

## **Resolution in opposition to Intro 585 which would amend the City Charter to impose term limits on Community Board Members**

Whereas, Community Board members are volunteers and spend an enormous amount of time serving their communities. They must learn a great deal not only about their neighborhoods but about the zoning codes, local laws and agency policies and service delivery that the Boards address.

Whereas, Board members must acquire knowledge and expertise so that they can play important roles in negotiating with developers, assisting constituents and tackling community problems related to traffic, sanitation, safety, business development and interests that impact all City residents.

Whereas, these skills take a long time to acquire, develop and refine. This is acutely relevant when there are large, long term projects that can take years to implement. Coupled with intricate zoning changes and negotiations with developers and city agencies, it is those Board members with long term and intricate knowledge of their communities that can represent and fight for the Board and the interests of the community most effectively.

Whereas, The Borough Presidents appoint community board members for two year terms and each Borough President is elected every four years for a maximum of two terms or eight years. This in and of itself amounts to a term limit as the Borough Presidents are under no obligation to reappoint an individual beyond a two year term. Natural attrition also occurs yearly with current members leaving for reasons related to their personal lives or increased responsibilities outside of their Community Board work. Membership is not automatic. Board members take the responsibilities of their tasks seriously and are held accountable for their attendance, active participation and lack of conflict of interest.

Whereas, there is a need to continually provide mechanisms for new and increased civic participation. Community Boards offer forums for community input and engagement, not only through its public sessions but often through Public Membership and committee work. While there is a need to encourage greater citizen participation in the work of Community Boards, therefore there is not a need to impose term limits on Community Board members.