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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

March 16, 2016

Maria Torres-Springer
President
New York City Economic Development Corporation
110 William Street
New York, NY 10038

Dear Ms. Torres-Springer,

I write regarding the Citywide Ferry plan. I have several concerns about the process and potential outcome of the project. We received a colorful presentation of the new citywide service on March 9th, with maps and renderings of new boats and landing areas. Missing from the presentation were details regarding the bidding and awarding of a contract for this service, its economic impact, and financial information on the anticipated subsidy.

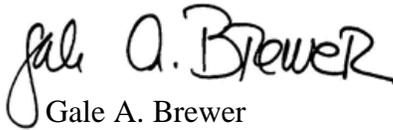
I learned recently that New York Water Taxi, which provides ferry service around Manhattan and into parts of Brooklyn, has issued a memo to its employees that this plan will force them to shut down their service. They disclosed that if Citywide Ferry services were to be run by another company, no other private ferry service would be able to compete with the \$2.75 per ride fare that will be subsidized by the City. New Yorkers and tourists alike will surely take advantage of the Citywide Ferry service, making it impossible for an independent company to compete and maintain its existing ridership.

I am also concerned about the future of the South Street Seaport Museum if New York Water Taxi ceases its operations there. The Museum is currently generating close to \$600,000 annually in revenue from the lease that New York Water Taxi has on Pier 16, and the Museum informed my office that they were close to finalizing a new lease that would generate \$1 million annually. This would be a loss of revenue that the Museum could not sustain. Does EDC have a financial plan to prevent the Museum from closing its doors as a result of lost revenue? You know how hard we are all working to support this institution, and a loss of income such as the one from this lease is devastating.

Another key concern is the 200 workers currently employed by New York Water Taxi whose jobs will be lost - a larger number, perhaps, than those in the tourist helicopter industry, which I know EDC fought hard to protect. How many new jobs will be provided under this new contract to offset those who are let go from New York Water Taxi? What assistance will EDC make available to those whose industry was disrupted by the City?

While I certainly support increasing ferry service, the predicted loss of jobs, and the foreseeable harm to New York Water Taxi and to the Museum must be addressed. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gale A. Brewer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "G".

Gale A. Brewer
Manhattan Borough President