



## New York City Environmental Justice Alliance

166A 22nd Street, Brooklyn, NY 11232 | [www.NYC-EJA.org](http://www.NYC-EJA.org)

On the ground – and at the table

### **New York City Environmental Justice Alliance testimony to Brooklyn Community Board 7 on Proposed Industry City Rezoning**

My name is Jalisa Gilmore and I am here to testify in opposition to the proposed Industry City rezoning on behalf of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance. Founded in 1991, NYC-EJA is a non-profit citywide membership network linking 11 grassroots organizations from low-income neighborhoods and communities of color in their fight for environmental justice.

In 2010, NYC-EJA launched the Waterfront Justice Project, New York City's first citywide community resiliency campaign. The Waterfront Justice Project began as an advocacy campaign to reform waterfront zones designated as the Significant Maritime and Industrial Areas (SMIAs.) These were zones created by the NYC Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP) to encourage the protection and siting of industrial and maritime uses along the waterfront. Additionally, the Waterfront Justice Project seeks to build climate resilience along the working waterfront, in communities like Sunset Park – which is home to the largest SMIA in NYC – while promoting local industrial business. The proposed Industry City rezoning not only goes against the community concerns, but is in opposition to building a truly climate resilient waterfront.

New York City needs a diverse economy that supports working and middle class families. In Sunset Park, industrial sector jobs offer the best paid jobs, but currently only less than 17% of Industry City is occupied by manufacturing uses, offering limited opportunities for families to access well-paid working class jobs. Promoting and preserving industrial jobs and manufacturing zoning in New York City is a key component of creating a resilient and thriving economy and Industry City threatens this by building luxury retail and commercial uses on the industrial waterfront.

The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), which legislated commitments to reduce green house gas emissions by 85% in NYS by 2050 is expected to create over 150,000 new green jobs. These new climate jobs need industrial infrastructure to ensure local benefits and sustainable economic development. Sunset Park has the opportunity to lead a Just Transition as a frontline community that is already facing the impacts of a changing climate.

Lastly, The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) does not adequately evaluate concerns around historic chemical contamination and current chemical uses in the proposed site for rezoning. The review of regulatory environmental databases as part of the City Environmental Quality Review was performed with 2012 and 2017 data which is considered data outside of the 6-month requirement. The DEIS

recognizes environmental contamination as part of the SMIA's history but lacks sufficient information around specific potential pathways for chemical exposure or information regarding the remediation of existing chemical contamination. Lastly, as documented by NYC-EJA's Waterfront Justice Project, the proposed area is vulnerable to chemical dislodgement from climate change and extreme weather; this should be considered in the final EIS, as is required by the City's Waterfront Revitalization Plan.

NYC-EJA endorses a balanced approach to waterfront policy that bolsters waterfront communities by promoting economic growth while protecting the environment and advancing equity. We envision innovative waterfront industrial regulations and zoning that set the standard for environmentally conscious development while enhancing community resiliency. The Green Resilient Industrial District or GRID developed by UPROSE and the Collective for Community, Culture, and the Environment does just that, is rooted in social equity and climate justice, and is a superior alternative to the proposed Industry City rezoning.