



careers
businesses
neighborhoods

TESTIMONY

BY

COMMISSIONER KENNY MINAYA

NYC DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES

BEFORE

THE COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

OF THE

NYC COUNCIL

MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026

Introduction

Good afternoon, Chair Thomas-Henry, Chair Lee, and members of the New York City Council Committee on Small Business. My name is Kenny Minaya, and I serve as Commissioner of the New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS). I am joined here today by First Deputy Commissioner Michael Forte and Chief of Staff Haris Khan. With us in spirit are over 300 SBSers who are out and about in the city, serving New Yorkers as we speak. I am pleased to appear before you to discuss our Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget and begin the first of many conversations on how we can partner together to support New York City's small businesses.

Last Monday, I took office as the first Dominican American to serve as SBS Commissioner. This once-in-a-generation opportunity to deliver for small businesses under Mayor Mamdani is deeply meaningful to me. My family has owned and operated a bakery for the past 42 years, and I grew up watching my parents hustle and wear many hats. They were the accountant, chef, front-of-house, and HR rolled into one. As SBS Commissioner, my job is simple: make it easier for small businesses like theirs to open, operate and succeed. Mayor Mamdani has made clear that supporting small businesses is central to his affordability agenda. Just 14 days into the administration, he issued Executive Order 11 to cut red tape and help businesses open faster. That commitment reflects a simple truth: when small businesses thrive, they create jobs and strengthen our neighborhoods.

Preliminary Budget Overview

To support SBS's charter responsibilities and Mayor Mamdani's affordability agenda, SBS's FY27 Preliminary Budget stands at \$185.5 million with an authorized headcount of 397 employees. Approximately 38%, or \$70.2 million, represents pass-through funding for other city entities, including the NYC Economic Development Corporation at \$30.6 million, NYC Tourism + Conventions at \$23.1 million, and the Trust for Governor's Island at \$16.5 million. We serve as a funding conduit to these other City entities, and thus, do not spend or manage any of those funds. The remaining \$115.3 million or 62% of the FY27 Preliminary Budget is allocated for SBS' core programming. Let me tell you about some of the small businesses we have helped.

Support for Business Owners

Gina and Giselle Chung had long had entrepreneurial aspirations. The two sisters started out by operating an empanada business in Queens, taking online sales and marketing through WhatsApp. But like many businesses picking up traction and a loyal customer base, they wanted to expand and grow with a storefront but did not know the next steps to take. SBS's NYC Business Express Service Team, also known as NYC BEST, stepped in and helped Giselle review her business model, learn about the required permits, apply for her Food Service Establishment Permit, and once she secured a location, receive an "A" grade from the Department of Health. Through coordinated guidance and continued follow-up, in less than four months, Ñañitas opened its doors in Woodside with all required permits.

Since inception, our NYC BEST team has saved small businesses more than \$60 million in fines and fees through compliance education, and in the last two years alone, SBS has connected small businesses to over \$120 million in financing to help grow their businesses. On my second day as Commissioner, I was proud to announce the citywide launch of our revamped NYC Future Fund program, that will provide \$80 million in financing to support nearly 100 small businesses annually. This one-of-a-kind loan program is designed for seasonal businesses with revenue-based repayments, so a tough winter doesn't put a small business under.

Support for M/WBEs

But financing alone isn't enough; entrepreneurs also need fair access to opportunity. At SBS, we support Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs), Local Business Enterprises and Emerging Business Enterprises grow through certification support, technical assistance, legal services, mentorship, and capacity building. We first met Kathy Chan in 2018 when she wanted to grow her business, Studio V Design + Planning. She identified city contracting as her next growth opportunity and joined our mentorship programing to gain the know-how needed to compete. After winning her first subcontract, Kathy continued to attend SBS resource fairs and took advantage of our QuickBooks for Construction Clinic to strengthen her firm's financial management.

The results speak for themselves. In Fiscal Year 2025 alone, the city awarded \$6.9 billion in contracts to certified firms like Kathy's, with a utilization rate of 36.4 – the highest in program history. And 75% of those firms used SBS services to successfully navigate the procurement process. Our work to connect entrepreneurs to these opportunities happens year-round through webinars, activations of our Mobile Outreach Unit, and large-scale events like the NYC Contracting Summit where we brought small businesses, particularly M/WBEs, and contracting agencies under one roof.

Support for Jobseekers and Employers

SBS also plays a crucial role in connecting New Yorkers to good, quality jobs. One such New Yorker contacted SBS for help after giving birth to her third child. Connie wanted to reenter the workforce in a role that would provide her the flexibility and wages to care for her children. SBS helped her train, certify, and apply for roles as a Home Health Aide. When she was unable to complete the computer-based trainings at home, SBS' Workforce1 Career Centers supplied her with space and resources. Due to these efforts, Connie was hired full-time. We are proud to have enabled Connie and so many more New Yorkers like her to achieve their career goals and support their families. Through our 18 Workforce1 Career Centers across the five boroughs, SBS offers jobseekers employment opportunities, career coaching, and free job training. In the last two fiscal years, SBS has placed nearly 45,000 New Yorkers in jobs and enrolled 14,000 in job trainings, with a focus on high-demand industries. The hires include 1,300 individuals with disabilities and 2,000 veterans and their spouses.

We also make sure we are meeting jobseekers where they are through our JobsNYC Hiring Halls. SBS delivers monthly hiring halls in neighborhoods with high unemployment rates to reach underserved New Yorkers. Since the start of 2024, SBS has served more than 16,000 New Yorkers at 55 hiring halls across all five boroughs. This effort has resulted in over 5,200 on-site interviews and 2,600 conditional job offers. This week, we are hosting a Career Panel & Jobs NYC Hiring Hall on March 27th in Queens and will be hosting SBS-focused Hiring Hall on March 31st to hire for our soon-to-be expanded NYC Business Express Service Team and other supportive units.

Support for Neighborhoods

Beyond entrepreneurship and employment, SBS supports neighborhood vitality through our oversight of New York City's 78 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), which collectively deliver more than \$216 million in services annually across nearly 300 miles of commercial corridors in all corners of the city. This past February, SBS joined Mayor Mamdani, Council Member Kayla Santosuosso, and the Alliance for Coney Island to celebrate the formation of the new Coney Island BID. The BID's creation culminates a decade-long effort in the neighborhood to foster neighborhood stewardship and local organizing through more than \$850,000 in grants. Since Fiscal Year 2025, SBS has disbursed nearly \$20 million in grants to fund similar merchant organizing, BID formation, and community revitalization

initiatives. SBS grants have also supported efforts to beautify New York City's public realm through creative neighborhood wayfinding, innovative lighting fixtures and other activities to increase foot traffic in our commercial corridors. In Councilmember Morano's district, the South Shore BID used its FY25 Small BID Grant to host its sold-out "Taste of the Towns Restaurant Crawl" event for the eighth consecutive year. In Councilmember Salaam's district, the Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement leveraged a three-year SBS Avenue NYC grant to create the Bradhurst Summer Festival, bringing together local vendors and community members to celebrate the neighborhood and its small businesses.

We are excited to release applications for our next round of grants in the coming weeks. We look forward to partnering with you to not only share these grant opportunities with local stakeholders, but also to continue supporting neighborhood development projects that create economic opportunities for businesses and communities.

Looking Forward

In closing, we are excited to continue building our partnership with the City Council to support small businesses, jobseekers, and commercial corridors. In the coming months, we are excited to expand SBS's NYC Business Express Service team and build our new Office of Street Vendor Services (SVS). This morning, City Hall and SBS announced the appointment of Carina Kaufman-Gutierrez, formerly Co-Director of the Street Vendor Project, as the inaugural Executive Director of the Office of Street Vendor Services. Her appointment comes four months ahead of schedule because we know our street vendors, the smallest of small businesses, cannot wait any longer. We also look forward to advancing economic justice for small businesses through Mayor Mamdani's Executive Order 11, which created the first-ever comprehensive inventory of all small business fines and fees, and charges us to streamline regulation, eliminate initial fees, reduce fines, and for SBS and DOF to explore an amnesty program for small businesses that pay their original fines. SBS is working closely with Deputy Mayor Su and our sister agencies to support this critical work which can fundamentally reset the relationship between small businesses and our city government.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and speak about our work. We look forward to continuing our partnership and are happy to answer any questions you may have for the agency.



City of New York Brooklyn Community Board 7

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Thursday, March 26, 2026

New York City Council
Committee on Small Business
250 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

Dear Committee Chair,

Community Board 7/Brooklyn would like to submit testimony asking the New York City Department of Small Business Services (NYC SBS) to reconsider its decision that threatens Southwest Brooklyn's industrial sector. While our board has taken no position on this proposal, our working waterfront is vital to the continued success and growth of our neighborhood, and the loss of this crucial service would irreparably harm our district.

For over 40 years, the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program has helped manufacturers and industrial businesses navigate real estate, permitting, regulatory challenges, and more — preserving thousands of good-paying local jobs. Now, the City is proposing to dismantle it entirely. This is not a transformation. It is an erasure.

Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing local residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few programs that help industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julio Peña III'.

Julio Peña III
Chairperson

FB: *BrooklynCB7* | Instagram: *BrooklynCB7* | Twitter/X: *BKCB7*
Serving Sunset Park and Windsor Terrace

Julio Peña III
Chairperson

Vacant
District Manager

Francis Yu
Director of Supermarket Access
Community Food Advocates
New York City Council Committee on Small Business
Hearing on the Development of the Office of Cooperative Economics
March 21, 2026

Good afternoon, Chair Thomas-Henry and members of the Committee:

My name is Francis Yu, Director of Supermarket Access at Community Food Advocates. On behalf of our organization and the coalition of partners working to advance equitable food access across New York City, thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony.

Community Food Advocates works to ensure all New Yorkers have access to healthy, affordable, and culturally affirming food. We lead research and coalition-building efforts focused on addressing systemic inequities across our food ecosystem including leading the fight for universal school meals, cafeteria modernization, and Good Food procurement in our public institutions. In the past few years, we have taken on the work of researching and advocating for equitable supermarket access—particularly in low-income and rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods where affordability, quality, and proximity remain persistent challenges.

I am writing to urge this Administration and the City Council to ensure that there is ample support for a cooperative ecosystem that is resourced, structured, and guided in a way that meaningfully strengthens the solidarity economy, particularly within the food sector.

First, I want to recognize the longstanding leadership of organizations that have built and sustained New York City's cooperative economy. The New Economy Project, the Cooperative Economics Alliance of New York City (CEANYC), and the New York City Network of Worker Cooperatives (NYC NOWC) have played a critical role in advancing policy, developing worker-owned businesses, and organizing communities around democratic ownership. Efforts towards building the cooperative infrastructure of the City should be built in close partnership with these entities, leveraging their expertise, and ensuring alignment with the needs of the field.

As the City advances major initiatives to address affordability—including the development of City-owned supermarkets—it is essential that cooperative models are not treated as secondary, but as a core, complementary strategy. Our recent report (attached), developed in collaboration with food system practitioners, researchers, and cooperative leaders, outlines a clear premise: solving food affordability requires both public infrastructure and community ownership.

City-owned supermarkets can deliver immediate, large-scale price reductions, if implemented at sufficient scale and supported by sustained operating investment. Cooperative models ensure long-term resilience, community control, and wealth-building. They ensure that the food system is not only affordable, but also democratically governed and rooted in the communities it serves.

To that end, we offer several key recommendations towards building robust support for cooperative business support in NYC:

1. Invest in Cooperative Development Infrastructure

Provide sustained funding for nonprofit and cooperative development organizations to support organizing, incubation, technical assistance, and shared purchasing models. At minimum, this should include dedicated support for co-op development entities in each borough.

2. Create a Cooperative Capital Fund

Access to startup capital is one of the most significant barriers to cooperative development. The City should establish a fund to cover construction, equipment, and other upfront costs for cooperative food businesses across the supply chain (eg., retail, distribution, and processing).

3. Leverage Public Land and Space

Provide rent-free or deeply affordable space for cooperative development, including within new housing developments, NYCHA campuses, and vacant commercial storefronts. RiseBoro's Steps at Saratoga demonstrate integrating cooperative food infrastructure into community development.

4. Support Ecosystem-Wide Development

A thriving cooperative food economy requires investment beyond retail. The City should support food hubs, aggregators, shared kitchens, and distribution networks, ensuring that cooperatives can compete on price by achieving scale and supply chain efficiencies.

5. Align with Broader Food Policy Goals

Cooperative development should be integrated into broader initiatives such as Good Food Purchasing and neighborhood-based food access planning, ensuring that public investment supports local and regional food economies while advancing equity and sustainability.

Importantly, these investments are not only about business development, they are about reimagining food access as public infrastructure and community ownership as a public good. Our analysis shows that relatively modest public investment in cooperative ecosystems, particularly when paired with larger-scale public supermarket infrastructure, can significantly reduce food costs, improve access, and build long-term economic resilience.

New York City has a unique opportunity to lead the nation in building a democratic, equitable food system. Cooperative development and support should be a cornerstone of that vision, but only if it is adequately resourced and grounded in the leadership of those who have been doing this work for decades.

We urge the Council to invest boldly, act with urgency, and center cooperative ownership as a key pillar of the City's economic and food policy strategy. Thank you for your time and leadership. I look forward to working together to advance this vision.



PRIORITIZING AFFORDABLE, QUALITY, NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED SUPERMARKET ACCESS AS A PUBLIC GOOD

Focus on City-Owned Supermarkets and Complementary Cooperative Ownership Models

Community Food Advocates and its partners are excited about the promise of city-owned supermarkets and are eager to ensure its success.

Our shared premise is that bold, innovative solutions are essential, as the private market has not ensured affordability overall and has failed to address the entrenched challenges of affordability, quality, and proximity that remain acute in low-income and gentrifying neighborhoods.

We believe solving these issues requires an expansive and multipronged approach.

In this document, we focus on recommendations to both make the promise of NYC's city-owned supermarket model a success alongside proposals for NYC to create a fertile environment for the growth of cooperative ownership and a democratic, solidarity economy.



DEVELOPED IN COLLABORATION WITH:



PRIORITIZING AFFORDABLE, QUALITY, NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED SUPERMARKET ACCESS AS A PUBLIC GOOD

Focus on City-Owned Supermarkets and Complementary Cooperative Ownership Models

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For questions on the recommendations proposed, contact Liz Accles—Executive Director, Community Food Advocates at laccles@foodadvocates.org

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DESIGN & CONTENT STRATEGY

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CITY-OWNED SUPERMARKETS

RECOMMENDATIONS AND KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The primary goal is to increase access to affordable and healthy groceries for consumers.

PRICING TO CONSUMERS

The current proposal is to sell food to residents at wholesale prices.

The NYC government will accomplish this by covering the cost of land, space, construction, equipment, utilities, labor, and ongoing operating costs. These city-owned grocery stores will be exempt from paying rent and property taxes, thereby, passing on savings to consumers who will pay for food with no markup.

The Military Commissary model—grocery stores owned and operated by the Department of War—is the north star for public supermarkets.

SUCCESS OF MODEL DEPENDS ON SCALE AND SUPPLY CHAIN EFFICIENCIES

Current proposal for 5 stores will likely have limited success in scale and consumer reach.

SCALE

Scale directly impacts favorable wholesale pricing, favorable distribution agreements, and can address the proximity of stores to consumers. Wholesale pricing fluctuates greatly based on purchasing scale. Independent grocers have difficulty competing with large corporate grocery stores because the latter can bargain for lower prices and/or purchase in bulk from wholesalers or manufacturers. As a result, wholesalers tend to overcharge independent grocers. To ensure lower prices for city-owned grocery stores, the City should source their meat from regional farms (which will have the added impact to strengthen the local supply chain and lower fuel use and costs) and purchase other goods at a high volume and scale from wholesalers or manufacturers. These savings will be passed on directly to consumers.

CONSUMER REACH

Resident proximity to public supermarkets is key to consumer access. Financial and time costs to travel out of neighborhoods to access groceries will impact participation. For NYC residents who do not own cars, managing groceries on public transportation or costly taxi services can be a prohibitive barrier. A Community District or neighborhood based analysis and approach is key to having the greatest impact.

STORE MODELS FOR CONSIDERATION

Warehouse style stores like Costco have price advantages and lower markups for two primary reasons: (i) a limited number of items (2,000) compared to Whole Foods (35,000) and (ii) lower overhead costs. Bulk buying of fewer items brings down pricing considerably and simplifies distribution. This model also has the advantage of lower labor costs since pallet models are much less labor intensive than shelf stocking. This allows for a lower overhead while simultaneously ensuring living wages.

ITEM NUMBERS AND MARK UP COSTS

Whole foods 35,000 = 35-40% markup

Aldi 1500 items = 25% markup

Costco 3,000 items = 14% markup

ACROSS THE BOARD CONSUMER APPEAL

It is critical to the success of city-owned supermarkets that they have consumer appeal that goes beyond low prices. They must carry healthy and quality food, and be a space that is welcoming to all members of the community. Workshops and cooking classes can be hosted in these spaces. Communities can participate and have input on how they want their public stores to look. These help us fulfill two goals (1) ensuring the volume of purchasing needed to ensure success, and (2) to ensure that this is seen as a solution for the broad range of New Yorkers (across class) that are struggling with food prices.



OWNERSHIP AND OPERATION

- Can be owned and fully operated by NYC or can be owned by NYC but operated by vendor/s of choice who are committed to deliver a mission-driven service.
- Priority must be placed on teams with management and operational experience.



ECONOMIC MODELING

In consultation and collaboration with experts **Raj Patel** (<https://civileats.com/author/rpatel/>) and **Errol Schweizer** (<https://civileats.com/author/eschweizer/>) we have provided a high level economic modeling and recommendation to ensure city-owned supermarkets are successful and sustainable.

WE PROVIDED ANALYSIS OF TWO MODELS

- (1) the current 5 store proposal **ADDENDUM A**
- (2) an analysis and recommendations for 20 store network proposal **ADDENDUM B**

Please see economic analysis for the two models in addendum A and B, beginning on page 11.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMPLEMENT THE PUBLIC GROCERY MODEL WITH COOPERATIVES

As a starting point for the next Mayoral administration, we are proposing that the city invest in cooperative ownership across the grocery food sector—including small grocers and supermarkets, but also proposes that the city invest in the ecosystem feeding into retail markets—food hubs, incubator/shared kitchens, distributors/aggregators, and more.

WHY THE COOPERATIVE APPROACH IS CRITICAL FOR LASTING IMPACT ON FOOD AFFORDABILITY IN NYC

While the Public Grocery model offers an unmatched opportunity for affordability, the cooperative model is essential for sustaining affordable food infrastructure while also building community participation and ownership.

Cooperatives are, first and foremost, owned by the communities they are a part of. They do not seek to maximize profits for investors or shareholders. Instead, as outlined in Principle 7 of the International Cooperative Principles, they are built on concern for the community. Successful cooperative models for grocery stores exist throughout the world, e.g. Denmark, the United Kingdom, and Vietnam.

The incoming Mayoral administration should deeply invest in cooperative food business development, as an essential element of securing an affordable food system for NYC. The public grocery model offers a measurable impact on food security for millions of low- and moderate-income New Yorkers for less than .5% of the city's budget. By investing in cooperative food businesses, the administration will also secure democratic ownership of the food system for future generations. Worker- and consumer-owned co-ops are consistently shown to be more resilient and likely to survive longer than traditionally owned businesses. Several international studies also confirm that co-ops often have survival rates exceeding 60–70% at the five-year mark, compared with about 40–50% for conventional businesses.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMPLEMENT THE PUBLIC GROCERY MODEL WITH COOPERATIVES

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

These two key recommendations will expedite infrastructural development and drive down the cost of doing business with savings being passed on to the consumer. As it is, the Park Slope Food Co-op markup is set at 21% on most items and co-ops, in general, are more affordable than private businesses. This is not exclusive to groceries or exclusive to a particular co-op model. With proper city investment, food hubs, distributors, and aggregators, whether worker-, consumer, or purchaser-owned, will also be able to secure wholesale prices at lower rates.

