



THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Bill de Blasio
Mayor, City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

February 27, 2018

Dear Mayor de Blasio,

We write to you to seek to establish a more productive and fruitful discussion around the development and implementation of the Department of Environmental Protection's Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) for managing New York City's Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) outfalls. As Council Members, we represent both groups and constituents who harbor grave concerns regarding how the LTCP process has been conducted to date. While we appreciate DEP's cooperation in the Committee on Environmental Protection's oversight hearing of December 13, 2017, we must ensure that the conversation does not end there, especially as 10 new Council Members have taken office in the interim.

At the outset, let us first establish that our goals here are in near alignment. We all desire to see our city's waterways achieve the fishable/swimmable standard set by the federal Clean Water Act. We want to ensure that as little untreated sewage makes it to the point of entering our waterways as possible. And we all want to do this without unduly burdening ratepayers, many of whom are middle class homeowners struggling to get by.

Our disagreements, where they exist, come down to several key points: First, how can the Council, and our constituents, be better integrated into the LTCP implementation process? Secondly, how can we ensure that the proposed solutions do not become problems in themselves? To clarify this latter point, we should reiterate that we share many of the concerns of advocates who argue that we must look to set attainable goals based on CSO overflow reduction and not simply that our infrastructure spending meets a certain set target. Additionally, while chlorination of CSO overflows is a method that has been used elsewhere, the EPA has acknowledged many problematic side effects of chlorination, including its toxicity, its corrosive properties, and the potential for creating carcinogenic by-products like trihalomethanes.

To be clear, we believe that the commissioner has done an admirable job here. He has always been forthcoming about the issues surrounding the LTCs, and has not hesitated to meet us at our offices when we have asked. We must ensure, however, that this represents the floor, and not the ceiling, of DEP's engagement on the topic. Our districts must have a greater seat at the table in this discussion.

Our local waterways are a true asset for our communities citywide, and in an era when our most fundamental environmental laws are under attack, New York City must strive for the goals enshrined in the Clean Water Act. We hope that we can work together as partners in that endeavor.

Sincerely,



Costa Constantinides
Chair, Committee on Environmental Protection



Margaret S. Chin



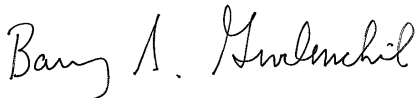
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Barry Grodenchik



Robert Holden



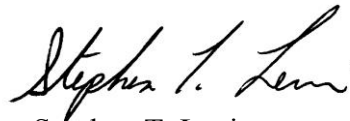
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Cc: Vincent Sapienza, P.E., Commissioner, New York City Department of Environmental Protection