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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

**Testimony of Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Public Hearing of the Landmarks Preservation Commission Regarding LP-2574,
Stonewall Inn, 51-53 Christopher Street, Manhattan
June 23, 2015**

Good morning, Chair Srinivasan, Commissioners, and members of the public. Happy Pride Month to you all. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the Stonewall Inn. My name is Jesús Pérez, and I am delivering this testimony on behalf of Manhattan Borough President, Gale A. Brewer. Any day now, the Supreme Court will rule on whether gay and lesbian people have a Constitutionally protected right to marry the person they love. I, for one, hope that we will have much to celebrate when that decision finally comes down. In a way, the long march to this day began at the Stonewall Inn.

As you know, cities all over the world take to the streets every year to celebrate Gay Pride in late June because of the events that took place at the Stonewall Inn 46 years ago. The designation of this site as a New York City landmark would represent a watershed for preservation in our city, as it would be the first site recognized in New York City, not for its architectural significance, but rather for its historical and cultural value to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Community. This site has already been recognized for its significance at the national level as a National Historic Landmark. And I also support further recognizing the Stonewall Inn with National Historic Park status.

Landmarks are special—they are buildings, sites, or neighborhoods that represent significant architectural, cultural, or heritage markers in our city's history. Landmarks link us to the past, memorializing our roots, and providing the architectural diversity a great city like ours deserves. We do a good job preserving the beautiful, but we must redouble our efforts to identify and preserve our culturally and historically significant places. In a city rich with architectural icons, we must not lose sight of the value of the varied cultural and historical heirlooms found among our city's storied landscape—for it is this variety that makes our building environment even richer.

The Stonewall Inn may not be the most architecturally significant building this Commission will ever consider, but the events that transpired in that little corner of our city inspired a movement, the impact of which reaches across our nation and across the world. This building is significant and special. That is why I am pleased to testify today in favor of the LPC finally designating its first landmark in recognition of the LGBT community with the Stonewall Inn.