

GREATER HARLEM
COALITION

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Commissioner Arlene Gonzalez-Sanchez, MS, LMSW
Office Of Addiction Services And Supports (OASAS)
1450 Western Avenue
Albany, New York 12203-3526

October 26, 2021

Re: Harlem's Disproportionate Share of Drug Treatment Facilities

Dear Commissioner González-Sánchez,

Our community is contacting you again, to urgently request for OASAS to systematically de-construct the concentration of drug treatment facilities in Harlem & East Harlem.

OASAS's policy of allowing the unfettered proliferation of drug treatment facilities in our neighborhood, has been catastrophic to the fabric of life in Harlem. Every day, our residents are subjected to intolerable conditions arising from the immense human traffic that OASAS-licensed facilities continually bring into our community. This policy of OASAS has violated the basic civil rights of Harlemites, and is part of a documented pattern of overt structural racism against our underprivileged black/brown & hispanic community.

Although our community remains deeply compassionate & supportive towards its residents who suffer from drug addiction (7.65% of OASAS OTP clients live in our community), we are outraged at the disproportionate share of New York's OTP's (19.92%) that have been sited in our neighborhood.

The severe effects of this highly disproportionate number of OTPs is evident in Harlem's online forums and Zoom conferences: frequent reports of drug dealers who come to the neighborhood every day to prey on drug addicts; men openly using drugs in front of children; men urinating & defecating on sidewalks; men who linger, congregate, and clog egress to subways and buses; schoolchildren walking alternate routes to their schools; local retailers who cannot conduct business; police departments that barely enforce the rule of law.

The news media has taken notice. The Wall Street Journal, CBS News, and other media outlets continue to highlight the acute effects of the high density of OTPs in Harlem:

"Harlem Residents Push Back Against Influx Of Drug-Treatment Providers"

(The Wall Street Journal) October 4th, 2018

“We Are Tired, We Are Fed Up’: Harlem Residents Say Addiction Treatment Programs Are Saturating Neighborhood” (CBS News) November 14, 2020

“Harlem Residents Say Area Is Oversaturated With Treatment Facilities, Causing Rise In Drug Use” (Spectrum News Channel 1) October 6, 2021

“Drug Users From Other Neighborhoods Come To Harlem For Methadone Clinics; Local Activists Worry For Neighborhood” (Pix 11 New York) October 12, 2021

“Many Harlem Residents Feel Besieged By Drug Treatment Centers” (Medium) October 16, 2021

“Harlem Facing ‘Public Health Crisis’ From Drug Use, Borough President Says” (Patch News) October 18, 2021

“Clicks, Clinics, and Commerce” (Manhattan Times) November 6th, 2019

“Vecinos De East Harlem Se Quejan Del Alto Numero De Clinicas Para Tratar Adicciones” (Noticias NY 1) October 14, 2021

“Addressing The Oversaturation Of Drug Clinics In Harlem” (Opinion Piece by Kristin Richardson Jordan, Presumptive NYC Council) October 27, 2020

“Residents Push Back Against Construction Of Methadone Clinic, Claim Harlem Is Oversaturated With Clinics” (Columbia Spectator) February 23, 2021

OASAS’s “packing” of OTPs in Harlem has shattered the liberty, economic mobility, and dignity of our community. We repeat our request for OASAS to:

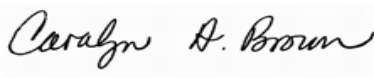
- 1) Systematically de-construct the density of OTP facilities in Harlem & East Harlem
- 2) Provide transparency & reporting on the deconstruction of the OTP network

Please contact Shawn Hill at (860) 398-0938 or tetshill@gmail.com. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Syderia Asberry-Chresfield.



Carolyn A. Brown PHD.



