



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 14
FLATBUSH–MIDWOOD COMMUNITY DISTRICT
810 East 16th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11230

ERIC ADAMS
Borough President

ALVIN M. BERK
Chairman

SHAWN CAMPBELL
District Manager

To: Councilmember Kallos, Chairman Committee on Governmental Operations
Members, Committee on Governmental Operations

Re: Thursday, April 30, 2015 New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations Hearing - Intro 585

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in relation to Intro 585, which would impose term limits on newly-appointed community board members.

I hereby submit that this Intro should be withdrawn, for the following reasons:

- The need for term limits has not been demonstrated; community board members already are subject to periodic non-reappointment, and to removal for cause.
- Many board members continue to grow in value to a board and its community beyond twelve years; loss or interruption of their services could hurt the community's voice in governmental decisions.
- Term limits could influence why some people join community boards, increasing the incentive for them to view board membership as a career credential. This might influence how they vote on matters before the board, including those affecting the board's own welfare.
- Term limits could subtly shift the relationship between the volunteer members of a board and its district manager, who is not term-limited.
- Term limits would hurt a community board's institutional memory.
- Term limits would reduce the pool of candidates for board membership.
- Term limits would infringe on the prerogatives of future borough presidents and constrain their authority.
- An argument for consistency with the existence of term limits for elected City officials fails to acknowledge that community boards are advisory and that their members are unpaid volunteers.

Respectfully submitted,
April 30, 2015

Alvin M. Berk
Chair
Brooklyn Community Board 14