete a comprehensive resiliency in Lower Manhattan.

While our buildings are still standing, there's no question that Lower Manhattan is in serious need of protection. But this recent capital commitment cannot be the end of resiliency funding for Lower Manhattan. Following Hurricane Sandy in 2012, the community urgently needs substantial rebuilding resources.

It is essential that Lower Manhattan be a key component in New York City's Natural Disaster Resilience Competition Application. I remain committed to working with our local community boards, the Downtown Alliance, LESReady!, my colleagues, the de Blasio Administration and community advocates to ensure Lower Manhattan's resiliency needs are met, from Montgomery Street to Battery Park City.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments.