



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007

April 25, 2017

The Honorable Melissa Mark-Viverito
Speaker
New York City Council
City Hall
New York, New York 10007

Dear Speaker Mark-Viverito:

I write to clarify the position of the Administration with respect to the effect and implementation of Int. No. 359-A & Int. No.886-A. Under these two bills, the advisory board is intended to serve a vital role in facilitating community action and participation in agency-decision making and promoting environmental justice in the City's programs and policies. I fully support the goals of these bills to address longstanding injustices within the city. However, I am advised by my counsel that the provisions of these bills that require the interagency working group to respond to recommendations and other communications of the advisory board curtail the powers of the mayoralty due to the structure of this board, which includes appointees of the Speaker serving for terms.

In particular, counsel advises that such a role for Council appointees in executive branch actions cannot be formalized without a voter referendum under the current structure of the City Charter. While these requirements are not binding as a technical legal matter, I am directing the interagency working group and other city agencies as necessary to work closely with the advisory board and fully consider its recommendations in developing the environmental justice study and the environmental justice plan.

Furthermore, I will ensure that the advisory board and the communities it represents have a critical voice in the work city agencies undertake pursuant to the intent of this historically significant legislation. I look forward to working collaboratively with the Council to implement these bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill de Blasio".

Bill de Blasio
Mayor

cc: Jonathan Ettricks, Director, Legislative Documents Unit, New York City Council
Michael McSweeney, City Clerk of the City of New York