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**TESTIMONY OF STATE SENATOR BRAD HOYLMAN
TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL REGARDING THE PROPOSED
APPLICATION NO. C 170116 ZSM (27 East 4th Street)**

September 17, 2018

Thank you Council Chair Moya and Council Committee members for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the application for a text amendment to the Zoning Resolution to allow construction of an eight-story hotel at 27 East 4th Street. I represent New York State's 27th Senate District, which includes the neighborhoods of East Village, Greenwich Village, Midtown/East Midtown, Clinton/Hell's Kitchen, Chelsea, Columbus Circle, Times Square, Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village, the Lower East Side, and the Upper West Side. I join Community Board 2, Manhattan, Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, the Historic Districts Council, the Merchant's House Museum, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, and residents in opposing the current application.

The application by Kalodop II Park Corp. (the "developer") is for a proposed eight-story hotel at 29 East 4th Street, directly adjacent to the Merchant's House Museum (the "Museum"), which threatens the Museum's very existence. The Museum was built in 1832 and is a federal, state and city landmark. Studies by architects, and structural and soil engineers demonstrate that the construction of the proposed hotel could pose massive risks to this fragile city treasure. In good faith, those at the Museum, with the help of design professionals, have been attempting to eliminate the risks to the infrastructure, but the developer's design team has made zero progress on protecting the structural integrity of the museum. Any damage caused by the applicant could result in temporary or permanent closure, stifled revenue, displaced staff and personnel, massive storage costs for this city-owned public resource or potentially destroy the Museum altogether.

Most egregiously the proposed zoning amendment prioritizes private real estate interests over what's best for the community. Zoning text amendments of this type, known as "spot zoning," are illegal. Moreover, the application does not prove credible land use considerations for its proposal; it excludes evidence the property could not be well-used as a developed one-story building with full lot coverage. But perhaps more importantly the community plainly rejects this hotel. At nearly 100 feet tall, this hotel would loom over all the buildings on the block and erode the character of the neighborhood. Furthermore, the developer has a viable alternative at 403 Lafayette, which the developer already owns, which would provide for a larger hotel, which would not require a text amendment, and most critically, which would not imperil the Museum.

I respectfully urge you to support the the preservation of this unique public museum and reject this application for zoning text amendment and special permits. Thank you for your consideration.