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To Whom it May Concern:

The Bowery has a rich, diverse, unique history and has always had an important role in the City of New York. The City of New York has recognized the historic significance of the Bowery by protecting the west side of the Bowery in the Special Little Italy District and the NoHo Historic District. The East Village/ Lower East Side Rezoning Plan will now protect the area just east of the Bowery. However, the east side of the Bowery, itself, and portions of the west side, not protected by the historic NoHo District, the Special Little Italy District or the recent East Village/Lower East Side rezoning have not been rezoned.

This unprotected zone is a gateway to multiple historic districts. Development of new buildings within this unprotected zone is rampant. Likewise, uses have been changing with a distinct leaning toward hotels and nightlife establishments. Most of the development is "as-of-right," meaning that it does not require a special permit or variance. Developers are simply taking advantage of existing zoning bonuses and the transfer of air rights; therefore, environmental studies are not required.

New York City has always been home to residents of diverse income levels. There are many low- and middle-income residents who live on the Bowery in tenements and single-occupancy hotels. These residents should be protected from harassment and displacement. In addition, permanent affordable housing should be created to insure that people of diverse income levels continue to call the Bowery home.

I call upon interested stakeholders in this immediate area and adjoining neighborhoods to come together with the Bowery Alliance of Neighbors to discuss the potential rezoning of the Bowery.

Very truly yours,

Alan J. Gerson