- 1 To address two of the biggest barriers co-ops face, the city should **create a program that offers land/space rent-free for co-op development and create a fund to invest in the startup costs** by supporting the costs for construction, equipment, and other capital needs.
- 2 The city should **invest in non-profit and cooperative co-op development** in order to support these entities who can identify and organize potential cooperators, incubate co-ops, create shared purchasing co-ops, and offer ongoing co-op TA services.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ **Major housing development projects should conduct needs assessments on food access infrastructure** - similar to assessment of need for new school seats.
- ➔ **Incorporate Good Food Purchasing in these models** to use purchasing power to advance vibrant local and regional food economies and support values-aligned food businesses along the food supply chain.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMPLEMENT THE PUBLIC GROCERY MODEL WITH COOPERATIVES

APPROACHES FOR CITY-OWNED LAND AND SPACE

- **Expand Promising Models: RiseBoro's Steps at Saratoga model**
 - **Significantly expand models like the RiseBoro's Steps at Saratoga (Steps) model** for retail grocery cooperative space, dedicated space for cold storage and distribution, an incubator kitchen for businesses who can then sell into the wholesale and retail spaces. This can be incorporated into housing development (as it is with Steps), but also should be available for stand alone development. This project originated from an HPD's Wealth and Wellness in Bed-Stuy RFP.
- **Build provisions into the contracts that ownership of building/land ownership eventually transfers to the cooperative.**
- **Use dormant city owned spaces**, such as underutilized NYCHA ground floor facilities to support cooperative food business development that can expedite processes in communities with the most need.
- **Expand Community Land Trusts model to include supermarket scale grocery access**. This will provide stability against speculative real estate forces by taking it off the private market and into community ownership.



RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMPLEMENT THE PUBLIC GROCERY MODEL WITH COOPERATIVES

APPROACHES FOR TRANSFORMING PRIVATE SPACE TO COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

→ CREATE FOOD AREA DESIGNATIONS (FOOD DISTRICTS)

Take inspiration from public markets infrastructure and the community-serving NYC retail landscapes that naturally occur when rents are not prohibitive. Target clusters of smaller, vacant storefronts to create cooperative and community ownership of food infrastructure within neighborhoods. The City can buy ground-level commercial spaces —via condo conversion to separate ownership of these spaces from residences above—and then structure opportunities for cooperatives (across model types) and community members to launch and ultimately purchase the commercial units.

- **Leveraging clusters of vacant storefronts**, the City can purchase these as condo spaces and provide long-term leases at deeply affordable rates with the goal of creating community-owned, diversified fresh food retail, storage, etc. The retail can be operated as a cooperative (worker, consumer, or purchasing), or, they can take the form of a mom and pop shop, independent grocer operating within a community-owned and controlled space.
- **Operator solicitations could come in the form of a bundle RFP open to the general public.** In order to receive the lease/funding/resources certain conditions would need to be met including utilizing a cooperative business model and/or community governance.
- **There would be a plan from day 1 for community land trust (CLT) conversions** of these commercial space clusters to prevent future predatory commercial rent.
- **This complements supermarket access.** Communities with thriving food infrastructure have a range of food purchasing options that are complementary.

→ CONVERT VACANT RITE AID AND GROCERY STORES INTO CO-OP SPACES.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMPLEMENT THE PUBLIC GROCERY MODEL WITH COOPERATIVES

BUDGET NEEDS FOR PROPOSED COOPERATIVE EXPANSION

- ★ **Develop a fund for start up capital for cooperative food business operations**
 - \$116M year 1 only

- ★ **Cooperative Organizing, Development, and ongoing Technical Assistance by non-profit or cooperative entities, with at least one co-op development entity in each borough**
 - \$12M for years 1-3 and \$5M ongoing

- ★ **Ongoing infrastructural improvement fund for cooperatives**
 - \$1M per year, beginning in year 2



As illustrated in this budget, most of the city’s investment would happen upfront with \$6M in annual funding for years 4 onward.

ADDITIONAL BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS TO INCREASE AFFORDABILITY:

- **Toll reimbursements for farmers delivering food** - \$12M
- **Creating a non-federally funded SNAP spending enhancement** - \$10M
 - Health Bucks provide \$2 in subsidy for every \$2 spent with SNAP at Farmers Markets (up to \$10). This program is funded by the USDA and by the City’s own budget The total budget for this program is about \$3M. The city could fund a program for use in city/co-op supermarkets.



ADDENDUM A: ECONOMIC MODELING

5 STORE CITY OWNED SUPERMARKET MODEL: BREAKING DOWN THE NUMBERS



THE OVERALL PLAN

5 STORES WITH A \$60 MILLION FIRST-YEAR INVESTMENT

Analysis of Weekly Store Operations

Each Store Handles \$192,000 in Groceries Weekly

Here's where every dollar goes:

- \$115,200 (60%) = What customers actually pay (wholesale price)
- \$76,800 (40%) = What the city pays to run the store

Think of it like this: The store moves \$192,000 worth of groceries each week, but customers only pay 60 cents on the dollar. The city picks up the other 40 cents.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR NEW YORKERS' GROCERY BILLS

AT A REGULAR SUPERMARKET:

- Your cart of groceries: \$100
- Store paid suppliers: \$60
- Store's markup: \$40 (for their costs, such as labor, utilities, rent)

AT THE CITY STORE:

- Same cart of groceries: \$60
- City paid suppliers: \$60
- City covers operations: \$40 (from tax revenue)
- You save: \$40 (in theory)

REALITY CHECK

Due to high wholesale prices from low volume, actual savings would likely be only 10-15%, not 40%.



THE ANNUAL PICTURE (PER STORE)

Money Flowing Through Each Store:

- Customer purchases: \$6 million (what shoppers pay at wholesale)
- City subsidy: \$4 million (covering operations)
- Total value: \$10 million (what these groceries would cost at regular retail)

What the City's \$4 Million Pays For:

- Wages for 15-20 employees (likely not living wages due to budget constraints)
- Utilities (keeping lights on, refrigeration running)
- Maintenance (equipment, repairs)
- Management (store operations, ordering)
- Insurance and other overhead

ADDENDUM A: ECONOMIC MODELING

5 STORE CITY OWNED SUPERMARKET MODEL: BREAKING DOWN THE NUMBERS

→ THE FULL 5-STORE NETWORK

FIRST YEAR COSTS

- **One-time startup:** \$10 million
 - \$2 million per store for equipment, shelving, registers, freezers, initial setup
- **Annual operations:** \$50 million
 - \$10 million per store in total budget
- **Total Year 1:** \$60 million

WHAT CITIZENS GET BACK

- **\$112.5 million worth of groceries** (at normal retail prices)
- **Pay only \$62.5 million** (at wholesale)
- **Theoretical savings: \$50 million**
- **Likely actual savings: \$15-20 million** (due to higher wholesale costs based on low sales volume)

→ WHY THESE NUMBERS ARE UNLIKELY TO WORK

THE 40% MARGIN PROBLEM

The model assumes a 40% margin to cover operations, but lacks the scale to achieve efficient operations.

SMALL STORE REALITY

- Still need full rent (unless city provides free)
- Still need minimum staff regardless of sales
- High wholesale prices (no volume leverage)
- High shrink/waste (products expire before selling)
- Limited selection may frustrate customers

THE VOLUME CRISIS

\$192,000 weekly is tiny for a full supermarket:

- Only \$27,400 in daily sales
- That's about 100-150 customers per day
- A regular supermarket does \$500,000-800,000 weekly
- **This is corner store volume with supermarket ambitions**
- **Will not make a dent in food access**

→ IS THIS A GOOD DEAL FOR TAXPAYERS?

THE MATH

- City invests: \$50 million annually (after startup)
- Citizens save: Maybe \$15-20 million (optimistically)
- Jobs created: 75-100 (likely at low wages)
- Return: \$0.30-0.40 saved per \$1 invested

WHO BENEFITS MOST

- Could reach very few people—stores will be poorly stocked
- Limited neighborhoods—only 5 locations
- Minimal savings—maybe 10-15% off regular prices

ADDENDUM A: ECONOMIC MODELING

5 STORE CITY OWNED SUPERMARKET MODEL: BREAKING DOWN THE NUMBERS

→ CRITICAL WEAKNESSES

WHAT MAKES IT VULNERABLE TO FAILURE

- **No scale:** Can't negotiate competitive wholesale prices
- **Too much variety attempted:** Trying to stock everything with no volume
- **High waste:** Products expire on shelves
- **Poor customer experience:** Limited stock, frequent outages
- **Inefficient operations:** Fixed costs spread over too few sales

THE WHOLESALE PRICE PROBLEM

Without volume, stores pay nearly retail prices at wholesale, making the promised 30-40% savings impossible.

→ COMPARISON TO ONE REGULAR SUPERMARKET

THE REALITY

- These 5 stores combined = \$112.5 million in annual retail equivalent
- One successful suburban supermarket = \$100-150 million annually
- **The city would subsidize 5 stores to equal the output of 1 regular store**

→ THE BOTTOM LINE

THIS IS ESSENTIALLY A \$50 MILLION ANNUAL PROGRAM THAT

- Cuts grocery prices by maybe 10-15% (not the promised 30-40%)
- Creates 75-100 jobs (likely not at living wages)
- Serves very limited areas (only 5 locations)
- Operates inefficiently due to lack of scale

THE BOTTOM LINE

Taxpayers would fund store operations for minimal benefit. It's like building a public transit system with only 5 bus stops - too small to work properly, but still expensive to run.

KEY CHALLENGE

At \$192,000 weekly revenue per store, these locations would struggle to stock fresh produce, maintain variety, and avoid waste. Customers would quickly return to regular supermarkets for better selection, creating a spiral of declining sales and increasing subsidies.

ADDENDUM B: ECONOMIC MODELING

ALTERNATIVE SCALED UP PROPOSAL: 20 STORE CITY OWNED SUPERMARKET MODEL



THE OVERALL PLAN

20 STORES WITH A \$400 MILLION FIRST-YEAR INVESTMENT

Analysis of Weekly Store Operations

Each Store Handles \$970,000 in Groceries Weekly

Here's where every dollar goes:

- **\$600,000 (62%)** = What customers actually pay (wholesale price)
- **\$370,000 (38%)** = What the city pays to run the store

Think of it like this: The store moves almost \$1 million worth of groceries each week, but customers only pay 62 cents on the dollar. The city picks up the other 38 cents.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR NEW YORKERS' GROCERY BILLS

AT A REGULAR SUPERMARKET

- What you pay for your cart of groceries: **\$100**
- Store paid suppliers: **\$60**
- Store's markup: **\$40** (for their costs, such as labor, utilities, rent)

AT THE CITY STORE

- What you pay for the same cart of groceries: **\$62**
- City paid suppliers: **\$62**
- City covers operations: **\$38** (from tax revenue)
- **You save: \$38**



THE ANNUAL PICTURE (PER STORE)

Money Flowing Through Each Store:

- **Customer purchases:** \$31.2 million (what shoppers pay at wholesale)
- **City subsidy:** \$19.25 million (covering operations)
- **Total value:** \$50.4 million (what these groceries would cost at regular retail)

What the City's \$19.25 Million Pays For:

- **Living wages** for 40-50 employees
- **Utilities** (keeping lights on, refrigeration running)
- **Maintenance** (equipment, repairs)
- **Management** (store operations, ordering)
- **Insurance and other overhead**

ADDENDUM B: ECONOMIC MODELING

ALTERNATIVE SCALED UP PROPOSAL: 20 STORE CITY OWNED SUPERMARKET MODEL

✓ THE FULL 20-STORE NETWORK

FIRST YEAR COSTS

- **One-time startup:** \$60 million
 - \$3 million per store for equipment, shelving, registers, freezers, initial setup
- **Annual operations:** \$385 million
 - \$19.25 million per store to keep them running
- **Total Year 1:** \$445 million

WHAT CITIZENS GET BACK

- **\$1 billion worth of groceries** (at normal retail prices)
- **Pay only \$600 million** (at wholesale)
- **Collective savings: \$400 million**

✓ WHY THESE NUMBERS WORK

THE 37% MARGIN EXPLAINED

In grocery economics, "margin" is what's needed beyond the cost of food itself.

TYPICAL SUPERMARKET NEEDS 40% MARGIN:

- 10% for rent/real estate
- 3% for taxes
- 15% for labor
- 10% for utilities, equipment, overhead
- 5% for profit

CITY STORES NEED ONLY 37% MARGIN:

- 0% for rent (city provides free)
- 0% for taxes
- 18% for labor (living wages, efficient model)
- 15% for utilities, equipment, overhead
- 4% for administration
- 0% for profit

✓ THE EFFICIENCY SECRET

FEWER PRODUCTS, HIGHER VOLUME

- Stock 1,500 fast-moving items (not 30,000)
- Each item sells more units
- Less spoilage, less labor needed
- Better bulk pricing from suppliers

It's like Costco meets public service: Limited selection, great prices, but accessible to everyone (no membership required).

ADDENDUM B: ECONOMIC MODELING ALTERNATIVE SCALED UP PROPOSAL: 20 STORE CITY OWNED SUPERMARKET MODEL

✓ IS THIS A GOOD DEAL FOR TAXPAYERS?

THE MATH

- **City invests:** \$385 million annually (after startup)
- **Citizens save:** \$400 million on groceries
- **Jobs created:** 800-1,000 at living wages
- **Return:** \$1.04 in savings per \$1 invested, plus jobs and food security

WHO BENEFITS MOST

- **Family** spending \$12,000/year on groceries: **Saves \$4,560**
- **Senior** on fixed income spending \$4,000/year: **Saves \$1,520**
- **Neighborhoods without supermarkets:** **Finally get food access**

✓ KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

WHAT MAKES IT WORK

- **Scale:** 20 stores create real buying power
- **Efficiency:** Warehouse model, not traditional supermarket
- **No rent or taxes:** City provides free real estate and no taxes incurred
- **No profit:** Every dollar goes to operations or savings

WHAT COULD MAKE IT VULNERABLE TO FAILURE

- **Going too small:** Fewer stores = no buying power
- **Too much variety:** Trying to stock everything = inefficiency
- **Charging rent:** Would eat up the entire budget
- **Poor locations:** Stores need to be where people shop

✓ THE BOTTOM LINE

THIS IS ESSENTIALLY A \$385 MILLION ANNUAL PROGRAM THAT:

- Cuts grocery prices by 38% for users
- Creates 1,000 living-wage jobs
- Ensures food access in underserved areas
- Operates as efficiently as private retailers

Clear benefits: Taxpayers fund store operations, but get back even more in direct savings, plus the social benefits of jobs and food security. It's public infrastructure for food, just like libraries for books or parks for recreation.

✓ BOTTOM LINE COMPARISON

We can save exponentially more by investing in proven strategies.
The large model costs 5.7x more but delivers 18x better results.

SMALL PILOT

Spending \$50M
to save residents \$15-20M =
Limited Impact

LARGE-SCALE NETWORK

Spending \$340M
to save residents \$364M =
High Impact



**NYC Council – Committee on Small Businesses
March 23, 2026
Testimony on FY27 Preliminary Budget – IBSP Program Funding**

Good afternoon, Chair Thomas-Henry and Members of the Council. My name is Laura Rothrock, and I am President of the Long Island City Partnership, the local nonprofit economic development organization serving LIC. We work closely with the Department of Small Business Services and manage both the LIC Business Improvement District and Industrial Business Zone.

I am here today to urge the Council and the Administration to protect New York City’s only dedicated support program for industrial businesses: the Industrial Business Service Provider program.

The current proposal to fold this program into the Business Solutions Centers is not a reorganization—it is a dismantling. Replacing a network of trusted, place-based organizations with a single industrial specialist per borough will significantly weaken the City’s ability to serve industrial businesses where they actually operate.

For more than 40 years, this program has helped retain and grow industrial jobs. Eliminating it now would come at exactly the wrong moment. Industrial firms are facing rising rents, shrinking space, labor shortages, and increasingly complex regulations. They need specialized, hands-on support—not a generalized, one-size-fits-all model.

Industrial businesses are foundational to an equitable New York City. They support over 500,000 jobs and generate more than \$1.7 billion in annual tax revenue. These are accessible, good-paying jobs for working-class New Yorkers—especially immigrants, people of color, and those without college degrees.

What makes the IBSP program effective is its local expertise. These are not generic service providers. They are embedded in industrial zones, helping businesses secure leases, access financing, navigate compliance, connect to workforce pipelines, and plan for growth. A single rotating staff member per borough cannot replicate this level of service across geographically dispersed industrial corridors.

This proposal also contradicts the City’s own NYC Industrial Plan, which calls for sustained, place-based industrial support.

And the cost is minimal: about \$1.2 million citywide—roughly \$2.40 per industrial job. For that modest investment, the City sustains critical infrastructure that supports entire supply chains and local economies.

We urge the Council and the Administration to take three immediate steps: remove industrial services from the Business Solutions Center RFP, extend existing IBSP contracts for two years, and work with stakeholders to strengthen a sector-specific model.

This is a small investment with an outsized impact. Preserving IBSP is essential to maintaining a diverse, resilient, and inclusive economy.

Thank you for your time and for your continued support of New York City’s industrial workforce.

New York City Council Council Hearing Room
Preliminary Budget Hearing - Small Business
Committee on Small Business, Council Member Thomas-Henry, Chair

Testimony of New York City Employment and Training Coalition (NYCETC)
Submitted by Gregory J Morris, CEO
March 23, 2026

My name is Gregory J Morris. I serve as CEO of the New York City Employment and Training Coalition (NYCETC) - the country's largest city-based workforce development association. NYCETC works to expand access to good jobs and better wages by helping build a stronger, more effective workforce system in NYC.

It focuses on two main goals:

1. Connecting job training providers and employers to improve how job seekers - regardless of their starting point - move into careers, and
2. Pushing for policies and funding that support these partnerships, reduce barriers for underserved communities, and boost local economies.

To support this work, NYCETC builds networks of education, training, and employment providers to share knowledge, partners on research and policy efforts, and keeps its members informed through convenings, conferences, and communications.

Let's start with this: strong small businesses are the foundation of a strong workforce system. If small businesses are going to grow and hire, they need reliable access to talent. But right now, too many are navigating a fragmented, inconsistent, and difficult-to-use system.

One of the challenges we need to name directly is this: we have a workforce system composed of both nonprofit and for-profit training providers, but without a clear, shared framework for quality, accountability, and alignment with business needs. From a small business perspective, that creates real confusion. Who do you trust? Which programs actually deliver job-ready talent? And how do you engage without wasting time or resources?

This isn't about one model versus another. But without clear standards, transparency, and

coordination, the system becomes harder—not easier—for small businesses to access.

So the question is: how do we make the workforce work for small businesses?

First, we need to invest in sector-based partnerships driven by employer demand—especially small and mid-sized businesses. These partnerships should serve as shared infrastructure, aligning providers—regardless of model—around real hiring needs and measurable outcomes.

Second, we need workforce navigators for small businesses. Trusted intermediaries who can help employers cut through the noise, connect to the right partners, and access available resources.

Third, we should expand incentives and operational supports for businesses that train and hire. Wage subsidies, tax credits, and simplified access to programs—designed with small business capacity in mind.

And finally, we need stronger accountability across the workforce system. Clear standards for performance, better data transparency, and a focus on outcomes—so businesses know the system works.

If we get this right, we reduce friction for small businesses, strengthen trust in the system, and create real pathways to quality jobs.

The goal is not more programs. The goal is a system that works. Thank you—and I look forward to your questions.



Regional Plan Association

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NYC Council Committee on Small Business Hearing

March 23, 2026

Re: Testimony supporting the IBSP program in relation to priorities for the New York City Executive Budget for Small Business, Fiscal Year 2026-2027

RPA thanks members of the Committee for the opportunity to submit comments on small business-related proposals for the Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget.

For more than a century, RPA has been advancing efforts to strengthen the New York City metropolitan area's economic resilience. But true success for our region relies so much on the local groups and communities that help implement bold ideas, translate plans into action, and ensure that the services and resources we have make it to those that truly need them. In fact, we have worked directly with NYCSBS to support local partners in previous work because of a shared understanding that New York City can only thrive if community partners are given the tools and resources they need to serve their communities.

