

Testimony for Public Hearing

Re: New York City Council Proposed Int. No. 363

November 19, 1999

Good morning and thank you for this opportunity to express my views on the proposed amendments to our city's administrative code. My name is John Liu, and I serve as the president of the North Flushing Civic Association, as well as a vice president of the Queens Civic Congress. We are an organization comprised of local residents who take great pride and ownership in the community where we live.

I'm here today to urge you to pass Proposed Int. No. 363.

New York City is a complex city in which change is constant. However, we believe that some measure of stability is desirable for residential neighborhoods. Zoning laws define the characteristics of neighborhoods and are therefore essential to keeping residential areas stable. However, there are many inadequacies in the enforcement and corrective provisions of the current law.

The provisions of this local law, Int. No. 363, make sense. They will discourage the illegal conversion of homes into multiple occupancy residences that are in violation of the zoning designated for the particular area. Barring that, the local law will allow for improved enforcement of the already existing statutes. We who live in Queens neighborhoods are in dire need of these provisions.

We also hope that the city agencies that will be responsible for monitoring compliance with the law, once it is passed, will do so vigorously and even-handedly. This is important because when laws are enforced sporadically or with varying intensity, there arises an appearance of biased and selective enforcement. In Queens, the most diverse county in the nation, there are many areas that attract new immigrants. Often times, city agencies attempting to enforce the law seem to come from nowhere enforcing laws that are poorly understood or sometimes unheard of. With vigorous and even-handed enforcement, agencies, such as the Department of Buildings, will not only keep our residential neighborhoods intact but will also alleviate fears of biased and selective enforcement.

Thank you.