



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Brooklyn Electeds, Caregivers, Community Rally to Support Lich and Suny Downstate

DANIEL L. SQUADRON January 25, 2013

| ISSUE: **HEALTH, SUNY (STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK), LABOR, HIGHER EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE**

Broad Coalition of Brooklyn Elected Officials Urge Long-Term Plan to Keep All Campuses Open

BROOKLYN – Today, a broad coalition of Brooklyn elected officials joined 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, the New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA), nurses and caregivers, and community members to rally in support of SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Long Island College Hospital (LICH), and the hospital's other affiliates – which are vital to Brooklyn's already-underserved residents.

Last week, an audit released by the New York State Comptroller's office made clear that there is a fiscal crisis at SUNY Downstate and its affiliated institutions. The elected officials are arguing that the potential closure of any campus is unacceptable, and that SUNY must develop a stabilization plan that provides a long-term solution to preserve critical diversity in medical education, quality healthcare, and good jobs for Brooklyn and the entire state.

Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez, State Senator Daniel Squadron, Assemblymember Joan Millman, Councilmembers Stephen Levin and Diana Reyna, and representatives of Borough President Marty Markowitz, Senator Velmanette Montgomery, and Councilmember Brad Lander hosted the rally outside LICH this morning.

The rally came alongside letters from Brooklyn's federal, state, and city elected officials in support of a plan that preserves Downstate and all of its affiliates.

"With the understanding that closing down any campus is completely unacceptable, we urge SUNY to develop a stabilization plan that [preserves Downstate and its affiliates] and

provides a long-term solution for Brooklyn's neighborhoods and the entire state," the elected officials wrote.

The letter from Brooklyn's congressional representatives was signed by Congressmembers Nydia Velázquez, Yvette Clarke, and Hakeem Jeffries. The letter from the borough's state and city elected officials was signed by State Senators Daniel Squadron, Kevin Parker, Martin Malave Dilan, Diane Savino, Martin Golden, John Sampson, Eric Adams, and Velmanette Montgomery; Assemblymembers Joan Millman, Alan Maisel, Joseph Lentol, Peter Abbate, James Brennan, Alec Brook-Krasny, and Felix Ortiz; Borough President Marty Markowitz; and Councilmembers Stephen Levin, Brad Lander, Jumaane Williams, Diana Reyna, Domenic Recchia, Vincent Gentile, David Greenfield, Letitia James, Lew Fidler, and Mathieu Eugene.

"We must protect the vital healthcare services that Long Island College Hospital provides to Brooklyn residents. LICH is a safety net hospital that serves seniors, working families and vulnerable patient populations. All other options should be thoroughly explored and exhausted before even considering the possibility of closure, especially since the Medicaid Redesign Team recommended that LICH stay open. LICH is also a large employer in Brooklyn, and its closing would result in the loss of thousands of good jobs, which could be a blow to the local economy. The caregivers of 1199SEIU will do everything in our power to make sure this disastrous closure is avoided and we develop alternative solutions that keep LICH's crucial healthcare services and good jobs in our community," said George Gresham, President of 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East.

"I've been working for LICH for 28 years caring for patients in this community and across Brooklyn," said Sonia Taylor, RN. "Our hospital is in critical condition and our patients need us now more than ever. I'm fighting to save LICH for my patients."

###