That is why we are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program. We view the effort to streamline services as effectively a rollback of this much needed support, which runs counter to the City's claim that the industrial sector is essential for the City's economy.

As the 2025 Industrial Action Plan frames it, the industrial sector plays a vital and underappreciated role in New York City's economy while simultaneously being the second largest industrial economy in the United States. From waste management to renewable energy manufacturing, industrial businesses are responsible for the production of essential goods and services that supply and support New York City. Industrial businesses are also the backbone of this City's economic justice future, providing over 500,000 accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers. Given that the current demographic makeup of the industrial sector is 67% non white workers and 70% workers without a college degree, this industry also creates opportunities for those who are too often left out of the City's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without a college education.

Many industrial businesses are small, with the 47,000 private industrial businesses in the City employing an average of 10-13 workers per establishment. Additionally, the sizable amount of industrial businesses located

along the City's historic manufacturing waterfront places roughly half of industrial land within the 100 year floodplain, meaning that almost 2,000 businesses and over 45,000 employees are also *vulnerable* to flood impacts from sea level rise, increasing heavy rainfall and coastal storm surge events. And unlike other small business sectors, industrial businesses do not have many choices when it comes to locating and opening a business.

At a time when macroeconomic headwinds and intensifying climate impacts make it difficult for small manufacturing businesses to survive, the IBSP's critical and community-oriented work is more necessary than ever.

Industrial businesses have unique challenges and needs. To truly thrive and be successful in an everchanging economy, their success necessitates the tailored services of the few IBSP's we have across the City. Providers like SIEDC, SBIDC and others provide a critical line of support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses, regularly connecting businesses with resources that allow them to operate and grow in the City.

And local knowledge and engagement is where their services really matter. One-on-one assistance, help to secure loans, emergency support and so many other functions may seem typical of all businesses, but the specialized needs of small industrial businesses in terms of real estate, freight and mobility, workforce development, supply-chain challenges, and others highlight just how important it is to have tailored services.

The IBSP program supports the work of these organizations and ensures that industrial businesses have the specialized support they need to remain in the City and continue employing local residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few existing services that can help small, industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment. As climate impacts continue to intensify in NYC, these organizations also play an essential role in helping businesses stay informed, connected, and prepared against flood risks. Without this assistance, it would be far more difficult for small industrial businesses to survive in New York. Removing this program would also mean one less opportunity for building climate resilience and capacity for New York's small industrial business owners.

What makes this rollback particularly troubling is that it runs counter to how the City supports other sectors that similarly rely on local groups to provide services.

We expand support for BIDs because they provide on-the-ground services to strengthen commercial corridors. We rely on community partners to run Open Streets and take care of public plazas. Many of our best parks have community partners or non-profits that provide programming and stewardship. We give resources to non-profit service providers to support tenants and ensure housing and social services meet the needs of New Yorkers.

We invest in community partners and service providers because we know that government cannot be everywhere it needs to be, and cannot understand the needs of specific communities or sectors the way local groups can. Investing in IBSPs is no different and deserves the same seriousness and commitment.

Over the last several months, RPA has been working with a range of small business stakeholders, including IBSPs, to understand what is needed to help them be more resilient in the face of climate change. **In a forthcoming report, we call for more not less support to help service providers and community groups coordinate with local businesses who are often left behind in our planning processes.**

Industrial Business Service Providers are already doing a lot with very little. For a modest \$1.2M citywide investment, these providers protect \$1.7B in annual tax revenue for New York City and support a sector that employs over half a million New Yorkers in well-paying jobs that don't need college degrees.

Transitioning towards the Business Solutions model cannot meet the specialized needs of industrial businesses and represents a severe cut in essential infrastructure to this sector.

We strongly urge the City of New York to preserve and expand funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting these few but vital organizations that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of industrial business owners and their employees depends on this critical resource.

Sincerely,



Maulin Mehta
New York Director

Testimony of Linda Baran

President & CEO, Staten Island Chamber of Commerce

New York City Council Committee on Small Business

Preliminary Budget Hearing

Monday, March 23, 2026

Chair Thomas-Henry and members of the Committee on Small Business, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce.

My name is Linda Baran, and I serve as the President and CEO of the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce. Since 1895, the Chamber has been dedicated to supporting and advocating for Staten Island's business community. As the largest business organization in the borough, we serve approximately 700 businesses, representing nearly 20,000 employees, with 90% of our members operating businesses with ten or fewer employees. While we are a membership association, our organization represents the interests of and serves more than 14,000 businesses of all sizes and sectors borough wide.

Small businesses are the backbone of Staten Island's economy, but they are operating under real pressure. Inflation continues to drive up the cost of goods and operations, while at the same time making it harder for businesses to attract and retain customers. Rising rents, real estate taxes, insurance, utilities, and regulatory compliance are all compounding these challenges.

We are seeing significant turnover across commercial corridors, and we are concerned about increased vacancies. On Staten Island, this challenge is even more pronounced given our proximity to New Jersey, where municipalities are actively recruiting Staten Island businesses to relocate by offering incentives, lower costs, and a more predictable regulatory environment. This creates a real competitive disadvantage and underscores the need for New York City to better support and retain its small business community.

The City must make a clear and sustained commitment to investing in small businesses. These are the businesses that create local jobs, activate our commercial corridors, and support our neighborhoods. Investment should not only be discussed, it must be reflected in the budget and in policy decisions.

First, we strongly urge the Council to reinstate and expand funding for the Small Business Resource Network (SBRN) through the Five Borough Chamber Alliance Initiative. This five borough initiative led by the Chambers of Commerce in partnership with the City and private

sector partners brings supports directly to small businesses across the City. This model works because it combines citywide resources with trusted, on the ground relationships. In the Fiscal 2027 Budget we request \$2 million in total for this successful initiative.

Through the SBRN, more than 10,000 small businesses across New York City have received direct support, the majority of which are minority and women owned. In Staten Island alone, we have connected thousands of businesses to critical services including grants, financing, marketing, and operational support.

Chambers are able to reach businesses that are not always connected to government programs and provide tailored, one on one assistance that drives real results.

There continues to be strong demand for these services, and without reinstated and sustained funding, we risk losing one of the most effective tools the City has to support small businesses. This proven model should be a priority in this year's budget.

The City Council's longstanding Chamber on the Go Initiative is a great example of how Chambers can deliver quality services. The Staten Island Chamber requests a full restoration of Chamber on the Go funding in Fiscal 2027.

Second, the overall regulatory environment needs to better reflect the reality of small businesses. Most of our members have only a handful of employees. They do not have in-house legal or HR teams, yet they are expected to comply with an increasing number of laws, mandates, and reporting requirements. Policies must be scaled appropriately, with clear guidance, reasonable timelines, and thresholds that reflect business size.

While fines and fees are a concern, the larger issue is the volume and complexity of legislation being imposed on small businesses. Wage increases and new mandates, particularly when layered on top of rising operating costs, create significant strain. Each individual policy may be well intentioned, but the cumulative impact is what small businesses are feeling every day. A more balanced approach is needed to ensure businesses can continue to operate, hire, and grow.

That said, enforcement must also be addressed. We appreciate the intent behind Executive Order 11 and the shift toward reducing unnecessary fines. That progress should continue. We strongly support expanded cure periods and an education first approach. We would also encourage the City to consider a small business fine amnesty program to help businesses resolve outstanding violations and move forward.

Recent examples highlight the problem. Local Law 152, which requires gas line inspections, has resulted in thousands of Staten Island properties being cited, many of which were simply unaware of the requirement or unclear on compliance timelines. At the same time, small businesses are still receiving summonses for minor issues, like a sidewalk sign. These situations point to the need for better communication, better outreach, and a more practical approach to enforcement.

Third, the City should focus on solutions that help businesses grow. That means expanding resources and incentives rather than relying on penalties. We recommend that the Department of Small Business Services take a more proactive role in developing new programs, including grants, targeted tax incentives, and cost reduction initiatives. The City should also look at what is working in other jurisdictions and bring those models here.

These resources should not only flow through City agencies. Chambers, BIDs, and local business organizations are often best positioned to reach business owners directly, especially in immigrant and diverse communities. Additional investment is needed to address language barriers through translation services, multilingual outreach, and culturally relevant programming so all business owners can access available support.

Finally, storefront turnover and vacancy must be addressed. These are not just real estate issues, they reflect the cost of doing business and the challenge of attracting customers. Reducing barriers, improving affordability, and supporting small business tenants must be part of the City's strategy.

The Staten Island Chamber of Commerce looks forward to continuing to work with the Council to support small businesses. We ask that you make them a clear priority in this year's budget and in future policy decisions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I welcome any questions.



TESTIMONY OF VOLUNTEERS OF LEGAL SERVICE
New York City Council Committee on Small Business: Preliminary Budget Hearing
March 23, 2026

Good afternoon, Chair Thomas-Henry and members of the Committee on Small Business.

My name is Adrian Smith, and I am the Director of the Microenterprise Project at Volunteers of Legal Service (VOLS). For over 40 years VOLS has partnered with community-based organizations and the private bar to provide free civil legal services to New Yorkers who otherwise cannot afford or access representation. Our five core projects serve small business owners, individuals accessing benefits, immigrant young people, incarcerated mothers, and older adults in every borough.

The Microenterprise Project's (MEP's) core mission is to help existing and aspiring small business owners access high-quality, *pro bono* legal services. Working closely with community-based partners to reach underserved neighborhoods, we leverage the transactional expertise of volunteer attorneys to help small businesses reduce legal expenses and reinvest those crucial funds into their operations. *Pro bono* transactional legal services are a critical resource for micro-entrepreneurs on the often-challenging path of starting, maintaining, and protecting a small business.

I am here today to urge the Committee to support both the Department of Small Business Services (SBS) and legal service organizations such as VOLS that provide transactional legal services to small businesses. Legal issues are business issues, and for small business owners, legal and operational challenges are deeply intertwined. They cannot be addressed in isolation, particularly when so many businesses are operating under real economic strain. According to NYCEDC, in the second quarter of 2025, about 3,500 businesses opened in New York City while about 8,400 closed, for a net loss of 4,900 businesses — the weakest quarter of net business formation in five years. At the same time, the City's economic growth has become increasingly concentrated in only a few sectors, adding to the uncertainty facing neighborhood businesses, nonprofits, and workers.

In that environment, SBS and legal service organizations play a critical role. Small businesses do not just struggle with market forces. They also struggle with permits, licenses, compliance, financing, contracting, and the day-to-day difficulty of operating in a high-cost city. For many entrepreneurs, these are not separate business and legal challenges but overlapping realities that shape whether a business can open, remain compliant, hire employees, and grow sustainably.

Programs like NYC BEST matter because they help business owners cut through red tape and navigate City processes more efficiently, removing barriers that might otherwise prevent a business from opening or moving forward. Executive Order 11 similarly recognizes the need to

reduce startup fees, penalties, and delays, reflecting the broader reality that small businesses need help overcoming regulatory and administrative barriers to entry and growth. Those reforms are vital, but they only matter if SBS has the capacity to implement them fully and if business owners have access to the support needed to understand and respond to changing requirements. The NYC Future Fund is a key step toward expanding access to capital, but financing alone is not enough. Small business owners also need legal guidance to evaluate terms, understand obligations, manage risk, and make informed decisions about how to use that capital in ways that support long-term stability.

For New York City to achieve stronger commercial corridors, more resilient neighborhood businesses, and more opportunity for the next generation of entrepreneurs, I encourage this Committee to continue investing in both SBS and the legal services organizations that help small businesses open, adapt, and sustain themselves.

VOLS respectfully requests that the Committee on Small Business support the Microenterprise Project in our ongoing efforts to provide legal services to New York City's small businesses and entrepreneurs by supporting our request for \$150,000 in funding for FY27.

Thank you.



Testimony to the New York City Council City Council Committee on Small Business

March 23, 2026

Good afternoon. My name is Matthew Shapiro, and I'm the Legal Director of the Street Vendor Project. I would like to thank Chair Thomas-Henry and the Committee members for the opportunity to testify today.

As the only organization that exclusively serves street vendors in New York City, SVP is the centralized hub for this underserved population, providing critical small business and legal services to vendors since 2001.

We respectfully request support from New York City Council to sustain and expand our essential Small Business Empowerment Program (158996) and Community Outreach and Education for Street Vendors (158917) for street vendors. Additionally, we ask for City Council to fully resource the new Office of Street Vendor Services, to ensure this office has the necessary funding and staffing to accomplish the goals of establishing educational services for street vendors and is not just an office in name.

Earlier this year, the City Council passed a historic landmark package of legislation, including Local Law 54-2026, that will create a total of 21,500 new licenses for street vendors. will create a legal pathway for tens of thousands of vendors to move out of the shadows and become fully licensed, regulated businesses. This legislation will only be impactful if the city's 23,000 vendors understand the new vending system, know how to access these new licenses, and have access to multilingual, accessible, comprehensive, and relevant resources to support them to come into compliance and join the formal economy.

SVP is seeking funding to create and implement a comprehensive outreach and education campaign to help vendors navigate complex street vending laws in seven languages - Arabic, Bangla, Spanish, Mandarin, English, French and Wolof - and offer trainings to build their skills to grow your street vending businesses.

SVP conducts weekly street outreach in 7 languages, meeting vendors where they work to educate them on the rules and regulations of vending, teach them their legal rights and responsibilities, connect them with SVP's pro bono legal and small business services, and

connect them to resources ranging from public health to immigration. In FY27, we will create and distribute multilingual, multimedia materials to educate vendors about the new vending system to ensure they are ready to join the waiting list and apply for the new supervisory licenses as soon as they become available.

Via our Small Business Empowerment Program, SVP supports vendors to establish financial independence, self-sufficiency, and small business growth by providing them with the tools, resources, and skills to grow their businesses, including assistance with setting up bank accounts, taking e-payments, marketing, and connections to catering opportunities, through targeted, one-on-one consultations and workshops in 7 languages.

Despite being a small team just 5 full time organizers, 2 part-time, and 1 lawyer on staff, in 2025 we served:

- Vendors in 144 zip codes across all five boroughs
- Engaged 1,148 through street outreach
- Held 382 Individual consultations on topics including creating bank accounts, social media promotion, menu development, and business compliance

53% of these small business consultations were conducted in Spanish, 13% in Mandarin, 5% in Wolof, 4% in French, 7% in English, 11% in Arabic, and 5% in Bangla. A growing number of vendors are women, and in the past year, 64% of our consultations were with female vendors.

SVP is eager to increase services to street vendors, but we need City Council's support to increase our capacity. By empowering vendors to improve their financial literacy, our services help them integrate into the formalized economy - allowing them to open bank accounts, access credit, regularly pay and file taxes, and grow their businesses. Thank you for your consideration of this proposal in supporting the small business owners that make New York City beautiful and diverse.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for considering our applications.

Matthew Shapiro

Legal Director

Street Vendor Project

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March 23, 2026

NYC Council Member and Chair Shanel Thomas-Henry
Committee on Small Business
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: Testimony on the Restructuring of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP)
Program – March 23, 2026 Hearing

Dear Chair Thomas-Henry,

I am writing on behalf of the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation (SIEDC) to respectfully urge the Committee to reconsider aspects of the NYC Department of Small Business Services' (SBS) recently released Request for Proposals (RFP), which proposes a new model of business services that eliminates the existing structure of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

As the economic development organization on Staten Island, a borough of approximately 10,000 businesses, SIEDC has proudly served as the dedicated IBSP for many years. Over that time, we have built deep relationships with the borough's industrial sector, including manufacturers, construction and logistics firms, and waste management operators. We also manage the West Shore Industrial Business Improvement District (BID), the borough's only industrial BID.

In the past 10 years, we have helped to secure over \$25 million in loans and critical services for businesses such as DiFazio Industries, Acme Marine, Island Charter and more through the IBSP program. SIEDC remains committed to advancing the growth and sustainability of industrial firms, particularly along Staten Island's West and South Shores, where the sector continues to expand and is poised to increase the number of businesses within IBSP service areas.

At the same time, SIEDC has extensive experience serving businesses across all other sectors—including retail, commercial, and professional services—providing our team with a comprehensive understanding of Staten Island's full economic landscape and establishing us as a trusted point of contact for the borough's business community. With this depth of experience, we are concerned that certain elements of the new RFP structure may unintentionally create challenges for maintaining the high level of tailored, one-on-one service that industrial firms require.

Given this context, we respectfully offer the following reconsiderations to this RFP:

- **Maintaining a strong focus on industrial businesses:** The program structure should continue to reflect the specialized role of IBSPs and prioritize the unique needs of industrial firms, ensuring this critical sector receives targeted and effective support

Testimony continues onto next page.

- **Ensuring continuity in service delivery:** Over our tenure of operating this program and navigating the guidance and benchmarks required by New York City and New York State agencies, businesses need on time responses and information that is communicated to the right personnel. Maintaining a knowledgeable and reliable point of contact for industrial businesses is essential to providing informed, responsive, and trusted guidance.
- **Aligning expectations with borough realities:** The new RFP introduces significantly expanded outreach expectations, including engagement with nearly 4,000 businesses annually and the operation of a satellite location. Given Staten Island's geographically dispersed landscape and business density, these benchmarks may warrant further evaluation to ensure they are both realistic and effective.

Thank you for your consideration, and we welcome the opportunity to discuss these recommendations further.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Cusick
President & CEO
SIEDC



Testimony Regarding Priorities for the New York City Executive Budget for Small Business, Fiscal Year 2026-2027

March 23, 2026

The Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD) thanks Committee Chair Shanel Thomas-Henry, and members of the Committee, for the opportunity to submit testimony on small business-related proposals for the Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget.

About the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development

ANHD is one of New York City's lead policy, advocacy, and technical assistance and capacity-building organizations. We maintain a membership of 80+ neighborhood-based and citywide nonprofit organizations that have affordable housing and/or equitable economic development as a central component of their mission. We are an essential voice, bridging the power and impact of our member groups to build community power and ensure the right to affordable housing and thriving, equitable neighborhoods for all New Yorkers. We value justice, equity and opportunity, and we believe in the importance of movement building that centers marginalized communities in our work. Across 5 decades and 5 boroughs we have consistently focused on addressing New York's housing affordability crisis, displacement, and economic inequity to build community power.

ANHD's work directly supports the needs of our members who develop, manage, and organize to preserve affordable housing, and who fight to bring equity into low-wealth communities in New York City—especially communities of color. Our groups rely on us for technical assistance and capacity-building resources that allow them to maximize their resources, skills and impact. The support services, research, analysis, public education, and coalition building we do helps to identify patterns of local neighborhood experiences and uplift citywide priorities and needs. Our work translates into the capacity to win new programs, policies and systems that ensure the creation and preservation of deeply and permanently affordable housing, and economic justice.

Merchant Organizing for Commercial Tenants

Every New Yorker knows the value that small businesses bring to their neighborhoods—whether it's their corner bodega or fruit vendor, favorite restaurant or barbershop, locally owned yoga studio or accessible financial services. Every New Yorker also knows the reality of a less and less affordable city, where low-income tenants are being pushed out of their homes and hard-working people are struggling to pay for basic necessities like groceries and utility bills. Our favorite small businesses also endure this reality.



In order to keep their doors open, small business owners are struggling against landlords, corporations, and banks that threaten to push them out. Despite the myriad challenges, small business owners remain committed to their communities and continue to play a vital and unique role. They not only provide goods and services that we rely on, but also act as cultural beacons, social glue, and safe spaces for all New Yorkers.

Since 2021, ANHD has been analyzing and collecting data about the state of storefronts in New York City. Our analysis of changes in storefront rents from 2019 to 2022 showed that in much of the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens, rents had been rising year over year since 2019, while in Manhattan storefront rents that dipped in 2020, likely due to the economic impacts of the pandemic, were again on the rise. Our 2023 analysis showed that threats to small businesses are consistently higher both in communities of color and for small business owners who are people of color and immigrants themselves.

