



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

Kavanagh, Lander Call on NYC to Revoke 'Essential' Status for Construction at Former LICH Site

BRIAN KAVANAGH April 17, 2020

| ISSUE: [CONSTRUCTION](#), [COVID-19](#), [ESSENTIAL WORKERS](#)



On April 17, Senator Kavanagh and City Council Member Lander wrote to the New York City Department of Buildings urging them to revoke the "essential status" for construction by development company Fortis at the campus of the former Long Island College Hospital (LICH). The text of the legislators' letter is below; the original may be viewed via the link above.

April 17, 2020

Kazimir Vilenchik, P.E.
Brooklyn Borough Commissioner
New York City Department of Buildings (DOB)
210 Joralemon Street, 8th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Borough Commissioner Vilenchik:

We are writing to request that all construction being done by the developer Fortis on the campus of the former Long Island College Hospital (LICH) not be granted any essential work status. This includes the work at 354 and 336 Hicks Street, which we have learned has been granted essential status already. The only work on this site that we believe to be essential under the Governors' parameters is NYU Langone, which is currently constructing an Emergency Room with additional bed space.

It is our understanding that Fortis has received a Certificate of Authorization from the DOB to be granted "essential status" during the New York State PAUSE (which, as you know, includes the pausing of non-essential construction). We believe that this "essential status" ought not to have been granted, since this site is primarily for the construction of condominium apartments. Although the site plans include a private elementary school at the base of the campus, at this moment, we are not aware of any executed lease that the developer has with a school and, therefore, the school should not be considered when evaluating essential status.

We request that the DOB revoke the certificate of authorization for this site, and, in the interest of public health, not allow any construction on Fortis' campus of the former LICH (barring emergency repairs or safety issues for the workers or neighbors.)

Thank you for your full attention to this matter. If you have any other questions or would like to discuss our request, please contact either of us directly or via Megan Flynn, in Council Member Lander's Office, at mflynn@council.nyc.gov or Greer Mayhew, in Senator Kavanagh's office, at gmayhew@nysenate.gov.

Sincerely,

NYC Council Member Brad Lander

NYS Senator Brian Kavanagh