

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE LIVING WAGE BILL

Fair Wages For New Yorkers Act, Intro 251-A

December 19, 2011

- * Whereas the poverty rate has been increasing in New York City and has now risen to 20% of the City's population,
- * Whereas we believe that government should not support businesses that create poverty wage jobs,
- * Whereas every year New York City spends billions in taxpayer dollars to subsidize development and create jobs, with no wage standards for jobs created by these subsidies,
- * Whereas currently the city government allows taxpayer-supported companies to create low-wage jobs that drain the public coffers through expanded expense on public benefits,
- * Whereas the Fair Wages for New Yorkers Act will ensure that when public money is invested in private development, our communities will benefit from increased wages and improved working conditions,
- * Whereas the bill would require developers that receive major taxpayer-funded subsidies to pay their employees a living wage of \$10 an hour with benefits, or \$11.50 without, for the jobs they create,
- * Whereas providing a living wage for some of the city's lowest paid workforce is critical to fighting poverty and rebuilding New York's middle class,
- * Whereas other cities have found that such safeguards have not slowed growth or prevented projects from moving forward,

Therefore Be It Resolved that Downtown Independent Democrats calls upon the New York City Council to pass and the Mayor to enact the Fair Wages For New Yorkers Act, Intro 251-A immediately.

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CC:

- Hon. Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor of the City of New York – [mayor@nyc.gov](mailto:mayor@nyc.gov)
- Hon. Christine C. Quinn, Speaker of the City Council, – [quinn@council.nyc.ny.us](mailto:quinn@council.nyc.ny.us)
- Hon. Margaret Chin, Member of the City Council, - [mchin@council.nyc.ny.us](mailto:mchin@council.nyc.ny.us)
- Hon. Rosie Mendez, Member of the City Council, - [rmendez@council.nyc.gov](mailto:rmendez@council.nyc.gov)
- Hon. Keith L. T. Wright, NY County Democratic Leader - [manhattandems@gmail.com](mailto:manhattandems@gmail.com)
- Ava Farkas, Living Wage NYC - [livingwagenyc@gmail.com](mailto:livingwagenyc@gmail.com)

## OCCUPY WALL STREET

Downtown Independent Democrats is the oldest and largest progressive Democratic organization in Lower Manhattan and has represented New York City's Financial District for 40 years. We have been committed to social justice and equality as well as to the general improvement of the quality of life of Lower Manhattan for that entire time.

In light of these two missions, the Downtown Independent Democrats:

- Shares the Occupy Wall Street Movement's grievances on the growing and unsustainable economic inequality in the United States.
- Endorses Occupy Wall Street's call for increased regulation and accountability for the financial services sector, including reinstatement of legislation similar to the Glass-Steagall Act. The DID recognizes that a robust, dynamic, stable and well regulated financial services sector is essential to the life of our neighborhood, our city and our country.
- Commends the OWS organizers for their outreach to community members on quality of life and noise concerns, while calling upon them to improve on this front especially in the area of drumming as well as to continue their engagement with our neighbors.
- Recognizes the NYPD's difficult and important role in maintaining public safety and calls upon them to use maximum restraint when dealing with non-violent political protest.

The people - united – will never be defeated.

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**Approved: DID Meeting October 7 2011**

## ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL UPDATE & DEMAND FOR A FULL-SERVICE HOSPITAL DOWNTOWN

Background: Downtown NYC, has seen a 91% increase in residents in 10 years, thousands of people work downtown, the 9-11 Memorial will have millions of visitors, and yet downtown has no full-service hospital since St. Vincent's closed. The former St. Vincent's site is slated for luxury condo development.

District Leader Keen Berger and Village Independent Democrats president Jonathan Geballe informed attendees of the Live & Learn Coalition. The Coalition is demanding that plans for the St. Vincent's hospital site include affordable housing, true public space, address school needs (Morton Street site) and limit height and bulk. Community Board 2 Full Board meeting is October 20th.

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb2/html/calendar/calendar.shtml>

\*\* D.I.D. reaffirmed its former position and further resolved:

Downtown Independent Democrats reiterates its strong support for a full service hospital at the site of the old St. Vincent's, as laid out in our June 2, 2010 resolution calling on the City Planning Commission, Community Board 2 and the New York City Council to zone the land under the old St. Vincent's Hospital exclusively for community hospital use – and pledge not to allow any variances in the absence of a full service hospital.

DID further reiterates our long-standing position that any and all residential development in Lower Manhattan and surrounding neighborhoods should address the shortages of affordable housing, public space and school seats in Manhattan south of 14th Street.