In order to combat those vulnerabilities, small businesses need protections. While New York City has some policy frameworks and technical assistance programs in place, these alone are not enough. For example, the commercial tenant anti-harassment law and the business owner bill of rights establish foundational protections, but without adequate enforcement of such policies, small business owners are left to fend for themselves. City programs like the Commercial Lease Assistance Program and the Business Express Service Team provide access to legal support and technical assistance, but these programs have very limited reach. In order to protect small businesses, we urge you to:

- Expand the Commercial Lease Assistance Program: The CLA Program is a vital resource for small businesses and other commercial tenants who may not otherwise be able to consult with a lawyer before signing a potentially predatory lease agreement. Such lease agreements put commercial tenants at risk of losing income and even their entire businesses due to factors like landlord harassment, structural issues, unforeseen rent increases, and more. In order to counterbalance the currently unchecked and unregulated power of commercial landlords, tenants need free and accessible legal assistance.
- Fund community-based organizations (CBOs) engaging in merchant organizing and outreach efforts: Local CBOs can work alongside the existing community of small businesses in a corridor or neighborhood to provide support that would otherwise not reach them. Such organizations continuously do outreach in order to make sure every single small business receives the information and services it needs. Especially in a regulatory environment that can be confusing and punitive, having a trusted source of information in the neighborhood can be a lifeline.

These partnerships and resources will ensure that our small business can remain the foundation of thriving New York City communities.



Industrial Business Service Providers

The industrial sector plays a crucial role in creating a more equitable, thriving, and functioning New York City. **Industrial businesses pay higher wages and offer more career opportunities to a workforce that is 67% people of color and 70% of whom do not have a college degree. Preserving and growing these jobs lies at the heart of a true equitable economic development strategy.**

- The industrial sector provides over 500,000 jobs in New York City, making up nearly 15% of our city's workforce, while contributing over \$1.7 billion annually in tax revenue.
- 33% of all NYC jobs that pay over \$50,000 and do not require a college degree are industrial jobs.

In addition, the industrial sector is essential to the functioning of New York City's services and infrastructure and is critical to addressing our climate resiliency and climate adaptation needs now and into the future.

As a convener of the Industrial Jobs Coalition (IJC), a city-wide coalition of IBSPs, non-profit developers of industrial space, and industrial policy advocates, ANHD and our member organizations have long advocated for increased support for the industrial sector and IBSPs. IBSPs play a crucial role in supporting the industrial sector. Every year, IBSP organizations collectively serve hundreds and hundreds of industrial businesses across the city, providing the specialized expertise and hands-on assistance that manufacturers and industrial firms require. For decades, these IBSPs have been the connective tissue between city government and the industrial businesses that make New York run — the manufacturers, distributors, and freight operators who move people, goods, and food through every borough. These are not transactional service providers. They are long-standing community institutions with deep roots in industrial neighborhoods, cultivated over years, often generations. They know their businesses by name. They show up when a lease is threatened, when a permit is stuck, when a loan falls through.

Yet despite the crucial role IBSPs play for the industrial sector, we are concerned by indications that the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) is looking to dismantle the only business support program for small manufacturers, through their newly released RFP (Business Solution & Industrial Business Zone Centers; EPIN:80125P0049). Based on the language in the RFP, we're concerned this may indicate an intention to eliminate funding for the IBSP program. Eliminating funding for the IBSP program would end a more than 40-year commitment by the City to retain and grow industrial jobs—and it would do so at the very moment when those businesses face some of the greatest pressures in decades.

As we understand this RFP, it assumes the Business Solutions Center model that serves all NYC small businesses will serve small and medium-sized industrial businesses as well. This is



not only a deeply flawed assumption but is at variance with the city's own recommendations from the New York Industrial Plan report, which finds that **industrial firms require specialized expertise, long-term relationships, and consistent on-the-ground presence**. The report clearly identifies the need for specialized support for industrial businesses that addresses the evolving needs of industrial businesses with high quality services at scale. It also emphasizes the importance of sustained engagement with businesses located in Industrial Business Zones. Yet the RFP threatens to effectively dismantle the city's existing Industrial Business Service Provider network and replace it with a generalized small-business service model in which a single rotating staff member is expected to serve multiple industrial neighborhoods across an entire borough. By eliminating the very infrastructure that currently provides that support, the RFP does not advance the recommendations of the Industrial Plan—it makes a mockery of them.

The RFP currently issued for Business Solutions Centers would eliminate the current and successful model of providing on the ground support to our small businesses. This new RFP proposes that **a single full-time employee in each borough rotate between multiple industrial neighborhoods to serve industrial firms**.

A single staff member cannot meaningfully serve the hundreds of industrial businesses that currently rely on IBSP organizations each year, particularly when those businesses are spread across multiple Industrial Business Zones and require specialized assistance related to real estate, permitting, financing, workforce development, and regulatory compliance. Industrial firms require **deep sector knowledge, long-term relationships, and consistent on-the-ground presence in industrial neighborhoods**. A rotating staff member covering multiple areas simply cannot replicate the specialized services currently provided by IBSP organizations.

At a moment when industrial businesses are already facing rising rents, shrinking industrial space, workforce shortages, and increasing regulatory complexity, this is **the worst possible time to dismantle the infrastructure that helps these businesses survive and grow**. This infrastructure is made of organizations that exist not just to help new businesses open. They exist to keep existing businesses alive, to ensure this city remains a place where durable things are made, where neighborhoods stay employed, where the industrial legacy of New York is not merely preserved as history but grown as a diverse and resilient economy.

Modest Investment for Outsized Economic Impact

Although the IBSP program represents only \$1.2 million in citywide funding, it supports businesses with over 500,000 jobs, making up nearly 15% of our city's workforce, and contributing over \$1.7 billion annually in tax revenue. That represents only \$2.40 per job of investment. This funding is critical keystone support for the nonprofit community economic development organizations that support these businesses. For many of these organizations, IBSP funding represents a significant portion of their operating budgets. Eliminating it would



severely weaken the capacity of community-based economic development organizations that serve underinvested industrial neighborhoods across New York City and undermine the Mamdani administration's goals of creating a more equitable and affordable city for all.

What We Recommend to Grow Industrial Businesses

ANHD urges the Administration and City Council to increase critical funding for IBSPs, which hasn't increased since 2016 despite record inflation, and to make it a multi-year commitment to help ensure the stability of the non-profit organizations that use this funding to serve industrial businesses across the city.

We also strongly believe that this program needs to remain distinct from other SBS programs that are more targeted to other types of small businesses.

We are asking the City to:

1. Remove industrial business support from the Business Solutions Center RFP.

Industrial firms require specialized support that general small business programs are not designed to provide.

2. Provide a two-year extension for existing Industrial Business Service Provider contracts.

This will ensure continuity of services while the City works with stakeholders to design a stronger program.

3. Collaborate with industrial organizations to develop a modernized IBSP program that better meets the needs of industrial businesses.

A future Industrial Business support program should:

- Address rising industrial real estate pressures
- Support manufacturing growth and retention
- Connect firms to green economy and infrastructure opportunities
- Strengthen workforce pipelines for industrial jobs
- Provide resources for nonprofit-managed affordable industrial space to prevent displacement of small businesses.
- Reinvest in the Industrial Developer Fund (IDF) to give nonprofits throughout NYC the means to develop affordable industrial real estate for manufacturers in their communities



We ask the City Council to work with us to ensure SBS makes these necessary changes to their RFP, extends IBSPs existing contract, and works to develop a modernized IBSP support program.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. If you have any questions or for more information, please contact Christopher Casey at christopher.c@anhd.org.



**Testimony of Patricia Robinson, Chief Administrative Officer , Greater Jamaica Development Corporation
NYC Council Committee on Small Business Hearing -March 23, 2026**

Thank you to Chair Thomas-Henry and the members of the Committee on Small Business for the opportunity to testify on the small business-related proposals in the Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget.

My name is Patricia Robinson, and I serve as Chief Administrative Officer at Greater Jamaica Development Corporation. Greater Jamaica is a nonprofit community development organization focused on economic growth, small business support, and industrial development in Southeast Queens.

We are also proud members of the Industrial Jobs Coalition, a citywide alliance of industrial service providers, nonprofit developers, and policy advocates working to protect and grow New York City’s industrial sector—and the good-paying jobs it provides.

I am here today to speak about the critical importance of Industrial Business Service Providers, or IBSPs.

We are deeply concerned that the New York City Department of Small Business Services, through its recently released RFP—Business Solutions & Industrial Business Zone Centers (EPIN: 80125P0049)—may be moving to dismantle the City’s only dedicated support system for small and mid-sized industrial businesses.

Based on the language in the RFP, this appears to signal a potential elimination of funding for the IBSP program.

If that happens, it would bring an end to more than 40 years of City investment in retaining and growing industrial jobs—at a time when these businesses are facing some of the greatest pressures in decades.

This is not a transformation. It is an erasure.

New York City’s industrial sector is a cornerstone of an equitable economy.

These businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city’s prosperity—including immigrants, people of color, and individuals without college degrees.

The industrial workforce is 67% people of color, and nearly 70% do not have a college



degree.

Across the five boroughs, the industrial sector supports more than 500,000 jobs and generates over \$1.7 billion in annual tax revenue.

For more than four decades, New York City has recognized the importance of organizations that have deep, trusted relationships within the industrial sector.

IBSPs are community-based nonprofit organizations that deliver hands-on, outcomes-driven services to industrial firms.

I also want to respectfully acknowledge that Council Member Selvena Brooks-Powers, a member of this Committee, has seen firsthand the impact of IBSP providers like ours in Queens and her District 31.

Some years ago, **Bartlett Dairy**, a minority-owned trucking company, relocated from Queens to New Jersey. Greater Jamaica worked closely with the company to identify a viable site, guide them through the bidding process, and connect them with programs and incentives that made the project feasible.

As a result, Bartlett Dairy made a long-term commitment to Southeast Queens—investing over \$30 million in a new facility and bringing approximately **200 union jobs back to the community.**

It is not only large firms that organizations on the ground can support. In District 31 in the Rockaways, **MME**, a small Black woman-owned construction firm, was experiencing rapid growth after being awarded multiple state contracts. Our organization assembled a series of six loans totaling approximately \$500,000, enabling the firm to successfully perform on more than \$2.5 million in contracts.

We were able to support a business with limited operating history—one that would not have qualified for traditional bank financing—and help position it for continued growth.

We urge the City to remove industrial support from the current RFP, extend IBSP contracts for two years, and work with stakeholders to modernize the program.

The industrial sector is not a legacy to be managed into decline—it is an asset to be invested in.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Good afternoon, Chair Shanel Thomas-Henry, and members of the Small Business Committee.

My name is Tsetan Dekyi, and I am the Development Associate at Accompany Capital, a certified Community Development Financial Institution established in New York City in 1997.

Over the past 25 years, we have expanded economic opportunities for BIPOC-owned businesses, disbursing more than \$76 million in loans - from \$1,000 microloans for street vendors and hair braiders to \$350,000 financing for larger projects, including a green business using rainwater management technology at the Jacob Javits Center.

We have supported over 10,000 businesses through training and technical assistance, helped create more than 3,000 jobs, and saved over 11,000 jobs citywide.

Most of our staff are immigrants, and we understand firsthand the challenges of building credit and starting a business while adapting to a new country and culture. Our diverse team speaks 14 languages including Spanish, Hindi, French, Bengali, and Nepali and works directly with clients in their preferred language.

We thank the City Council for creating the CDFI Initiative, and we respectfully request \$330,000 in restored grant funding to enable Accompany Capital to continue creating economic opportunities for entrepreneurs across New York City through the Emerging Micro-Entrepreneur Hub Program. Through this initiative, we will support up to 350 micro-entrepreneurs in starting or formalizing their businesses, establishing ITINs, and accessing the capital they need to grow.

We are also requesting \$150,000 through the Speaker's Initiative to launch a Commercial Gate Compliance Loan Program. This initiative will help small businesses comply with Local Law 75 of 2009, which requires security gates to maintain 70% visibility by July 1, 2026. Many immigrant and minority-owned businesses lack access to affordable financing for these upgrades. This program will help them avoid penalties while maintaining safe, compliant storefronts.

At the same time, federal policy changes are creating real uncertainty - recent Executive Order has raised concerns about the future capacity of the CDFI Fund, and new SBA microlending restrictions tied to citizenship will significantly narrow access to capital.

Based on our FY2025 data, these SBA changes would exclude approximately 38% of our borrowers, who previously qualified for SBA Microloan funding, despite having legal status and operating legitimate small businesses.

Given these circumstances, we kindly request you to continue your support for the CDFI Initiative and invest in our new Compliance Loan Program.

Small businesses are vital to our economy, our neighborhoods, and our cultural identity. Thank you for your time. On behalf of Accompany Capital, we look forward to continuing our partnership with the Council.

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March 23, 2026

Testimony of William Rubinstein of Billie-Ann Plastics Packaging Corp. NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing March 23, 2026

My name is William Rubinstein, and I am the owner of Billie-Ann Plastics Packaging Corp., an industrial business located in Bushwick. Our company has manufactured plastic cylinders & plastic boxes since 1973. We have been in Bushwick since 1989 providing packaging to food establishments, candy, and confectionery industries throughout Brooklyn. We currently employ 16 New Yorkers.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

Organizations like Evergreen: Your North Brooklyn Business Exchange provides critical support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses like mine. Evergreen has helped our company find employees, keeping us up to date with regulations. As well as cohesive organization for the business community. It has helped us find suppliers/vendors in maintaining our building. Evergreen regularly connects us with resources that allow us to operate and grow in New York City. Without their assistance, it would be far more difficult for small businesses like ours to thrive in NYC.

Industrial businesses like mine provide stable, good-paying jobs and produce essential goods and services for New York City. Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies like mine have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few systems that help industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like Evergreen that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Sincerely,
William Rubinstein

President

Billie-Ann Plastics Packaging Corp.

wrubinstein@billieannplastics.com



**Business Outreach Center
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Written Testimony

**NYC Council Hearing
Small Business Committee**

March 23, 2026

Presented by:

Nancy Carin
Executive Director,
Business Outreach Center Network/BOC Capital Corp.

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My name is Nancy Carin and I am the Executive Director of the Business Outreach Center (BOC) Network, and of our affiliate small business loan fund, BOC Capital Corp. CDFI. I would like to acknowledge and thank Small Business Committee Chair Thomas-Henry and the members of the committee for the opportunity to testify today.

BOC Network is a longtime partner with New York City in providing industrial business services in three Industrial Business Service Areas as well as small business technical assistance, customized small business training and access to capital targeted to largely immigrant and minority communities throughout New York City.

BOC Network is well known for its hands-on bilingual service model that supports entrepreneurs at every stage of business development including sector-specific training for childcare and construction businesses and lending programs targeting minority and low-income entrepreneurs and contractors.

BOC Capital Corp., our Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) affiliate loan fund has grown both as a lending and training resource for businesses with NYC contracts with a special focus on certified minority and woman-owned businesses, deploying over \$140 million in term loans and contract-based financing. We see first-hand how community businesses of all sizes and types can benefit and grow with appropriate resources, creating and preserving jobs vital to local economies. Supporting local businesses with industry-specific acumen alongside cultural and language competencies is a hallmark of BOC.

Today we are prioritizing our longtime collaboration with NYC SBS to deliver industrial business services as the Industrial Business Solutions Provider (IBSP) for Queens Central, Brooklyn East and Bronx industrial areas. These areas span large geographies in Brooklyn East, Queens Central and the entire Bronx. As a result, the IBSP team reaches and serves manufacturing and industrial businesses that work in Industrial Business Zones (IBZs) and surrounding communities. In fact, more than 50% of the industrial businesses BOC serves are located in the service areas outside of IBZs, including manufacturers, contractors and early-stage businesses that create quality jobs for New Yorkers. Within IBZs BOC's industrial business teams support many established industrial firms to train workers and sustain high quality jobs in NYC - whose



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workers typically reside in low-moderate income neighborhoods i.e. Corona Queens, East New York, South Bronx and Harlem.

Industrial businesses and jobs throughout NYC neighborhoods in all five boroughs are important to the creation of good jobs and development of community economies. It is important to point out that Central Manhattan office towers are home to major multinational firms that are included in the jobs data i.e. Skanska which is a Swedish company, and publicly traded companies i.e. Aecom and WSP and many others. The jobs data is skewed considering these companies - which are not the target for NYC Small Business Services.

The industrial and manufacturing sector plays a vital role in creating and sustaining good jobs that largely employ workers who reside in low-moderate income neighborhoods. These jobs support neighborhood economies. BOC knows this firsthand through its longtime work as one of NYC's Industrial Business Solutions Providers (IBSP) that knowledgeable support for industrial and manufacturing businesses helps create well-paying jobs. As an IBSP, BOC guides businesses from small contractors to manufacturers with hundreds of employees to access programs, incentives and financing designed to build business and workforce capacity. In the last 5 fiscal years, the BOC IBSPs have supported businesses to access more than \$36 million in financing with the majority of those businesses located outside the Industrial Business Zones (IBZ) boundaries, demonstrating BOC's commitment to supporting industrial businesses across the entirety of our three IBSP Service Areas.

Preserving a strong IBSP Network contributes to NYC's infrastructure and economy. NYC is fortunate to have a well-developed and mission-driven ecosystem and decades of trust and sector expertise built over time, ready on the one hand to respond to disasters and on the other hand to support emerging priorities to build toward greater equity and a greener future.

As a result, BOC Network is strongly supporting ongoing SBS funding for the IBSP network. In reviewing the newly issued RFP from Small Business Services we are concerned that New York City is proposing to dismantle the only program dedicated to supporting small manufacturers and industrial businesses, many of which keep this city functioning. This strategy contradicts



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the recently released Industrial Plan that recognizes the need to strengthen the industrial sector and support businesses located in Industrial Business Zones.

Eliminating funding for the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program would end the partnership between the SBS and the organizations that have demonstrated their dedication to helping industrial firms survive and grow in New York. BOC IBSPs are proud to have assisted industrial businesses scaling up to address the migrant crisis – businesses that care about their workforce. During COVID, SBS sent us hundreds of businesses from across the city seeking help accessing disaster funding and our CDFI BOC Capital would not have been able to deliver over \$37 million in PPP loans without the IBSP team’s support working literally around the clock. When DCP needed 300 surveys completed per IBSP over the holidays, we delivered 900 surveys for our Industrial areas—because we have relationship-focused staff. If IBSPs lose their city funding, NYC will lose out. The IBSP program costs the City roughly \$1.2 million annually—a negligible investment relative to the billions of dollars in economic activity and hundreds of thousands of jobs supported by the industrial sector. For approximately \$1.2 million annually—the City sustains a system that supports thousands of jobs and billions in economic activity. Eliminating it does not save money. It dismantles infrastructure the City relies on. We are asking the City not to dismantle the industrial support ecosystem and to partner with us to create a system that works to achieve NYC’s vision for a more equitable city.

We join many others in urging the City to:

- Remove industrial business support from the Business Solutions Center RFP
- Provide an extension for existing IBSP contracts to ensure continuity of services
- Work with industrial organizations to design a modernized program that addresses industrial real estate pressures, business education needs, and emerging opportunities in the green economy.

Industrial businesses make New York a city where working people can still build a future. The IBSP network helps keep those businesses here. The Industrial Business Service Providers are the infrastructure that supports them.

The current network of Industrial Business Solutions Providers maintain longtime partnerships with key stakeholders i.e. National Grid. These partners work closely with local non-profit IBSP organizations to ensure that businesses gain information on energy programs and incentives.



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Small National Grid grants are restricted to non-profit partners and designed to leverage existing teams with deep community connections.

BOC Network is also proud of its reach and work with community businesses and supports funding from City Council for business assistance programs and initiatives including:

Chamber on the Go - Small Business and Job Development Initiative:

BOC Network urges the City Council to support entrepreneurs and small business owners by enhancing support for locally delivered training, needs-based financial and business counseling, and access to capital for new entrepreneurs and local small businesses. The BOC Network and its members serving all five boroughs of New York City request the City Council to maintain its investment in the Chamber on the Go which impacts BOC's work in multiple communities.

Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative:

BOC Network urges the City Council to support worker cooperatives, which provide higher wages and job stability to individual workers and communities, by enhancing the Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative. Worker cooperatives are values-driven small businesses whose core purpose is to benefit workers and their community. BOC joins the Worker Cooperative Coalition to request the City Council to invest in the *Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative*.

