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**Testimony by New York State Senator Brad Hoylman
Before the New York City Council Subcommittee on Landmarks
Regarding the Proposed West End-Collegiate Historic District Extension**

September 16, 2013

My name is Brad Hoylman and I represent New York State's 27th Senate District, in which the southern tip of the proposed West End-Collegiate Historic District Extension (the "Extension") is located. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony before the New York City Council Subcommittee on Landmarks regarding this remarkable concentration of historic buildings.

First, I would like to express my appreciation to LPC for its June 25, 2013 approval of the Extension, which is generally bounded by West 70th Street and West 79th Street along portions of West End Avenue, Riverside Drive and Broadway. As you know, the Extension is a crucial part of the larger stretch of West End Avenue, from West 70th Street to West 109th Street, for which preservationists, community advocates and elected officials have long sought the protections afforded by historic district designation. A study of this area conducted by Andrew Dolkart, a leading architectural historian and Director of Columbia University's Historic Preservation Program, found that its buildings have unique architectural and historical merit.

The proposed historic district captures a relatively short but significant window of time in late 19th Century and early 20th Century architecture. During this period, economic and social forces—largely a result of the introduction of service on the revolutionary Interborough Rapid Transit Subway line beneath Broadway in 1904—contributed to the redevelopment of West End Avenue and Riverside Drive from low-rise row houses amidst rural landscapes to an enduring chain of grand apartment buildings. Designed by prominent architects like Rosario Candela, George & Edward Blum, Emery Roth and Lamb & Rich, these buildings are among the finest examples of New York City's early 20th Century multifamily dwellings and form a cohesive and uniquely "New York"

model for upper-middle class living. As Dolkart describes, the buildings on the avenues create a tremendous sense of place, with consistent height, cladding materials, and buildout to the lot line. Nestled between these are the Neo-Flemish West End Collegiate Church and the superlative Apthorp apartment house. Dolkart's findings make a compelling case for the Extension's designation.

Unfortunately, the voracious New York real estate market, if left unchecked, poses a serious threat to this cohesive span of historic architecture. Already, Neo-Renaissance row houses at 732 and 734 West End Avenue—located in the proposed Riverside-West End Historic District Extension II—have been demolished, and the site's owner has obtained a permit from the New York City Department of Buildings to construct a tall residential building there that likely will not conform to the area's aesthetic character. This same owner had also sought permits to demolish row houses at 508 and 510 West End Avenue, located in the Riverside-West End Historic District Extension. These cases illustrate the risk of leaving critical portions of New York's architectural history unprotected. It is essential that the City Council acts now and designates the West End-Collegiate Historic District Extension in its entirety.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.