



# Queens Civic Congress

P.O. Box 238, Flushing, NY 11363 (718) 343-6779 fax: (718) 225-3366  
www.queensciviccongress.org queensciviccongr@aol.com

**President:**  
Corey Bearak

**Executive Vice President:**  
Patricia Dolan

**Secretary:**  
Seymour Schwartz

**Treasurer:**  
James Trent

**Vice Presidents:**

Tyler Cassell Richard Hellenbrecht Paul Kerzner David Kulick  
Barbara Larkin Audrey Lucas Kathy Masi Nagassar Ramgarib  
Harbachan Singh Edwin Westley Dorothy Woo

**Founders:**

President *Emeritus* Sean Walsh  
Albert Greenblatt  
Robert Harris

March 9, 2009

Hon. Robert LiMandri  
Commissioner  
280 Broadway, 7th floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Commissioner LiMandri:

Queens Civic Congress welcomes your announcement late Friday concerning proposed [changes](#) to the system for the public to make building complaints, specifically that "the launch date for the new process will be moved to mid-April." Thank you for recognizing some of the issues raised by our coalition and other commentators. As the umbrella group of 110 and growing civic organizations, with a [membership](#) that represents every community in the borough, Queens Civic Congress welcomes this additional period to allow the Department of Buildings (DOB) to address clear flaws in the process.

Essentially, DOB lacks any authority to limit the reporting of illegal activity. In fact, the proposal, if adopted unchanged, clearly creates an immunity for the building community when civics, community members and others with standing challenge in court any dismissal of their examining a complaint. Queens Civic Congress strongly recommends the DOB reform the propose changes to avoid what must be an unintended consequence – that would perpetuate illegal and often hazardous development.

Why risk effectively legalizing development activity that fail to follow plans that may be legitimate but where the illegality gets exposed after the passage of thirty days? Many illegal conditions may not be visible even subsequent to the substantial completion, again after the 30 days are tolled. In addition, concerns remain about the general inability of the DOB to respond timely to inquiries or make files available. A short complaint period thereby delays any reasonable attempt to conduct a due diligence prior to filing a complaint.

As stated in its [testimony](#), Queens Civic Congress generally opposes any statute of limitation type prohibition on complaints beyond the 30 day process outlined in the proposed rules.

Queens Civic Congress looks forward to continuing its dialogue with you and the DOB and looks forward to your participation in the April 20 meeting as a good opportunity to further explore areas for attention and reform.

Sincerely,

*Corey Bearak*

Corey Bearak, Esq.  
President