New York City Council has played a strategic role in supporting organizations and initiatives to save and create jobs, to encourage neighborhood business development, and to support strategies for equitable economic development.

I would like to thank Small Business Committee Chair Shanel Thomas-Henry and the members of the Committee for your time and attention. At this critical moment, your leadership is essential. We urge you to stand with us in protecting this vital infrastructure and ensuring that New York City remains a place where working people and small businesses can succeed.

Thank you,

Nancy Carin, Executive Director



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Written Testimony

**NYC Council Hearing
Small Business Committee**

March 23, 2026

Presented by:

Quincy Ely-Cate
Director of Industrial Business Development
Business Outreach Center Network
qelycate@bocnet.org
(718) 766-7980



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Good afternoon, Committee Chair Thomas-Henry and members of the Committee on Small Business.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Quincy Ely-Cate and I am Director of Industrial Business Development at the Business Outreach Center (BOC) Network. We are proud to support industrial and manufacturing businesses across Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx, although we serve Industrial Business Zones (IBZ) and their high concentration of industrial businesses, our services support significant amounts of industrial businesses outside of IBZs, regardless of their location in our service areas, whether its Publimax Printing in Ridgewood, Verdugos General Contractors in Brooklyn or Evelia's Tamales in Corona, our services and programs extend far beyond the IBZ boundaries.

The bottomline is that Industrial and manufacturing businesses are critical for New York City and they deserve the specialized support the IBSPs have been refining over decades. Industrial businesses move goods, build our city, provide essential services and importantly, provide quality jobs for so many diverse and underserved communities in New York City.

IBSP's provide support to industrial businesses from navigating government, accessing financing and incentives, legal consultation, connection to recruitment and training services, business planning and growth support. All services that we provide with specific technical expertise which comes from years of experience and institutional knowledge working with industrial businesses. And importantly, we continually meet or surpass almost every single metric for our center goals year after year. Over the last five fiscal years, our IBSP team has helped industrial businesses access over \$36M in financing with the majority of the businesses located in our service areas but outside of the IBZs, demonstrating our commitment to serve businesses across the entirety of our service areas.

For 40 years the IBSPs have been working with industrial businesses and surrounding communities. We have long established relationships with community stakeholders including community boards, police precincts, public utilities and city agencies such as DEP, DOT, Sanitation, DDC and DCP. We work in partnership with local electeds to support communities with representation on local issues and we have been part of critical community support networks when disasters have happened. We stay late at night at local community board meetings and we host early morning meetings to get critical information to local businesses.



bocnetwork
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Business Outreach Center Network

**Business Outreach Center
Network, Inc.**

85 S Oxford Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217

Tel: **718-576-2230**

www.bocnet.org

And these are all things that we do that fall outside of our IBSP contracts metrics. These are things that we do because we know industrial businesses need this support, our local communities need this support, the City of New York as a whole needs this support. This trusted community partnership and network of holistic industrial business support is at risk if the current IBSP service model is shelved in favor of the recently released consolidated service model RFP.

We know that this new administration has prioritized affordability and equity as cornerstones of its policies which is why at this moment it should be doubling down on the success of the IBSP program, not dismantling it under the guise of optimization. The IBSP program is the city's most proven program to support the industrial and manufacturing sectors and will preserve and promote some of the most critical pathways to creating a more equitable and affordable New York City now and in the future. We are counting on your support and leadership to protect the IBSPs as this directly translates into protecting local jobs, local businesses, and economic stability for working families.

Sincerely,

Quincy Ely-Cate
Director of Industrial Business Development
Business Outreach Center (BOC) Network
Qelycate@bocnet.org

Testimony of Patrick Shaw-Kitch of Brooklyn Granary & Mill.
NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing March 23, 2026

My name is Patrick Shaw-Kitch, and I am the owner of Brooklyn Granary & Mill, an industrial business located in Gowanus. Our company is New York City's only operating flour mill that sources grain from Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regenerative farms to sell fresh, stone milled flour to restaurants, bakeries, and home bakers across New York City. We also operate a bakery in the same building that is a showcase for whole grain stone milled regional flour. We currently employ seven New Yorkers.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

Organizations like Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) provide critical support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses like mine. Opening a business is hard. Opening a business in New York City is really hard. Opening a business in New York City that doesn't already exist is really, really hard. We set out to open a flour mill in New York City where one hasn't existed for at least 100 years. But, there are a lot of building regulations surrounding flour mills, which initially put our business concept in one of the most dangerous industry categories possible — the dreaded M3 use group 18. This means that our options for locations were severely limited. Upon further investigation, we realized these strict regulations were for steel roller milling, which is very different from the stone flour mill operating we do. So, we called the Department of Buildings (DOB) and we called the City in order to try to speak with someone about how our business could operate in a different zone and explain that the general category we fit under is not accurate to the type of operation we are running. But, our calls were left unanswered and we hit a dead end trying to reach someone at the City level. Then we were connected to SBIDC

and everything changed. We built a relationship with SBIDC who listened and understood our situation. They were able to connect with the DOB and the City and talk to them about our operation. And, based on conversations that related to our meeting performance standards of dust, vibrations, and noise, we were able to get permission for us to be in an M1 zone. This opened up literal doors for us to rent and start our business, while also maintaining the standards and requirements we know are necessary for us. Our business would not exist as it does today without SBIDC. Being able to be in the M1 zone has allowed us to be closer to residential areas and has allowed our business to flourish. SBIDC is integral to small industrial and manufacturing businesses being able to survive in New York City. And without them we are cutting off this necessary growth of the business market.

Since opening, we have continued our relationship with SBIDC and they regularly connects us with resources that allow us to operate and grow in New York City. Without their assistance, it would be far more difficult for small businesses like ours to thrive here.

Industrial businesses like mine provide stable, good-paying jobs, produce essential goods and services for New York City, and are the backbone of an economic justice future. Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies like mine have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing local residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few programs that help industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like SBIDC

that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Sincerely,

Patrick Shaw-Kitch

Owner, Miller, Baker

Brooklyn Granary & Mill

240 Huntington Street, 4RET, Brooklyn, NY 11231

206-387-6654

brooklyngranarymill@gmail.com



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Advocating for all.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL, SMALL BUSINESS
COMMITTEE, PRELIMINARY BUDGET HEARING BY BUILD UP JUSTICE NYC

March 23, 2026

Dear Chair Thomas-Henry and members of the Committee on Small Business,

My name is Jessica Rose and I am testifying on behalf of Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A, doing business as Build Up Justice NYC (BUJNYC). BUJNYC would like to underscore the importance of the Department of Small Business Services (SBS) Commercial Lease Assistance (CLA) Program. We are also seeking funding for our Community Economic Development program, which provides legal support for small businesses and nonprofits across the five boroughs. This year, we are applying for \$175,000 from the Neighborhood Development Grant Initiative (reference number 2214404).

As the sole provider of the SBS CLA Program, we represent small businesses across the city in commercial lease matters. Through additional state and city funding sources, including the Neighborhood Development Grant Initiative, we also provide legal support to small businesses and non-profits at critical stages of startup, expansion, and long-term stability. Our work extends to worker-owned cooperatives and solidarity economy projects that are building more equitable models of working and living, as well as community activists advancing equity in their communities and building grassroots movements for racial and economic justice. This legal support is essential. In an economic climate where many small businesses and community-based non-profit organizations operate on shoestring budgets, access to legal counsel can be the difference between survival and closure.

BUJNYC's commercial real estate services—including negotiating new and renewal leases, terminations and sublets; enforcing lease terms and other agreements with landlords; negotiating rent reductions and payment plans when commercial tenants fall behind on rent payments; and combating harassment or breaches of contract—help level the commercial lease playing field for small businesses. These services are critical to preventing displacement driven by ongoing gentrification and the consolidation of commercial space in the hands of large national chains and corporations, ultimately improving a neighborhood's long-term economic outlook.

In the last fiscal year, our CED program handled 1,440 small business cases and nonprofit or cooperative support cases across New York City. We provided assistance to businesses in every council district in NYC in FY22 and all but one council district in FY23, FY24, and FY25. Every one of these neighborhood businesses plays a vital role in their communities. Our small business project works closely with SBS and with a network of community-based organization (CBO) partners to conduct outreach and intake across the city. Through these partnerships, we host

virtual and in-person events that connect us with prospective clients and receive referrals, ensuring that our services reach the communities that need them the most.

Our work continues to be vital as small business owners face rising costs and mounting challenges. As former NYC SBS Commissioner Dynishal Gross reported in testimony to this committee last year, New York City's storefront vacancy rate reached 11.4 percent in 2025—up significantly from just four percent in 2004.¹ A recent report from the NYC Economic Development Corporation found that New York City lost nearly 5,000 businesses in the spring of last year, marking the weakest quarter of small business growth in five years.² Small business owners consistently report that rising costs—from higher rents to the increasing cost of supplies, insurance, and more—are placing significant strain on their operations. In this environment, access to free legal resources can make the difference between staying open and closing shop for many small businesses.

Our CED team has observed consistent issues among our client base. Unlike residential tenants, commercial tenants in New York City lack meaningful statutory protections. As a result, small business owners remain vulnerable to landlords who refuse to offer lease renewals, or neglect necessary repairs. One consistent issue we've identified is owners who sign leases they don't understand due to a lack of legal expertise—often compounded by language barriers. Our team also regularly sees landlords try to impose unjustified costs on commercial tenants after an incident or accident, trying to force business owners to pay for repairs that aren't directly associated with their commercial space. We've also encountered improper subdivision of ground-floor commercial spaces by tenants, who then sublease portions at inflated rates, leaving them vulnerable to fines and other liabilities. The City should strengthen legal protections for both commercial tenants and sub-tenants to prevent small business owners from entering these kinds of precarious and exploitative arrangements.

BUJNYC supports legislation at the city and state levels that can better protect small business owners, including the Commercial Rent Stabilization Act (S8319 Salazar / A5568A Gallagher) recently introduced in Albany. We strongly support the bill's proposal granting commercial tenants the right to a ten-year lease renewal, which would provide critical stability to NYC small business owners who are routinely forced to negotiate new leases or find new locations at the end of each lease term. We urge the City Council to pursue similar legislation to ensure small business owners are guaranteed meaningful opportunities to renew their leases.

Through our work administering the Commercial Lease Assistance program for nearly a decade, we have seen first-hand how valuable our legal services are to small businesses and hope to see the program grow. Most notably, expanding the scope of legal services funded by the CLA program would enable us to significantly improve outcomes for the businesses we serve. Many small businesses face landlord-initiated lawsuits after falling behind on rent—sometimes by just a few thousand dollars. Yet, the CLA program does not allow us to litigate on behalf of our clients. At the same time, most small businesses cannot afford a private attorney to represent

¹ "How NYC's Housing Crisis is Squeezing its Small Businesses." March 11, 2026. Brewer Roberts. City Limits. <https://citylimits.org/how-nycs-housing-crisis-is-squeezing-its-small-businesses/>

² "New York City Economic Snapshot." New York City Economic Development Corporation. December 2025. <https://edc.nyc/sites/default/files/2026-01/NYCEDC-NYC-Economic-Snapshot-December-2025.pdf>

them in litigation, and by New York law, most business entities need legal representation to appear in court. In practice, this gap in access to legal counsel is exploited. BUJNYC has seen repeatedly that when landlords are aware that their small business tenant cannot secure an attorney to appear in court on their behalf, they use litigation strategically to evict longtime tenants and raise rents, even if it results in keeping their storefronts vacant for months while seeking higher-paying tenants.

We believe the CLA program could be meaningfully expanded by:

- As a pilot project, allowing the CLA legal service provider to appear in a limited amount of litigation on behalf of small business tenants for the purpose of finalizing and signing stipulation agreements. Currently, because of the way the program is structured, our team is unable to sign stipulations even after negotiating the terms of an agreement with a landlord for weeks. Our clients are forced to seek private counsel to appear in court solely to formalize the agreement ending the litigation.
- A pilot project would allow our team to assess the volume and scope of litigation-related services, ensuring that any expansion of the CLA program is effective and sustainable. Initial efforts could focus on allowing CLA counsel to appear in court to finalize and file agreements, or represent specific categories of vulnerable small business owner, such as veterans, individuals impacted by the carceral system, or business owners engaged in legal cannabis sales.

We hope you will take our recommendations to strengthen the CLA program and to continue supporting our work serving small businesses and nonprofits across the city in the coming year.

Thank you,

Jessica A. Rose, Esq.

Executive Director of Build Up Justice NYC

jrose@buj.org



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We hope you will take our recommendations to strengthen the CLA program and to continue supporting our work serving small businesses and nonprofits across the city in the coming year.

Thank you,

Jessica A. Rose, Esq.

Executive Director of Build Up Justice NYC

jrose@buj.org

Testimony of Graceann Dorse of Christopher Webb Films, Inc.

NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing March 23, 2026

My name is Graceann Dorse, and I am the co-owner of Christopher Webb Films, Inc. (dba FX WRX), an industrial business located in Gowanus. Our company creates and shoots practical special effects (effects for film and television that are real and handmade, rather than computer generated.) We currently employ 6-20 New Yorkers on a full time or contractor basis. Beyond immediately employing these New Yorkers, our business also supports the wide ranging local ecosystem of caterers, fabricators, printers, artists, restaurants, and hotels.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

Organizations like Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) provide critical support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses like mine. SBIDC has helped our company deal with a sensitive issue with a neighboring business that could have been detrimental to our functioning. They were able to do this with the goal of allowing both of our businesses to operate and co-exist. They also helped us navigate the purchase of our building, helping us to plant our roots in this community and make a long term commitment to this neighborhood. SBIDC regularly connects us with resources that allow us to operate and grow in New York City. Without their assistance, it would be far more difficult for small businesses like ours to thrive in NYC.

I would also like to point out that Mayor Mamdani ran on the promise of taxing the ultra wealthy. I would assume this includes the multi-million/billion dollar businesses that benefit from what NYC has to offer: a world-class talent pool, infrastructure, and the food chain of businesses that support the entire economic strata. It should be abhorrent for him to consider eliminating the IBSP program that helps so many small businesses, while costing the taxpayers relatively little.

Here's a suggestion on where to find the money if Mayor Mamdani and Gov. Hochul are too afraid to ask the wealthy to pay more taxes. I'm the parent of a medically complex child. The system in place to provide him with HRA Medicaid and other social services is ridiculously mired in inefficiencies and unnecessary (and confusing) layers of bureaucracy. I can only imagine streamlining that system would save millions of dollars in the budget. Let me know if you want some help figuring that out ;) I'm serious.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like SBIDC that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Sincerely,

Graceann Dorse
Co-Founder/Owner
Christopher Webb Films, Inc. (dba FX WRX)
81 14th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11215
917-543-4516 / graceann@fxwrx.com



TESTIMONY

Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget Hearing:

**“New York City’s Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative:
Building Good Jobs and Vibrant Essential Businesses in New York City Through Cooperative
Enterprise”**

Presented to

New York City Council, Committee on Small Business
Hon. Shanel Thomas-Henry, Chair
Monday, March 23, 2026

Prepared By:

Anh-Thu Nguyen
Director of Strategic Partnerships

New York City Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative

Democracy at Work Institute

254 36th Street Suite C-308

Brooklyn, NY 11232

Good afternoon, Chair Thomas-Henry and distinguished members of the New York City Council Committee on Small Business. My name is Anh-Thu Nguyen and I am the Director of Strategic Partnerships at the Democracy at Work Institute, a member of the Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative (WCBDI). It is an honor to address you all as I submit testimony in support of the hardworking worker-owners running cooperative small businesses in our communities.

Thanks to City Council's investment over the last eleven fiscal cycles, WCBDI has provided significant benefit to aspiring business owners and cooperative small businesses under the administration of the NYC Department of Small Business Services. Our initiative creates and support resilient employment and business ownership opportunities unlike any other in New York. We provide critical support largely to low-wage and contingent workers, the majority of them foreign-born and people of color--connecting them to business ownership opportunities, including when traditional routes to employment and business ownership are unavailable. Our work puts agency and assets in the hands of workers and their communities.

Some key achievements in the past few years have included:

- The successful incubation and launch of Afrilingual, an interpretation and translation cooperative business that provides language support in over 10 African languages.
- The successful conversion to worker-ownership of small businesses like Simple Brewing and Bike Plant, keeping them thriving and local.
- The launch of an online School for Democratic Management that offers free trainings on worker ownership basics in finance, governance, and group dynamics.
- The development of a rapid response cooperative business toolkit and trainings in English and Spanish for community based organizations to make small business ownership more accessible and inclusive to all communities.

In FY25 alone, WCBDI has:

- Created 112 jobs and pathways to business ownership.
- Served 286 businesses and organizations
- And provided 4500 education and technical assistance services to existing and aspiring entrepreneurs and worker-owners in English, Spanish, and other languages.

Amidst ongoing economic volatility, small business owners in New York City are in need of support more than ever. We are familiar with navigating and thriving in times of crisis, as our small business support has helped scale and strengthen the cooperative ecosystem in NYC, being inclusive of all workers, especially immigrant workers. In COVID times, we expanded our services, grew our membership in alignment with increased demand, and moved more than \$20M in emergency funding to help small businesses thrive. Over the past year, our services have been in high-demand and especially impactful as a tool for lowering the barrier to small business ownership for first-time entrepreneurs and stabilizing longstanding businesses for years to come.

Worker cooperative businesses are unique in their ability to establish, grow, and retain community wealth, to make entrepreneurship accessible, and to create stable, dignified work. They are a haven for workers in low wage, high turnover, and often exploitative industries who have been traditionally marginalized and excluded from the broader economy. In NYC, the majority of worker cooperative businesses are owned by immigrant women of color in industries like janitorial services, home health care, and child care. Through worker ownership, these individuals are bringing home living wages, building assets that contribute to financial stability, building worker power and leadership, and transforming industry standards for the better over time.

It is critical to continue the work that we are doing to improve worker protections, offer a means to build and root wealth in local communities, and sustain and grow the diversity of the small businesses in NYC for the next generation.

We urge City Council to continue investing in worker cooperatives in NYC, through enhancing WCBDI funding to \$5.09 million for FY27. This will provide for the start-up of 30 new worker cooperative small businesses and over 100 new jobs, as well as offer technical assistance consultations and education reaching thousands of existing, start-up, and aspiring cooperative entrepreneurs across NYC.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Hello. My name is Ki-Sang Yi and I am the Revitalization Program Manager at the East Williamsburg Collaborative. I'm submitting this written testimony to ask Council to direct SBS to withdraw the RFP process in question as it compromises the critical ongoing work that organizations like Evergreen Exchange have been conducting for the past 44 years.

As a Community-Based Program Manager of SBS' own AvenueNYC Revitalization Program, my role is to understand local commercial needs and concerns in North Brooklyn, and partner with local organizations and agencies to implement programmatic and/or infrastructural responses to community concerns.

What has been made clear in my experience and through the anecdotes and long-standing partnerships in the neighborhood, is that Evergreen has been an anchor in the local economic development and industrial preservation in North Brooklyn for several decades. They are an exceptional example of the kinds of community-based organizations that our City needs – those that are committed to the local community as keepers of institutional knowledge; have built interpersonal relationships and trust with local manufacturers, political offices, and organizations; and have time and time again, been a driving force for participatory governance and decision-making that preserves an economy that allows North Brooklyn to remain home to industrial and commercial working families as it has been for generations.

This RFP compromises this work by significantly disrupting the already-insufficient funding that Evergreen operates on by shifting decision-making processes into organizations that have little to do with the experienced realities of our community. The lack of meaningful notice and engagement regarding this RFP also reinforces a pattern of top-down technocratic decisions reflected in the Department of City Planning's recent Industrial Plan, which destabilizes Evergreen and North Brooklyn's industrial economies against their stated feedback.

For these reasons and more, I urge the Council to direct SBS to withdraw this RFP and to reconsider alternatives that may achieve the intended goal through more participatory, less punitive processes that continue to support community-based organizations like Evergreen Exchange.

Thank you for your time and sincere consideration.

