



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Co-Sponsoring Legislation to Protect the Character of our Communities

BRAD HOYLMAN March 4, 2014

I am pleased to co-sponsor Senate Bill 1771, introduced by Senator Kenneth Lavalle (R - Long Island), that grants municipalities the authority to restrict the growth of formula retail, or “chain stores.” These businesses have steadily infiltrated communities across the state leading to the erosion of the character and identity of historic neighborhoods. We have certainly seen this on the Lower East Side/East Village, where 7-Elevens have replaced bodegas, a Starbucks displaced the original home of The Bean, and the East Village Community Coalition (EVCC) has counted more than 60 chain stores throughout the neighborhood.

I can't overstate the importance of patronizing our independent, small businesses. However, to protect them and maintain the retail diversity that makes the Lower East Side/East Village unique, we also need the means to keep the mass market chains out. Senate Bill 1771 would expressly allow the enactment of local zoning laws to regulate formula retail -- as long as the restrictions are enacted according to a comprehensive plan and for a public purpose, like preserving a neighborhood's historic character.

I appreciate the EVCC's strong support for Senate Bill 1771 and its companion, Assembly Bill 1216, which is co-sponsored by Assembly Member Deborah Glick. I will continue to work towards its ultimate passage.