**Approved: DID Meeting October 7 2011**

### **NYU PLAN TO TAKE OVER GREENWICH VILLAGE**

Our public officials must step in to stop New York University's non-contextual mega-plan to take over Greenwich Village and Washington Square Park. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Uniformed Land Process (ULURP) is beginning. The flawed procedure puts severe disadvantage on the public to fight against a well-connected and endowed institution. NYU's large revenue to our media further impacts the quid pro quo with protecting the community.

Thousands of people in the community already know how inappropriate NYU's plans are. We see this before the ULURP process starts and so should our elected officials. We ask our officials to step in now and mediate better alternatives.

NYU has been a big bully for decades, ignoring deed restrictions and not fulfilling promises to the community. The institution continually states they will do better. If this were a probation hearing, the panel would say time and time again - sorry, come back when you have proven your rehabilitation.

NYU has a worldwide presence in far-flung places from Shanghai to Dubai. Their argument that they must continue to build in Greenwich Village is weak. They have expanded in Brooklyn and have cited Governors Island, yet will not consider 5 WTC or numerous locations further downtown that are 15 minutes away.

NYU did not expand in Paris because city planners did not agree to non-contextual plans. Our NYC City Planning Agency must raise the bar accordingly and change from the "reactive" agency they are and work with our elected officials to be the "proactive" agency they should be.

We must not let NYU destroy a residential neighborhood with its rich, vibrant history. It is a birthplace of grassroots activism, bohemian culture, a start of the LGBT movement and a tourist destination.

Washington Square Park is a park for all, not for NYU to co-opt the park and the surrounding area for its own use.

Robert Moses did wonderful things for New York. He also made grave mistakes which the public successfully fought against. The public defeated him on the highway through Washington Square Park and the Broome St./Lower Manhattan elevated expressway.

NYU has done similar for New York. Academic excellence, creation of jobs and brain power are of great benefit. But like Robert Moses, NYU is not infallible in its planning.

The major changes from residential to commercial zoning, the high-scale development, loss of green strips and the co-opting of Washington Square Park and surrounding sites is not in the public interest.

We request our elected officials support those who elected them and step in to ensure NYU seeks better alternatives.

**Approved: DID Meeting February 24 2011**

## **D.I.D. RESOLUTION ON REDISTRICTING REFORM**

### **FEBRUARY 24, 2011**

Whereas New York State's redistricting process has in the past been used to entrench incumbent elected officials, stifle democratic competition and weaken the voice of communities and voters in our political process and

Whereas backroom redistricting deals often lead to the fragmenting of community representation as can be seen in our communities of Battery Park City and the East Village

Be it resolved that Downtown Independent Democrats hereby strongly calls upon our elected officials to support Governor Cuomo's proposal for a nonpartisan redistricting commission. DID encourages legislative districts that prioritize cohesive communities, minority representation, geographic compactness and have a maximum population variation of 1% (as opposed to 5% in the current plan).

DID also encourages the New York City Council to follow a similar nonpartisan, community focused model in its own redistricting process.

Cc: Governor Andrew Cuomo

Cc: State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver

Cc: State Assembly Member Deborah Glick

Cc: State Senator Daniel Squadron

Cc: Mayor Michael Bloomberg

Cc: City Council Speaker Christine Quinn

Cc: City Council Member Margaret Chin

Cc: City Council Member Rosie Mendez

## **SUPPORT OF TENANT'S RIGHTS**

### **\*CALL FOR NYS LEGISLATURE TO ENACT SAFEGUARDS AGAINST UNSCRUPULOUS LANDLORDS & ATTORNEYS USING THE COURTS TO FINANCIALLY BANKRUPT RENT STABILIZED/CONTROLLED TENANTS**

The Downtown Independent Democrats (DID) supports Tenant's Rights and calls on the NYS Legislature to enact safeguards, including punitive and criminal sanctions, for protection against of unlawful evictions taking place under the auspices of a frivolous legal proceedings.

Added safeguards such as harassment protection are helpful, but do not go far enough. The relatively small fines are no match for the devastating legal fees and years of litigation that tenants are faced with to protect their rights.

Punitive and criminal sanctions should be sought from landlords AND attorneys where it can be shown that eviction cases are either retaliation for asserting rights and/or a clear pattern specifically to evict tenants to achieve market rate or higher rents.

DID further requests that a data base be established by an appropriate administrative agency to keep records of landlords with regard to eviction proceedings. Such a database will be telling of any planned and/or contrived and/or repeated pattern of tenant harassment.

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