Ki-Sang Yi
Revitalization Program Manager

East Williamsburg Collaborative
A partnership between Grand Street BID and Graham Avenue BID



Testimony of Leah Archibald

Executive Director, Evergreen: Your North Brooklyn Business Exchange
NYC Council Committee on Small Business March 23, 2026

Good morning Chair and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

New York City is proposing to dismantle the only program dedicated to supporting small manufacturers and industrial businesses, many of which keep this city functioning. Eliminating funding for the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program would end more than forty years of partnership between the City and the organizations that help industrial firms survive and grow in New York.

Evergreen has partnered with the City of New York for more than 40 years to support industrial businesses in North Brooklyn—manufacturers, fabricators, food producers, and logistics firms that anchor the city’s working economy. For more than 40 years, Evergreen: Your North Brooklyn Business Exchange has worked directly with these businesses that anchor the working economy of North Brooklyn. These businesses are essential.

What We Do

Since our founding in 1982, Evergreen has evolved alongside the City. We began by improving public safety in industrial areas, then became experts in incentive programs, helping hundreds of businesses grow. When the City created the IBZ program, we were selected to serve North Brooklyn. During the 2008 recession, we partnered with the City to acquire industrial property, and today we operate five buildings—32,000 square feet—leased below market to small manufacturers to preserve jobs.

In 2024, Evergreen served 178 industrial businesses, with 113 firms receiving one-on-one assistance on 187 issues ranging from financing and regulatory compliance to real estate and government navigation. We helped 11 businesses apply for 23 incentive programs, assisted 32 businesses with financing consultations, and helped 6 firms secure \$376,790 in loans and grants to stabilize and grow their operations.

The businesses we assist are not small in their impact. A recent economic analysis found that **the businesses Evergreen served in 2024 support approximately 3,300 jobs across New York City and generate roughly \$1.2 billion in economic activity annually.**

IBSP organizations also serve as the City’s most effective pipeline connecting industrial businesses to critical public programs. Because we maintain long-term relationships with hundreds of firms in Industrial Business Zones, IBSPs are often the primary source of referrals for companies accessing city



EVERGREEN

Your North Brooklyn Business Exchange

incentives such as the Commercial Expansion Program (CEP) and the Relocation and Employment Assistance Program (REAP). Without IBSP organizations actively identifying and assisting eligible businesses, many small manufacturers simply do not know these programs exist or lack the capacity to apply successfully.

At the same time, Evergreen is actively helping industrial businesses participate in the emerging green economy. Through our Growing Green initiative, we are working with partners to connect Brooklyn's small manufacturers and industrial service firms to opportunities in clean energy, infrastructure resilience, and environmental restoration. These programs are designed to ensure that the transition to a green economy creates opportunities for local businesses and working-class New Yorkers rather than leaving them behind.

This is a true public-private partnership. **City funding enables us to leverage philanthropy, private capital, and earned revenue to deliver far greater impact.** The City's investment allows organizations like ours to mobilize far greater resources on behalf of small industrial businesses, providing better bang for the buck with taxpayer dollars. Just as importantly, we are a trusted messenger—able to reach businesses and connect them to City programs more effectively than the government alone.

Why This Matters

In North Brooklyn alone, industrial businesses support nearly 48,000 jobs and generate approximately \$15 billion in economic activity annually across New York City. These jobs pay average wages of approximately \$108,000, significantly higher than the Brooklyn average. The firms Evergreen served in 2024 support 3,300 jobs and \$1.2 billion in output across NYC. These are accessible, living-wage jobs—often held by immigrants, workers of color, and workers without college degrees—and they remain one of the most reliable pathways to economic mobility in this city, where cost of living continues to rise in many neighborhoods.

The IBSP program is not optional—it is core infrastructure that allows this sector to function. Organizations like Evergreen are a critical part of the infrastructure that allows this sector to survive in one of the most expensive cities in the world.

The work IBSP organizations do already aligns directly with many of the Mamdani administration's priorities: expanding access to good jobs, ensuring that growth is equitably distributed throughout all communities in NYC, and ensuring that the benefits of the green economy reach historically underinvested communities.



EVERGREEN
Your North Brooklyn Business Exchange

What's At Stake

Eliminating the IBSP program and its funding weakens the entire ecosystem of nonprofit economic development organizations that extend and amplify the City's investment in working-class job creation. The replacement model currently proposed in the Business Solutions Center RFP would assign a single rotating staff member to serve industrial businesses across multiple neighborhoods in each borough.

Industrial firms require help navigating zoning and permitting, securing industrial space, accessing specialized financing, complying with environmental regulations, and building workforce pipelines. This work requires deep sector knowledge and sustained relationships built over years. A rotating generalist cannot replace the trusted expertise that IBSP organizations provide, and a single employee cannot possibly serve the hundreds of businesses that IBSPs serve each year throughout NYC.

Further, this proposal is also inconsistent with the City's own industrial policy. The recently released Industrial Plan recognizes the need to strengthen the industrial sector and support businesses located in Industrial Business Zones. Eliminating the organizations that actually deliver those services and replacing them with a single employee in each borough undermines that strategy.

If IBSP is eliminated, the City loses that infrastructure. **If this program is eliminated, the City will lose more than a contract line. It will lose an entire ecosystem. This will undermine the effectiveness of NYC's own programming.**

You lose the front door to industrial businesses—and decades of trust and sector expertise built over time.

You lose the pipeline to your own programs. IBSPs are the primary way industrial businesses access City incentives like CEP and REAP. Without us, businesses don't know these programs exist—and even when they do, they lack the capacity to apply successfully.

You lose your emergency response network. After Hurricane Sandy, when SBS needed to meet impacted businesses, we brought the Mayor directly to flooded firms. During COVID, we connected manufacturers to produce hospital gowns for NYC Health + Hospitals, distributed PPE to essential businesses, and served as a real-time conduit between government and industry.

You lose capacity when the City needs it most. During COVID, SBS sent us hundreds of businesses from across the city seeking help accessing disaster funding. We worked around the clock to assist them. When DCP needed 300 surveys completed over the holidays, we delivered—because we have the relationships. When DOT asked us to collect feedback from our industrial businesses about the BQE and Grand Street Bridge redesign we were able to say yes because we had the relationships and at present, we still have the capacity.



EVERGREEN

Your North Brooklyn Business Exchange

You lose deep, sector-specific expertise that cannot be replicated by a rotating generalist and cannot be replaced by a rotating generalist.

If we lose this funding, we are not going to have the capacity—the staffing—to do these things for the city in the future.

And you'll lose decades of expertise—for what? A model that replaces trusted, sector-specific support from multiple staffers and organizations with a single rotating BSC staff member in each borough? Doing office hours once a week in a library? It is not humanly possible for a single BSC staffer in each borough to serve the 400+ businesses our IBSPs serve in each borough each year. How will businesses even know how to find them?

Let me be blunt: this is not efficiency. It feels more like **DOGE-style cuts or private equity stripping a company for short-term gains** while undermining its long-term viability.

The IBSP program costs the City roughly \$1.2 million annually—a negligible investment relative to the billions of dollars in economic activity and tens of thousands of jobs supported by the industrial sector. For approximately \$1.2 million annually—a rounding error—the City sustains a system that supports thousands of jobs and billions in economic activity.

Eliminating it does not save money. It dismantles infrastructure the City relies on.

What We Recommend

We are not asking the City to preserve the status quo. We are asking the City not to dismantle the industrial support ecosystem and to partner with us to create a system that works better and helps your administration achieve its goal of a more equitable city.

Specifically, we urge the City to:

- **Remove industrial business support from the Business Solutions Center RFP**
- **Provide an extension for existing IBSP contracts to ensure continuity of services**
- **Work with industrial organizations to design a modernized program that addresses industrial real estate pressures, business education needs, and emerging opportunities in the green economy**

Industrial businesses make New York a city where working people can still build a future. The IBSP network helps keep those businesses here. The Industrial Service Providers are the infrastructure that supports them. **Don't squander it. Strengthen it.**



EVERGREEN
Your North Brooklyn Business Exchange

Evergreen At A Glance: Our History, Our Work, and Our Impact

Who We Are & What We Do

Evergreen is a mission-driven economic development nonprofit that connects industrial and manufacturing businesses with services and opportunities to help create and maintain high-quality working class jobs in our North Brooklyn community.

Longtime Partnership with New York City

Since 1982, Evergreen has partnered with the City of New York to support North Brooklyn's industrial neighborhoods. Evergreen was founded by the St. Nicks Alliance and key business owners in the community to address the significant issues facing the beleaguered industrial neighborhoods of East Williamsburg, Greenpoint, and Bushwick such as vandalism and illegal dumping. As crime diminished, our services shifted to business growth, helping hundreds of firms access city and state incentives. In 2006, Evergreen was awarded contracts to assist businesses in the newly created Greenpoint-Williamsburg and North Brooklyn Industrial Business Zones (IBZs). With NYC support, we purchased our first industrial property in 2008 and have since acquired four more, all leased below market to small manufacturers. They cover 32,000 square feet and 47 jobs. Our success serving thousands of firms and developing five industrial buildings has been possible only through this long-standing partnership.

Evolving Needs for Evolving Industry

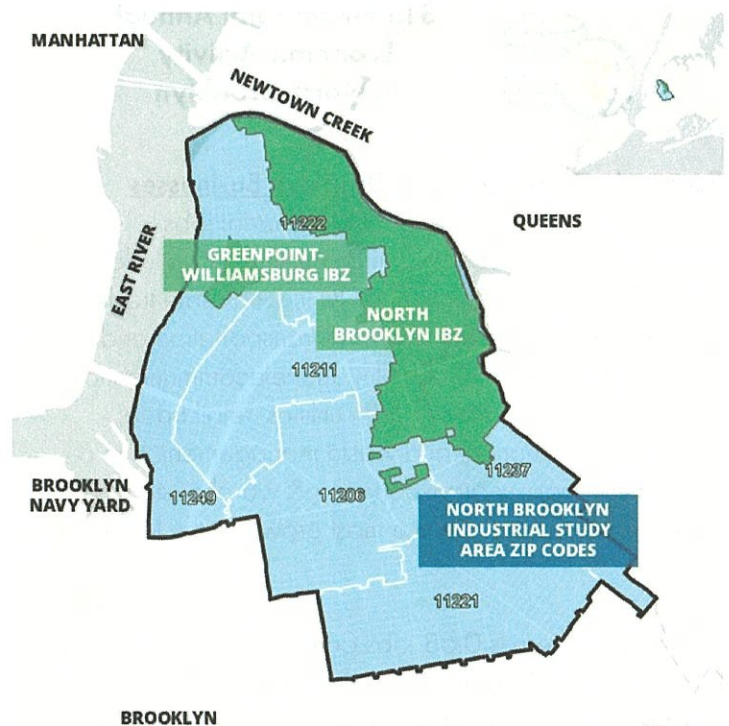
Our IBZ contract ensures that every year we serve more than a hundred businesses with their needs, centered on financing, real estate, incentives, and navigating government. In 2024, Evergreen assisted 178 businesses, handling 34 financial consultations, 13 financing requests, 23 incentive applications, 23 real estate inquiries, 31 requests for help working with the City on issues like signage and parking, and 50 other issues.

We also had 61 businesses at our events. As manufacturing shifted to more entrepreneurial, smaller-scale enterprises, we noticed a demand for education. Each year, we

host multi-week seminars covering topics such as human resources, financial systems, company culture, and marketing which provide practical, in-depth instruction from knowledgeable professionals. We offer workshops on a range of topics and host quarterly mixers for networking and community building.

We have been staunch advocates for our businesses and the interests of industrial constituents since day one. This means dealing with illegal dumpings, truck routes, and curb cuts for loading zones. It also means serving as a leading voice on industrial policy for land use changes, rezonings, and city plans. Our longstanding relationships with hundreds of companies provides a steady flow of conversation and a deep understanding of their needs, challenges, and opportunities. We effectively serve as a bridge between NYC and local businesses whenever the need arises.

Evergreen's Service Area



Why We Do It – Why Manufacturing Matters

The industrial sector is among the best pathways to achieving an equitable New York City with its high-quality, working class jobs that have a low barrier to entry. After all, no housing is affordable without a job.

The Industrial Sector In North Brooklyn

North Brooklyn is home to an estimated 14% of NYC's manufacturing base. These jobs pay 29% more than retail and food service, offer higher rates of health coverage, and often do not require either advanced education or English proficiency. Over half of workers are non-white and over a quarter are foreign born, reflecting the community's diversity. In neighborhoods where 25% of residents live below the poverty line, industrial jobs remain a key path to stability and upward mobility.

Industrial businesses do not just provide good jobs. They are massive engines of economic activity, especially given their lengthy supply chains that increase cross-company activity and agglomeration effects. The activity is so robust because the multiplier effect is so strong - the number of indirect (business-to-business activity) and induced (worker activity outside work) jobs generated by one direct job (at the company).



**\$15 Billion Total Annual
Economic Activity
in North Brooklyn**

Economic Output of North Brooklyn Businesses

There are approximately 28,600 industrial jobs across 242 industries in North Brooklyn. This includes about 8,340 in construction, 6,110 in wholesale trade, 5,060 in manufacturing, 4,060 in transportation and warehousing, and 3,370 in film and telecommunications, with the remainder coming from utilities, retail trade, repair & maintenance, and waste management. Film & telecommunications, transportation & warehousing, and waste management saw the most growth in the last ten years.

The multiplier here is 0.68 jobs generated, adding 19,300 for a total of 47,900. It is more than double the 0.3 multiplier value of accommodation & food services and retail, other sectors often seen as low barriers to entry. It

also surpasses the 0.6 multiplier value for management and professional & technical services.

North Brooklyn businesses generate \$9.9 billion of economic output directly, adding another \$5.1 billion in multiplier impacts for a total of \$15 billion. The combined employee compensation is \$4.9 billion, with an average annual income of \$108,000. This outpaces the average for Brooklyn of \$72,000, and most of the jobs require only a high school diploma. Among the employees, 34% of jobs are held by women, 55% by people of color, and 79% by residents of New York City.



**47,900 Total Jobs Supported
(direct and multiplier)
in North Brooklyn**

Support Climate Goals

Industrial businesses have grown increasingly attentive to environmental concerns over recent decades. North Brooklyn is home to the Newtown Creek and active railways. These alternative means of transportation reduce truck traffic and congestion pollution. The Newtown Creek is also part of the larger Blue Highway network. With ambitious goals to reduce the effects of climate change and bolster the green economy, the City will need to rely on the manufacturing sector for help. Initiatives like the Growing Green Collective and WeSource NYC, both of which Evergreen participates in, are actively working to increase solar and wind energy and give local firms opportunities to participate. Industrial sites are also excellent hosts for solar panels, battery storage of electricity and green roofs.



**\$108,000 average income
compared to \$72,000 across
Brooklyn**

Economic Impact of Evergreen's Client Businesses

Of the 178 businesses Evergreen served last year, we surveyed 102 and found that there were 1,820 direct full-time equivalent jobs plus 1,450 multiplier jobs - based on a multiplier value of 0.81 due to a very high proportion of manufacturing jobs (roughly 55%) - for a total of 3,270. This accounts for \$1.2 billion of economic output and \$455 million in employee compensation. The businesses we served are one-third minority owned, 40% women owned, and 20% immigrant owned.



TESTIMONY FOR NYC COUNCIL BUDGET HEARING.

March 23, 2026

Testimony of Samuel Robinson of Field Form, NYC Small Business Council Hearing,

My name is Samuel Robinson and I'm the founder of Field Form, a resilient landscape design-build firm based in Gowanus, just outside the Industrial Business Zone. We design and implement stormwater systems and ecological infrastructure across small properties, employing New Yorkers in design, construction, and maintenance.

While we are not located within the IBZ, our work is deeply tied to it. We rely on local fabricators, suppliers, and trades, and our projects directly support the long-term functionality of this flood-prone industrial district.

I'm here to strongly oppose the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider program.

Organizations like the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation are essential—not just to businesses inside the IBZ, but to the broader ecosystem around it. They've helped us build relationships, access resources, and operate more effectively within Gowanus's industrial landscape, serving as an essential bridge between emerging businesses and the neighborhood's long-standing industrial base.

Eliminating IBSP funding would weaken not just industrial firms, but the growing network of businesses working to support their adaptation and survival.

I urge the City to preserve this funding and continue investing in organizations like SBIDC.

Thank you.

Samuel Robinson
Field Form
301 Douglass Street,
Brooklyn, NY 11217
212.791.7464

Written Testimony: City Council Small Business Committee Hearing Re: Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) Program Submitted by: Daniel Sklaar, CEO, Fine & Raw Chocolate LLC & The Chocolate Factory 70 Scott Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11237 March 23, 2026

My name is Daniel Sklaar. I am the founder and CEO of Fine & Raw Chocolate, a Brooklyn-based bean-to-bar chocolate company, and The Chocolate Factory, a 1,000-person event and production venue at 70 Scott Ave in Bushwick. I am writing to urge the Council to oppose the elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider program and to restore funding to organizations like Evergreen that are essential to the survival of industrial businesses in New York City.

Fine & Raw has been making chocolate in Brooklyn for over fifteen years. We source cacao directly from cooperatives in Ecuador and the Dominican Republic, manufacture in-house, and sell across the country and internationally. The Chocolate Factory employs local workers and serves as an anchor in our neighborhood. We are exactly the kind of business the IBSP program was designed to support—and we have relied on it.

Through Evergreen, we have navigated regulatory processes with city agencies that would have been extraordinarily difficult and costly to handle on our own. We have accessed financing and incentive programs that helped us invest in equipment and grow our workforce. When regulatory issues arose—whether related to building compliance, fire safety, or manufacturing permits—Evergreen helped us understand our obligations and resolve them without losing momentum. And when we needed to find and secure industrial space appropriate for food production, Evergreen's knowledge of the local industrial real estate market was invaluable.

These are not abstract services. They are the difference between a business surviving and thriving in New York City, or relocating—or closing. The cost and complexity of operating as an industrial business in this city is immense. The IBSP program exists precisely because the city recognizes that small manufacturers and industrial employers cannot navigate it alone.

Dismantling the IBSP program under the guise of reform, after 40 years of investment, would be a serious mistake. It would weaken the support infrastructure that allows businesses like mine to stay and grow here. It would ultimately accelerate the displacement of industrial businesses from the five boroughs—businesses that employ working New Yorkers, anchor neighborhoods, and generate economic activity that cannot simply be replaced by retail or office use.

I urge this Council to protect the IBSP program and ensure that organizations like Evergreen continue to have the stable funding they need to serve our community.

Thank you.

Daniel Sklaar CEO, Fine & Raw Chocolate LLC / The Chocolate Factory
chocolate@fineandraw.com 70 Scott Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11237

Testimony of Robert Thomas Premus of Fork in the Road Productions, Inc.

NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing - March 23, 2026



My name is Robert Premus, and I am the owner of Fork in the Road Productions, an industrial business located in Sunset Park. Our company develops games that tell stories rooted in the neighborhoods of New York City, and we currently employ 3 New Yorkers with ongoing efforts to hire more to transition away from our out-of-state contracted workforce.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

Organizations like Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) provide critical support to small businesses like mine.

SBIDC has helped my company: obtain legal representation for patents and copyright services; gain access to diverse creative talent pools necessary to succeed as a creative business, access to services and programs such as the New York Digital Game Development Program which I would have otherwise been unaware of and have proven to be a critical resource for supporting us in funding our projects; sharpen its business and financial acumen through its Plan For Growth cohort; access its hub of industrial businesses that have been critical for us to coordinate with for physical asset development and architectural drafting necessary for our development work. SBIDC regularly connects us with resources that allow us to operate and grow in New York City.

Many people do not think of game development companies as industrial businesses, and they are wrong. Much like the movie industry, the game industry relies on a complex network of technical and creative artists, craftsmen, engineers, actors, carpenters, and metalworking businesses to produce products built here in New York City by New Yorkers. Without programs like IBSP, **small video game development studios cannot exist in New York City.** Eliminating this program would shutter an ecosystem of talent and integrative businesses that my business relies on, **forcing this business to move out of state.**

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like SBIDC that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Sincerely,

Robert T. Premus

Chief Executive Officer | Fork in the Road Productions, Inc.

