

Testimony by Roberto S. Garcia, Chairman of Bronx Community Board #2.

Good morning. I am Roberto S. Garcia, Chairman of Bronx Community Board # 2, a member of the Southern Boulevard BID Steering Committee and the current Executive Director of the Jerome Ave-East Gun Hill Road BID in the Norwood section of the Bronx.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the creation of the SOBO BID.

The SOBO BID concept came about because of the lack of economic development and commercial revitalization programs along the Southern Blvd commercial district. Property owners, merchants, shoppers, elected officials and Community Board #2 identified the need to improve quality of life conditions while providing marketing and attracting customers and quality stores that would provide much needed goods and services.

Community Board #2 working with the Hunts Point EDC, began to quickly mobilize property owners and merchants to explore the creation of the SOBO BID. From this need we also executed a very successful demonstration pilot project, A Taste of the BID, which for 1 month provided sanitation services, marketing and other benefits to the commercial district, fostered support and demonstrated first hand how effective and needed a BID is on Southern Blvd.

As our Community Board continues to go through an incredible positive transformation and renaissance that include the creation of over 2,000 units of housing and coop projects in the past 2 years, the creation of new schools, 4 new parks and other community amenities, residents now need a business district they could shop at for all there needs.

Throughout the City, BID's have helped transform many struggling commercial districts into thriving vibrant and safe business districts.

I have no doubt that the much needed SOBO BID will add to the vibrancy and positive resurgence that the Hunt's Point, Longwood and Morrisania communities are witnessing.

I thank you for your attention, consideration and support for the creation of the Southern Blvd BID.