



Vote Public, Not Private.

New York, NY
917.720.8341

March 7, 2008

Maureen Babis
Executive Director
New York City Industrial Development Agency
110 William Street
New York, NY 10038

Dear Ms. Babis:

At your behest, and on behalf of VOTE People and its supporters, I submit this letter as a written reflection of what I expressed before your board yesterday. We ask that you vote no to both tax incentive plans.

The issue is whether your agency should “provide tax incentives of \$15 million to Vornado Reality Trust, and \$5 million to Major League Baseball to move to East Harlem”. (New York Times Fed. 27, 2008).

New York City would have your agency take additional public funds to lure two huge private corporations to Harlem to develop on public property without securing public benefits to the community. Meanwhile, it is actively trying to displace at least 71 local and viable businesses whose livelihoods are at peril because they are denied even business *loans* from the Empowerment Zone, banks, and tax incentives from the City.

What does it say about this City’s motives, when it offers huge financial incentives to outside corporations when at the same time, less than 100 yards from the very site at issue, it shows disdain for the existence of smaller community businesses in East, West, and Central Harlem.

This proposal epitomizes the City’s indifference towards Harlem’s culture, people, and businesses to *remain* in existence. Here in Harlem, we often wonder whether the issue before your agency is ever in reverse: should you provide tax incentives of \$20 million to Harlem’s businesses to stay? The potential injustice that would flow from a yes vote by your agency would write another sentence on the City’s eviction notice to Harlem’s cultural.

In closing, I implore you to vote no to a \$20 million tax incentives package to lure corporations to this community. Instead, these same tax incentives could be used to help local economically neglected businesses stay in Harlem.

I thank you for your time, patience, and consideration.

Sincerely yours

Craig Schley
Executive Director
VOTE People
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Cc: Judith A. Capolongo, Assistant Vice President and David Shelley, Record Access Officer