██████████ | rob@forkroadgames.com



Date: March 23, 2026

To: New York City Council, Committee on Small Business

From: Emma Myers, Sr. Director of Small Business Programs, Hot Bread Kitchen

Re: FY27 Preliminary Budget Hearing

Thank you to the City Council, Chair Thomas-Henry, and the Committee on Small Business for their attention to the 2027 fiscal budget cycle. I am speaking on behalf of Hot Bread Kitchen, an organization that promotes economic mobility for New Yorkers who face barriers to economic opportunities through job training and placement, food entrepreneurship programs, and a wraparound ecosystem of support in New York City.

Over the past 18 years, Hot Bread Kitchen has supported a community of over 2,700 program participants, who we call members, in launching careers in the food industry, starting and growing their small businesses, and accessing the resources they need to succeed at work and in the world. Beyond transformational wage increases, our members gain stable benefits and career advancement opportunities.

We offer our members a diverse array of programs and services to help them reach economic mobility: workforce development, job placement, wraparound support services, and small business incubation. We are grateful to have received funding from the City Council previously, and **we are seeking the Council's support again in FY27 to ensure we expand access to our programs and deepen our impact in members' lives.**

Hot Bread Kitchen's small business program, HBK Incubates, supports food business entrepreneurs through three programs: Seed, Start, and Scale. Seed is our pre-incubation program that supports aspiring and early-stage entrepreneurs in designing a viable business model and provides a roadmap to launch a food business. Start is our incubator, connecting ready-to-launch and recently-launched food businesses with subsidized shared commercial kitchen space, market opportunities to grow sales, and technical assistance, with the goal of reaching breakeven and building a strong foundation for success. Scale is our accelerator, which supports growth-ready businesses in accessing capital across lending, equity, and grants to fuel their continued growth. In 2026, Hot Bread Kitchen will reach over 190 small business owners across New York City through our HBK Incubates programs.

As facilitators between entrepreneurs and City resources, organizations like Hot Bread Kitchen need support from the City to help entrepreneurs understand their business finances, navigate the unique complexities of launching a food business, build strong networks, and tap into the many resources available across New York City's entrepreneurship ecosystem.

For example, we're currently working with a member who runs a bakery and ice cream business. She is taking the exciting step of opening a brick-and-mortar location in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, after two years of operating out of a shared commercial kitchen space we provided access to through our Start program. As this founder applies for funding, we're supporting her in accessing City-backed opportunities like the NYC Future Fund, which she first learned about through our program.

Another member runs a catering company specializing in empanadas. As an M/WBE, she has been selling to City agencies through micropurchases and as a subcontractor on City contracts. She's ready to take the next step by pursuing larger orders and securing contracts directly. We're supporting her with the financial and operational planning needed to grow, as well as connecting her with bridge capital to make that transition possible.

As these examples illustrate, organizations like Hot Bread Kitchen play a critical role in New York City's small business ecosystem, serving as connectors and helping businesses plan strategically to maximize the resources available through the City. This is especially important for food businesses, which face additional operational and compliance requirements while often operating on very tight margins.

On behalf of Hot Bread Kitchen, I respectfully urge the Committee on Small Business to support our ambitious FY2027 agenda and budget requests to reach more members than ever with our offerings. Thank you for your attention to this important issue and for your investment in Hot Bread Kitchen's work and community.

Thank you,

Emma Myers
Senior Director of Small Business Programs
Hot Bread Kitchen
emyers@hotbreadkitchen.org
(202) 705-4000



Ionic Order LLC

March 23, 2026

To: New York City Council

Subject: Testimony regarding Small Business and the Role of Local Development Corporations

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Ionic Order LLC, a marine infrastructure manufacturing company operating at the Red Hook Container Terminal in Brooklyn. Since establishing our operations at the terminal, we have worked closely with a number of local partners that support the growth of Southwest Brooklyn's working waterfront and industrial economy. Among these partners, the South Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) has been particularly valuable. SBIDC's WeSource program has provided meaningful support to our business as we expand our role in the offshore wind supply chain. Through the program, SBIDC connected us with industry experts in offshore wind who helped us think through how our company can continue participating in the sector during the operations and maintenance phase that will follow the current construction cycle. These conversations helped us refine our strategy and identify new opportunities for long-term participation in the industry.

SBIDC has made about a dozen very valuable introductions for our team. They have connected us with government agencies, elected officials, and potential commercial partners, demonstrating their role as a central hub for the industrial and maritime ecosystem in Southwest Brooklyn. These introductions have been both thoughtful and highly relevant to our operations.

SBIDC has begun assisting us with workforce development by identifying potential candidates for open positions. Like many industrial employers, we have found that reaching candidates from the immediate neighborhood can be challenging, and SBIDC's efforts to bridge that gap are extremely helpful.

Organizations such as SBIDC play an important role in ensuring that working waterfront businesses in Brooklyn can grow, collaborate, and contribute to the regional economy. Their practical approach has been valuable to our company and to the broader industrial community.

We appreciate the work SBIDC does to support Southwest Brooklyn's industrial base and are grateful for their continued partnership.

Sincerely,
Alexios Shaw
Co-Founder, Ionic Order LLC

Prof. Laura Wolf-Powers
Testimony to the New York City Council
Committee on Small Business
Preliminary Budget Hearing for FY2027

March 23, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the Committee on Small Business on the crucial issue of industrial business services. My Name is Laura Wolf-Powers and I am Professor of Urban Policy & Planning at Hunter College, where I specialize in economic and community development. I am writing to urge the SBS to retain the Industrial Business Service Provider Program.

Industrial businesses support the city's architectural design & development sector, its fashion cluster, its specialty food sector, and its performing arts sector. The city's EDC, as part of its green economy initiative, has been partnering with Industrial Business Service Providers to help develop and capitalize neighborhood-based businesses that can be the future of the clean energy and building retrofit supply chains. The IBSP program is a key part of the city's private business ecosystem, and it would be a terrible mistake not to retain it in the FY 2027 budget.

I (and many other experts not taken in by misleading narratives of industrial obsolescence) take strong exception to the conclusions and recommendations reached in the NYC Department of City Planning's 2025 Industrial Plan, which recommends supplanting the Industrial Business Zone program initiated by Mayor Michael Bloomberg in 2006 with a much weaker system. The de-funding of the IBSPs appears to be continuous with this plan, which I urge the Council and the Administration to revisit. The Industrial Plan claims that fewer acres of industrially zoned land are necessary to report the city's current industrial base, and that mixed use (MX) zones can accommodate the retention of industrial firms. But a large proportion of the losses in "making" employment that the plan documents can be attributed in part to luxury conversions of buildings formerly occupied by makers and working artists, and to prohibitively high rents and outright evictions faced by these enterprises. Maker businesses are desperate to remain in New York City but cannot find space compatible with profitability.

The industrial sector requires investment and assistance, not eradication. In sync with the goals of an administration that champions affordability, living wage work, sectoral diversity, and a strong middle class, we implore the Council to maintain funding for the Industrial Business Service Service providers in the FY 2027 municipal budget.

Value of SBIDC

As a long time business owner in South Brooklyn, I cannot emphasize the importance of SBIDC to the business community. Linda Tool is a small family owned business started in Brooklyn in 1952. Brooklyn has been a good home to us and we have thrived all these years in part to our hard work and the support of SBIDC. We started dealing with them in 1999 and they have assisted in our growth and stability throughout the years. In 2003, we had to move our facility due to the gentrification of the neighborhood that our facility was in. After looking at other areas to move to we worked with SBIDC and secured another facility in South Brooklyn (Red Hook). If we had moved out of Brooklyn the likely place would have been Long Island or New Jersey. If we had, there most certainly would have been the loss of 20+ jobs. Our workforce is the heart of our business and we decided to stay in Brooklyn. This was possible due to the assistance we received from SBIDC.

Their assistance allowed us to purchase a building, gut and renovate to suit our needs, which gave us the opportunity to provide a clean, safe working environment for our employees. This move to Brooklyn gave us the ability to retain every one of our employees as well as grow our workforce.

In addition, SBIDC was a guiding light during Super Storm Sandy and the Covid Pandemic. Their responsiveness was incredible to all of the local businesses and kept us going. Their devotion to small businesses is priceless and it would be a tremendous loss to Brooklyn and New York City if it could not get the Funding it deserves.

MFACTORY.

Dear Members of the City Council,

My name is Jorge Castro, and I am the HR and IT Director at M Factory, an eyewear manufacturing company based in Industry City in Sunset Park. We have been operating since 2017, and I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed funding cuts to the Small Business Improvement District Corporation (SBIDC) and the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) programs.

Our company has worked with SBIDC since 2018, and their support has been instrumental to our growth and stability. Over the years, SBIDC has helped us connect with qualified applicants for both permanent and temporary positions. Today, we employ 53 people, and the majority of our employees came through resumes submitted by SBIDC.

As a manufacturer, having access to a reliable workforce is critical. SBIDC has provided us with a consistent pipeline of candidates, allowing us to grow, adapt, and continue operating without disruption. This is not something we could have easily achieved on our own.

Beyond supporting businesses, SBIDC has had a meaningful impact on individuals in our community. They provide employment assistance, help people build resumes, and prepare for interviews, including video interviews. Their team supports both sides of the process, helping people find jobs while also helping businesses fill essential roles. That balance is incredibly valuable and not easily replaced.

On a personal level, working with Jessicka Duran, Natalie Camacho, and Wayne Small for nearly eight years has been a great help to me and to the needs of our company. Their dedication, responsiveness, and understanding of both employer and job seeker needs have made a real difference in our success.

These programs are not abstract budget items; they are real, on-the-ground support systems that businesses and workers depend on every day. Cutting funding to SBIDC and IBSP would make it significantly harder for companies like ours to hire, grow, and continue contributing to our local economy.

Manufacturing businesses like ours are an important part of New York City's economic fabric. We create local jobs, support families, and help keep neighborhoods like Sunset Park economically vibrant. Reducing support for programs like SBIDC risks weakening that entire ecosystem.

I respectfully urge the Council to reconsider these funding cuts and to recognize the tangible, real-world impact these programs have on businesses like ours and the communities we serve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jorge Castro
HR and IT Director
M Factory
147 41st Street Brooklyn Unit 8 NY11232
george@mfactory.us 917 410 7878



Makerspace NYC 450 Front St, Unit B Staten Island, NY 10304 makerspace.nyc

Testimony of Scott Van Campen of Makerspace NYC for NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing March 23, 2026

My name is Scott Van Campen and I am the Executive Director of Makerspace NYC, an industrial business located in Sunset Park. We are a non-profit that offers workforce training in manufacturing and the trades and we currently employ 12 New Yorkers.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

Organizations like Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) provide critical support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses like mine. SBIDC has partnered with us to offer workforce training programs in critical skills such as CNC machining, welding, and carpentry and helped to place participants in jobs citywide. SBIDC regularly connects us with resources that allow us to operate and grow in New York City. Without their assistance, it would be far more difficult for small businesses like ours to thrive in NYC.

Industrial businesses like mine provide stable, good-paying jobs, produce essential goods and services for New York City, and are the backbone of an economic justice future. Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies like mine have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing local residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few programs that help industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like SBIDC that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Sincerely,

Scott Van Campen
Executive Director
Makerspace NYC
140 58th St, Building B Unit 1C
Brooklyn, NY 11220
scott@makerspace.nyc

Marine Spares International, Inc.

54 Richards Street

Brooklyn, NY 11231

Tel 718 855 9800

Email: Shipparts@aol.com

March 22, 2026

TESTIMONY FOR NYC COUNCIL BUDGET HEARING.

Testimony of Jim Tampakis of Marine Spares International, Inc. NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing March 23, 2026

My name is Jim Tampakis, and I am the owner of Marine Spares International, Inc., a Maritime & Industrial business located in Red Hook, Brooklyn, NY. Our family business moved into Red Hook in 1974 from the Gowanus where it was started in 1954. We were a ship repair business with full machine shop services and are still in our building currently employing 15-20 employees as a machine shop doing mechanical repairs.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program. Organizations like Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) provide critical support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses like mine. I have 8-10 local businesses as tenants that I am always referring for aid and assistance by SBIDC, as well as my own. I have been working with SBIDC for 25 plus years, and have introduced their services to many local Red Hook Business's from how achieve discounts on utilities, available space for expansion, vocational trained employees, etc. etc.

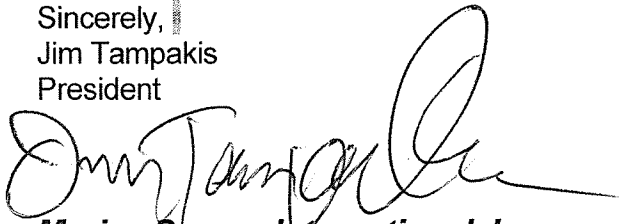
SBIDC identified and assisted local business's and land owners on the incentives for remediation on our contaminated properties through the Brownfields programs. At a time when we need to increase our manufacturing, industrial and maritime jobs in order to have our City, State and Country be self sufficient, SBIDC plays a critical roll in achieving this goal.

SBIDC regularly connects us with resources that allow us to operate and grow in New York City. Without their assistance, it would be far more difficult for small businesses like ours to thrive in NYC.

Industrial businesses like mine and my tenants provide stable, good-paying jobs, produce essential goods and services for New York City, and are the backbone of an economic justice future. Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies like mine have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing local residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few programs that help industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like SBIDC that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business, my tenants business's, and all additional local Marine and Industrial business's learn and depend on it.

Sincerely,
Jim Tampakis
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Tampakis", written in a cursive style.

Marine Spares International, Inc.

54 Richards Street
Brooklyn, NY 11231
Tel 718 855 9800
Email: Shipparts@aol.com

Martin Greenfield Clothiers, Ltd.

HAND TAILORED CLOTHING

239 Varet Street · Brooklyn · NY 11206 · Telephone: (718) 497-5480 · Fax: (718) 456-3365

Testimony of Tod Greenfield of Martin Greenfield Clothiers LTD NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing March 23, 2026

My name is Tod Greenfield, and I am an owner of Martin Greenfield Clothiers LTD, an industrial business located in East Williamsburg. Our company manufactures hand tailored custom suits, and we currently employ 50 New Yorkers.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

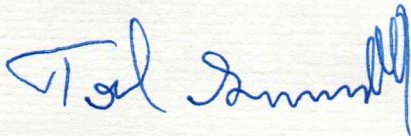
Organizations like **Evergreen: Your North Brooklyn Business Exchange** provide critical support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses like mine. Evergreen has helped our company Apply for our PPP loan, provided us with HR classes, and advocated on our behalf when we were issued unjust violations because of conflicting requirements of different city agencies. Evergreen regularly connects us with resources that allow us to operate and grow in New York City. Without their assistance, it would be far more difficult for small businesses like ours to thrive in NYC.

Our business provides stable, good-paying Union jobs to a mostly immigrant workforce. During Covid we produced desperately needed masks and hospital gowns for City Agencies, Hospitals, and front-line workers. My father Martin Greenfield got his first job in NYC at what is now our factory. He worked for the predecessor company for 30 years, starting as a non-English speaking refugee with only grade school education. His factory job enabled him to put down roots here and provided our family with the means to educate my brother and I. Today our employees can do the same for their families.

After the blackout of 1977 our neighborhood was decimated and business that survived the fires and looting were fleeing. Martin Greenfield worked with St. Nicks Alliance to establish Evergreen in 1982. This helped to stabilize and improve our neighborhood. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies like mine have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing local residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few systems that help industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like Evergreen that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Sincerely,
Tod Greenfield, VP



Martin Greenfield Clothiers LTD
239 Varet Street, Brooklyn, NY 11206
(718) 497 5480 tod@greenfieldclothiers.com

Email: suit@greenfieldclothiers.com

MECHANISM

March 18, 2026

Nepal Asatthawasi

Co-Executive Director, Mechanism

1216 Broadway

New York, NY 10001

Attention: City Council Small Business Committee Hearing, March 23 2026

We have watched with hope as the Mamdani administration has taken the question of who NYC's economy is actually working for seriously. We write now because the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program would move that project in exactly the wrong direction. Eliminating IBSPs would be a mistake that would deepen NYC's inequality, undermine its economic resilience, and abandon the workers and small businesses that need the City's support most. We urge the administration and SBS to reverse this decision.

For our first decade, we operated as the Urban Manufacturing Alliance, founded in NYC, where we helped launch the Made in NYC initiative and built the national case for urban manufacturing as a core economic development strategy. Now as Mechanism, we partner with communities, municipalities, and economic development agencies to plan and develop production ecosystems that increase local resilience and well-being. We work to fix the systems that have allowed manufacturing to erode, and with it, the economic security and stability of working-class communities. NYC is where this work began. What happens here still matters to us, and matters nationally too.

NYC is one of the most unequal cities in the world, and that did not happen by accident. It is the direct outcome of decades of shortsighted policy choices that prioritized the knowledge economy, finance, and tech industries while allowing the industrial sector to erode. The businesses and jobs that have sustained immigrants, New Yorkers of color, and workers without college degrees - the very people systematically excluded from the high-wage economy - have been allowed to shrink, squeezed by rising rents, speculative real estate, and the absence of dedicated policy. The IBSP program is one of the few remaining mechanisms the City has left to counteract this trajectory. Eliminating it tells the immigrant business owner in Maspeth, the garment worker in Sunset Park, and the food manufacturer in the South Bronx that the city has decided their economy is not worth saving or even having.

for

Community &
Connection in
Manufacturing

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MECHANISM

The numbers demonstrate the stakes:

- The **industrial sector provides over 500,000 jobs** (nearly 15% of the city's workforce) and generates over **\$1.7 billion annually in tax revenue.**
- **32% of NYC jobs that pay over \$50,000 and don't require a college degree are industrial jobs,** more than any other sector.
- Industrial businesses offer real mobility to a **workforce that is 67% people of color and 70% of whom do not possess a degree.**

These jobs are the primary remaining pathway to the middle class for New Yorkers most often left behind. Without doubt, they depend on the specialized support that only IBSPs provide.

We are entering an era of what many recognize as a polycrisis: accelerating climate shocks, geopolitical instability, fractured global supply chains, and economic volatility that no single policy can predict or prevent. When global supply chains collapsed during the pandemic, the city's remaining industrial sector - composed of its garment workers, food manufacturers, medical supply producers - became an emergency resource. As NYC pursues a Green New Deal transition, it will depend on its industrial sector to design, manufacture, install, and maintain green technologies. IBZs contain freight logistics, cold storage, waste processing, electricity distribution, energy storage, advanced manufacturing capacity, and other capabilities that the city cannot afford to lose. The businesses that can flex to meet changing needs are small manufacturers, who also are the most agile, community-rooted producers in the ecosystem. IBSPs keep them viable and connected.

There is one more disruption that demands attention: AI is already transforming the knowledge economy that New York has spent decades building. No one knows exactly how this will unfold, but manufacturing jobs — that require physical skill, spatial judgment, and craft — have proven far more resistant to automation than the office economy New York has bet everything on. Protecting and growing the industrial sector now is a hedge against the workforce displacement that is coming. A city that preserves its manufacturing base will be far better positioned to absorb shock than one that lets it disappear.

We understand the city is facing a serious budget deficit. We do not dismiss this difficult reality. But the IBSP program costs just \$1.2 million citywide, a figure so modest it amounts to a rounding error in municipal finance. For that investment, the city

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sustains the backbone organizations that keep hundreds of industrial businesses alive, growing, and employing marginalized New Yorkers. These are businesses that generate tax revenue, anchor neighborhoods, and provide the kind of stable employment that reduces long-term demand on city social services.

The proposed alternative of a single rotating generalist staffer per borough through the Business Solutions Center is an insufficient substitute for what currently exists. Industrial firms require specialized support from organizations embedded in their sector and communities. That is what IBSPs provide, built over decades of institutional knowledge and relationships based on trust and it cannot be replicated by drop-in services.

We ask the City to take three steps:

1. Remove industrial businesses from the Business Solutions Center RFP;
2. Extend existing IBSP contracts by at least one year to ensure continuity; and
3. Work *with* the industrial community to co-design a modernized program that addresses rising real estate pressures, connects manufacturers to green economy opportunities, strengthens workforce pipelines, and reinvests in the Industrial Developer Fund.