Shawn Hill

Founders of the Greater Harlem Coalition (an organization of 6,000 residents, businesses, and churches in Harlem. <https://greaterharlem.nyc/>)

cc: Manuel Mosquera, Director of Regional Operations
Trisha Schell-Guy, Acting General Counsel
Patricia Zuber-Wilson, Associate Commissioner
Pat Lincourt, Director
Connie Burke, Acting Associate Commissioner
Keith McCarthy, Associate Commissioner
Vittoria Parry, Fiscal Associate Commissioner
Dr. Marc Manseau, Medical Director
Peggy Bonneau, Director of Health Initiatives
Edison Alban, Director of Communications
Jannette Rondo, Director of Internal Communications
Sean M. Byrne, Deputy Commissioner
Robert A. Kent, General Counsel
Henri Williams, Director of Housing Services
Tracey Collins, Director, Government Affairs and Federal Policy
William F. Hogan, Associate Commissioner
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addictionmedicine@oasas.ny.gov

The Greater Harlem Coalition is comprised of the following tenant associations, churches, schools, businesses, cultural institutions, and retailers:

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| Block Association of West 118th Street | Clay |
| 100-168 West 121st Street Resident Block Association | Columbus Distributors |
| 118 Street Block Association | Compass Realty |
| 120th Street Block Association | Covington Realty Services |
| 124 East 117th Street Tenants Association | D and D Enterprise |
| 125th Street Business Improvement District | Dorrence Brooks Property Owners & Residents Association |
| 128th Street Block Association | DR3J Consultants |
| 1775 Houses Tenants Association | Edward Jones |
| 314 - Pizza, Pasta & Wine Bar | Elaine Perry Associates |
| 97-98 Lexington & Park Ave. Neighbors | Ephesus SDA Church |
| A. Philip Randolph Square Neighborhood Alliance | Eye Cycle |
| A.K. Houses Tenants Association | Freeland Liquor |
| Advocates 4 The Community | Friendly Hands Ministry |
| Asberry and Associates, LLC | Friends of the Harriett Tubman Monument |
| ATAPE Group, LLC | Future Giants Organization |
| CentralCasting Solutions LLC | Gastiaburo + Stella Real Estate |
| Chaiwali | Ginjan Cafe |
| Chocolat Restaurant & Bar | Graham Court Renters Association |
| CIVITAS | Greater Calvary Baptist Church |
| | Hakimian Organization |

Halstead Manhattan
Hamilton Terrace Block Association
Harlem American
Harlem Arts Foundation
Harlem Business Alliance
Harlem Lacrosse
Harlem Lofts
Harlem Neighborhood Block Association
Harlem Park to Park
Harlem Properties Inc.
Harlem Shake
Harlem Wine Gallery
HarlemHome
HarlemHoopz
Il Cafe Latte 1
Il Cafe Latte 2
Indian Summer Harlem
Jacqueline Allmond Cuisine INC
Le Petit Parisien
Lenox to 5th 124th Street Block Association
LenoxFive 127th Street Block Association
Lido
Malcolm Pharmacy
Mirada Home Owners Association
MoHo Dance
Mount Morris Park Community Improvement
Association
MXB United
Neighbors United of West 132nd Street
Block Association
New 123rd Street Block Association (Lenox
- 7th)
New York Council for Housing Development
Fund Companies, Inc.
Open Hands Legal Services
Paris Blues Jazz Club
Pativity, LLC
Progressives Educating New Yorkers, Inc.
R. Kenyatta Punter and Associates
Rubys Vintage
Sayers and Doers
Silent Procession Nyc4pr
Silicon Harlem
SottoCasa Pizzeria
StreetSquash
Sugar Hill Concerned Neighbors Group
Super Nice Coffee and Bakery
T.H.E. Works
Union Settlement House
United New Church of Christ
Upholstery Lab

Uptown Democratic Club
Uptown Townhouse
Valeries Signature Salon
Virgo Hardware
West 119th Block Association
West 121st Street Block Association
West 126th Street Block Association
West 130th Street Homeowners Association
West 132nd Street Block Association
West 135th Street Block Association
West 136th Street Block Association
Wynn Optics