A more equitable NYC is not possible without a strong industrial sector. The IBSP program is one of the most important tools the city has for building the economy this administration claims it wants. We urge you to protect it.

Sincerely,

Nepal Asatthawasi
Co-Executive Director
Mechanism

for

Community &
Connection in
Manufacturing

mechanism.community



TESTIMONY FOR NYC COUNCIL BUDGET HEARING.

Testimony of Hedvig Bourbon of Norwegian Baked NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing March 23, 2026.

My name is Hedvig Bourbon, and I am the owner of Norwegian Baked, an industrial business located in Sunset Park. Our company is a small batch bakery specializing in handcrafted organic crispbread, and we currently employ 5 New Yorkers.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

Organizations like Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) provide critical support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses like mine. SBIDC has helped our company with advice during lease renewal negotiations and development programs with their Plan for Growth, and introductions and networking with other small businesses in the neighborhood. SBIDC regularly connects us with resources that allow us to operate and grow in New York City. Without their assistance, it would be far more difficult for small businesses like ours to thrive in NYC.

Industrial businesses like mine provide stable, good-paying jobs, produce essential goods and services for New York City, and are the backbone of an economic justice future. Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies like mine have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing local residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few programs that help industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like SBIDC that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Sincerely,

Hedvig Bourbon
Founder
Norwegian Baked LLC
80 58th st, Brooklyn NY 11220
[REDACTED] / norwegianbaked@gmail.com



O'CONNELL ORGANIZATION, LLC

175 Van Dyke Street, Suite 322A, Brooklyn, NY 11231

P: (718) 624-0160 · F: (718) 875-5790

www.redhookwaterfront.com

March 23, 2026

Testimony of Gregory T. O'Connell, Principal
O'Connell Organization
New York City Council Committee on Small Business

Dear Council Members,

My name is Gregory T. O'Connell, and I am Principal at The O'Connell Organization, a Red Hook, Brooklyn-based real estate investment and management company. Our Red Hook portfolio is home to hundreds of small businesses, including many light-manufacturing and creative enterprises. SBIDC has supported this business community for decades and remains an important partner in the neighborhood's economic life.

We believe neighborhoods are strongest when they grow through a healthy mixture of uses, including housing, commercial activity, and light manufacturing. Mixed-use development is strongest when it makes room for productive businesses as part of neighborhood life rather than pushing them out.

I am writing in strong support of continued funding for the Industrial Business Service Provider program and in opposition to any proposal to eliminate or weaken it.

Organizations like Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation, or SBIDC, help make that kind of balanced growth possible. SBIDC supports light manufacturers, makers, and small production businesses that give neighborhoods like Red Hook economic depth, local character, and opportunity. Its work helps businesses solve problems, access resources, stay rooted locally, and continue contributing jobs, services, and day-to-day activity to the community.

Red Hook demonstrates that light manufacturing does not need to be pushed far away from residences in order to succeed. When planned thoughtfully, light manufacturing can coexist with homes, retail, and other community uses. That coexistence creates neighborhoods that are more resilient, more functional, and more inclusive.

This is not an argument for single-use neighborhoods. It is an argument for mixed-use neighborhoods that continue to make room for light manufacturing and the small businesses that help communities function.



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The IBSP program helps preserve that balance by supporting organizations that work directly with small businesses on the ground. Eliminating the program would make it harder for those businesses to remain part of New York City neighborhoods.

I urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like SBIDC. If the City wants neighborhoods like Red Hook to remain vibrant, functional, and inclusive, it should invest in the local economic ecosystem that allows mixed-use development and light manufacturing to coexist and flourish.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gregory T. O'Connell". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gregory T. O'Connell
Principal
O'Connell Organization



O'CONNELL ORGANIZATION, LLC

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APRIL 15, 2020

VIA FACSIMILE TO (518)474-1418

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF CORPORATIONS
ONE COMMERCE PLAZA
99 WASHINGTON AVENUE
ALBANY, NY 11231

RE: RESUBMISSION EXPEDITED PROCESSING FOR CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

PLEASE LET THIS SERVE AS MY SECOND, CORRECTED, REQUEST FOR EXPEDITED PROCESSING TO RECEIVE AN ASSUMED NAME OR D/B/A FOR MY COMPANY, O'C CONSTRUCTION GROUP INC. I WOULD LIKE TO UTILIZE THE OFFERED "SAME DAY" PROCESSING AND HAVE ENCLOSED THE CREDIT CARD/DEBIT CARD AUTHORIZATION FORM, ALONG WITH THE VARIOUS FEE AUTHORIZATIONS. MY COMPANY, O'C CONSTRUCTION GROUP INC. BEGAN AS A CONSTRUCTION COMPANY BUT NOW IS MORE OF A PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANY, MAINTAINING PROPERTIES THROUGHOUT KINGS, WYOMING AND LIVINGSTON COUNTIES. OUR PRIMARY PLACE OF BUSINESS IS IN BROOKLYN, NY AND WE HAVE AN ANCILLARY OFFICE IN MOUNT MORRIS, NY. FEES FOR MULTIPLE COUNTIES HAVE BEEN INCLUDED. I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE AN ASSUMED NAME OF "O'CONNELL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT," IN ORDER TO OBTAIN CLARITY FOR MY CUSTOMERS, AND BUILD THE BRAND MORE EFFICIENTLY.

ADDITIONALLY, AS PER YOUR TIMELY, RESPONSE VIA FASCIMILE AT 11:01AM, I HAVE CORRECTED THE NAME OF THE CORPORATION, OMITTING THE INCORRECT COMMA MISTAKENLY INCLUDED.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICES, AND PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU REQUIRE ANY MORE INFORMATION. I HAVE INCLUDED MY CONTACT DETAILS IN THE LETTER.

SINCERELY,

GREGORY O'CONNELL, PRESIDENT
O'C CONSTRUCTION GROUP INC.

EIN: 45-5438930

PHONE: 718-624-0160 EXT. 103

EMAIL: GREGORY@REDHOOKWATERFRONT.COM

**NYC City Council
Committee on Small
Business**
Shanel Thomas-Henry,
Chair

March 23, 2026

Note: This testimony reflects the position of Pratt Center for Community Development and not necessarily Pratt Institute

NYC Council Committee on Small Business Hearing

Pratt Center for Community Development works for a more just, equitable and sustainable New York City through participatory planning, applied research, and policy advocacy in collaboration with community-based organizations. We strongly believe in advancing an equitable local economy that includes a strong industrial sector because of the employment opportunities and career pathways it provides to people with limited educational attainment. The city's industrial sector also plays a critical role in promoting sustainability since it decreases the amount of goods that are brought to the city via long-distance trucking. Finally, the industrial sector contributes to local supply chains that help other economic sectors in the city thrive.

We are also members of the Industrial Jobs Coalition, a citywide coalition of Industrial Business Service Providers, non-profit developers of industrial space, and industrial policy advocates fighting to protect and grow the industrial sector in NYC and the good paying jobs that it provides.

This testimony addresses the importance of Industrial Business Service Providers (IBSPs) and the role they play for the industrial sector. This is especially pressing given our concern that the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) is looking to dismantle the only business support program for small and mid-sized industrial firms, through their newly released RFP - which would eliminate funding for IBSPs.

This approach would harm the industrial sector and the good paying jobs and \$1.7 billion in tax revenue that it provides.

IBSPs are:

- Providers of high-value services through their trusted, specialized support in Industrial Business Zones, including: financing, real estate, compliance, workforce, and operational support tailored to industrial firms
- Extremely cost-effective: \$1.2M supports a sector with 500K jobs (~\$2.40 per job).

We believe SBS's Proposed Business Solutions model for NYC's industrial businesses is structurally flawed for many reasons. The primary one is that it assumes all small businesses (whether industrial or those in the service/commercial/retail sectors) are the same and can be serviced in relatively the same way with limited staffing. This doesn't account for the unique needs of industrial businesses.

We are specifically asking the City Council to work with us to ensure that SBS:

1. Removes industrial services from their RFP
2. Extends IBSP contracts for 2 years

3. Co-develops a modernized, sector-specific IBSP program that better meets the needs of industrial businesses.

We know the members of the Small Business Committee, the City Council as a whole, and the Mamdani administration are committed to building a more equitable city. The industrial sector -with its good quality jobs for working class New Yorkers- is not a legacy to be managed into decline. It is an asset to be invested in. We urge the City Council to assist us in pressing the City to act accordingly, before the window closes.

For more information, contact

PAULA CRESPO
Senior Planner
Pratt Center for Community Development

63 Flushing Avenue, Building 3, Suite #701
Brooklyn, NY 11205
pcrespo@prattcenter.net





**NYC Council Small Business Committee Budget Hearing
In Support of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) Program
and the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC)
March 23, 2026**

Dear Members of the City Council Small Business Committee,

My name is Victoria Alexander, and I am chair of Resilient Red Hook (RRH), a community-based organization in Red Hook, Brooklyn dedicated to climate resilience, environmental justice, equitable land use, and working waterfront advocacy. I am writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program and the folding of industrial business support into the Business Solutions Center (BSC) Request for Proposals.

We understand the City faces a fiscal crisis. That is exactly why this proposal does not make sense. Defunding the organizations that keep industrial businesses in New York City does not save money—it accelerates the loss of the tax base, jobs, and economic activity those businesses generate. This testimony explains why, drawing on SBIDC's own track record in Red Hook and the structural problems with the proposed RFP model.

These Organizations Keep Businesses in New York City—That Is the Fiscal Case

In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy devastated Red Hook. Businesses lost everything—equipment destroyed, basements flooded, electrical systems wiped out. Residents faced the most devastating day of their lives. The Red Hook community responded immediately. The City of New York did not show up in a timely manner.

SBIDC did. They were on the ground helping businesses and residents when no one else was. They didn't just help businesses rebuild—they helped the community rebuild. They became members of the Governor's NY Rising Community Reconstruction program. They commissioned the Dewberry Red Hook Small Business Hazard Mitigation Case Study (2013), which documented Sandy's impacts on small manufacturers and identified locally tested flood mitigation strategies that SBIDC then helped businesses implement.

SBIDC is the reason those businesses stayed in Red Hook instead of relocating to New Jersey, Long Island, or out of state entirely. Every manufacturer that stayed is tax revenue retained. Every warehouse that reopened is jobs preserved. Every maritime operator that kept running is supply chain capacity the City did not have to replace.

Organizations like SBIDC are nimble in ways that city agencies and generic service providers are not. They know the businesses by name. They know which landlords are reliable, which permits are stuck, which contractors can do flood-proofing work. They have relationships built over decades that cannot be replicated by a Business Solutions Center vendor who was just handed a new line item on a broadened contract. That institutional knowledge is the City's most cost-effective tool for retaining industrial businesses—and the IBSP program is how it gets funded.

We Are Disinvesting in Industrial Communities at the Worst Possible Time

Our Industrial Business Zones are already underfunded. At a time when we are trying to bring manufacturing back as a nation—when federal policy, supply chain disruption, and climate transition are all pointing toward the need for domestic industrial capacity—New York City is continually disinvesting in its IBZs and spot-zoning throughout its manufacturing communities.

Industrial jobs are the gateway for community members—especially immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees—to build working-class careers. These are the jobs that make New York City diverse and equitable. Red Hook's industrial economy provides stable, accessible, good-paying work to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity.

The proposed RFP model makes this worse, not better. Under the current plan, SBS will give a Business Solutions Center the same pool of money it received last year to serve non-industrial businesses—and now expect that same vendor to serve industrial businesses as well. Under this model, industrial support is not a priority; it is an afterthought. There is no additional funding, no specialized mandate, and no incentive for a generalist BSC to subcontract with organizations like SBIDC that actually have the expertise. The result is predictable: industrial businesses get less support, not more, and the organizations that built decades of specialized capacity are defunded.

Industrial firms require specialized support that a general small business program is not structured to provide. A manufacturer navigating flood-proofing requirements, environmental remediation, IBZ zoning protections, freight logistics, and industrial lease negotiations has fundamentally different needs than a retail storefront or a restaurant. Treating them as the same is not streamlining—it is abandonment.

Stripping Independent Advocacy Silences Communities

Beyond the fiscal case and the specialization case, there is a structural problem with this proposal that the Council must confront: it eliminates the independent advocacy voice of industrial communities.

SBIDC can walk into a City Planning Commission hearing and testify that a proposed rezoning will destroy industrial jobs. It can tell the Economic Development Corporation that its master plan for the Brooklyn Marine Terminal threatens the working waterfront. It

can go before a community board, a borough president, or this Council and say: the City's own policies are failing these businesses. SBIDC can do all of that because it is accountable to the community—not to the administration.

A Business Solutions Center vendor operating under an SBS contract cannot do any of that. SBS's entire metric model is built around starting new businesses, not preserving existing ones. The agency is not structured to fight for the retention of a manufacturer facing displacement from a City-backed rezoning. And a vendor whose contract depends on SBS is not going to challenge the administration that signs its checks.

Eliminating IBSP isn't streamlining—it's consolidating power into a contracting structure that can't challenge the administration's own policies. SBIDC can fight a rezoning at DCP. You're silencing communities, not serving them.

In Red Hook, this is not hypothetical. The City is currently proposing the Brooklyn Marine Terminal redevelopment—a massive rezoning of the exact working waterfront that the adopted *Red Hook 197-a Plan (1996)* was written to protect. That plan, formally approved by the City Planning Commission and City Council, establishes preserving and strengthening industrial and maritime activity as a core policy goal. SBIDC is the primary organization delivering on those goals—and it can only do so because it is independent. If industrial advocacy is folded into a vendor contract managed by the same City apparatus proposing the rezoning, there will be no independent institutional voice left to hold the City accountable to its own adopted plan.

Independent Research Is the Foundation of Community Power

SBIDC has not only provided direct services and independent advocacy—it has built a body of research that gives communities the evidence they need to challenge bad policy and plan for their own future. This research pipeline exists because IBSP funds independent organizations with the mandate and capacity to produce it. A BSC vendor with a broadened, underfunded contract will not do this work. SBIDC's research includes:

1. **Dewberry Red Hook Small Business Hazard Mitigation Case Study (prepared for SBIDC, 2013)**

Documented Sandy's devastating impacts on Red Hook's small manufacturers and identified locally tested flood mitigation strategies—data the City itself had not produced. SBIDC then used this research to deliver the hands-on technical assistance businesses needed to survive and stay.

2. **Red Hook Economic Analysis: Resiliency & Labor Market (SBIDC, 2016)**

Independent economic analysis of Red Hook's industrial area, produced through the Brownfield Opportunity Area process. This is the kind of evidence communities use to push back against proposals to convert industrial land—evidence a City-contracted BSC vendor has no mandate or incentive to produce.

3. **Red Hook Brownfield Opportunity Area Nomination Report (prepared for SBIDC and NYS DOS, 2021/2023)**

SBIDC led a community-based revitalization plan for 343 acres of Red Hook's Industrial Business Zone—stakeholder engagement, site assessment, economic analysis, and equitable development vision. This is institutional capacity built over years. It cannot be handed to a generalist vendor and replicated.

4. **Red Hook Light Manufacturing Center Feasibility Report (SBIDC)**

Assessed the potential for dedicated, affordable light manufacturing space in Red Hook—proactive, community-driven industrial planning that a Business Solutions Center focused on general small business support would never undertake.

5. Resiliency Programs Analysis & Capacity Building (Karp Strategies, prepared for SBIDC)

Strategic analysis that helped SBIDC strengthen its post-Sandy resiliency programming—institutional capacity that the IBSP program made possible and that cannot be rebuilt once it is dismantled.

Every one of these reports exists because an independent organization had the resources, the relationships, and the mandate to produce it. If IBSP is eliminated and industrial support is absorbed into a generic BSC contract, this research pipeline dies—and with it, the community’s ability to challenge bad policy with its own evidence.

Our Ask

Resilient Red Hook joins the Industrial Jobs Coalition—including SBIDC, Evergreen, Pratt Center for Community Development, GMDC, and other organizations—in urging the City Council to take the following actions:

- **Remove industrial business support from the Business Solutions Center RFP.**

Industrial firms require specialized support that a general small business program is not structured to provide. Lumping industrial services into a generic BSC contract—with the same funding pool and no additional resources—guarantees that industrial businesses will receive less support, not more. Industrial business support must be separated from the BSC RFP and funded through a dedicated, sector-specific program.

- **Extend existing IBSP contracts for two years.**

The relationships, institutional knowledge, and trust that organizations like SBIDC have built with industrial businesses over decades cannot be quickly rebuilt if they are allowed to collapse. A two-year extension ensures continuity of services while a modernized program is developed—and prevents the immediate, irreversible loss of capacity that the current timeline would cause.

- **Work with industrial organizations to co-develop a modernized, sector-specific program.**

The industrial economy is evolving—and the program that supports it should evolve with it. The City should work directly with industrial service providers and the communities they serve to co-develop a new program that addresses industrial real estate pressures, workforce development, green economy transition, and the emerging needs of a sector that is ready to grow if the City will invest in it. This is not a sector that needs to be folded into a generalist program. It is a sector that needs a dedicated, modernized commitment.

Eliminating the IBSP program does not save money—it accelerates the loss of the businesses, jobs, and tax base that make industrial neighborhoods viable. It strips communities of independent advocacy at the moment they need it most. And it replaces decades of specialized, trusted, community-rooted capacity with a generic contract that has no mandate, no incentive, and no ability to do this work.

The livelihood of Red Hook’s industrial businesses, the workers they employ, and the power of this community to speak for itself depends on getting this right.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Alexander

Chair

Resilient Red Hook

Red Hook, Brooklyn, NY

ResilientRedHook@gmail.com

Testimony of Sophia Suh of S BY S STUDIO INC. for NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing March 23, 2026

My name is Sophia Suh, and I am the owner of S BY S STUDIO INC, an industrial business located in Brooklyn. Our company manufactures military uniforms for the federal government, and we currently employ 40 New Yorkers.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

Organizations like Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) provide critical support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses like mine. SBIDC has helped our company secure financing, access training and technical assistance, and navigate operational challenges—enabling us to expand our operations, improve efficiency, and retain jobs for New Yorkers. SBIDC regularly connects us with resources that allow us to operate and grow in New York City. Without their assistance, it would be far more difficult for small businesses like ours to thrive in NYC.

Industrial businesses like mine provide stable, good-paying jobs, produce essential goods and services for New York City, and are the backbone of an economic justice future. Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies like mine have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing local residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few programs that help industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like SBIDC that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Sincerely,
Sophia Suh
President

S BY S STUDIO INC
140 58TH ST BUILDING A SUITE 8M BROOKLYN, NY 11220
[REDACTED] / buttdownfty@gmail.com



**Testimony of Leslie Fox
Co-Founder & COO, SakeBrooklyn Brewing Company
NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing – March 2026**

My name is Leslie Fox, and I am the Co-Founder and COO of SakeBrooklyn Brewing Company LLC, a full-production sake brewery that will be opening in the Gowanus neighborhood of Brooklyn.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

While we have not yet opened, we are actively moving forward with the development of a production facility that will create high-quality manufacturing jobs and contribute to the long-term revitalization of Gowanus – an area the City has identified as critical for industrial retention and growth.

By Year 5, we expect to generate over \$6 million annually in local economic activity and create more than 30 jobs, including approximately 16 production and manufacturing roles. By Year 10, we project over \$11 million in annual economic activity and more than 50 total jobs, including approximately 25 manufacturing jobs. These are exactly the kinds of jobs New York City has said it wants to preserve and expand.

As a startup navigating a highly complex development process, the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) has been instrumental to our ability to get our project off the ground. Early on, SBIDC introduced us to NYC Small Business Services, a resource we were not aware of and would not have found on our own. They helped us identify relevant city and state incentive programs and guided us toward opportunities that were actually applicable to our business.

When we needed to understand manufacturing-related incentives through Con Edison, we were unable to find the right contacts. SBIDC directly introduced us to the appropriate representatives so we could get clear answers and move forward efficiently.

As a small business navigating a complex and often difficult process, we relied heavily on SBIDC to help us access economic development resources. They strengthened our applications with NYCEDC and Empire State Development by providing letters of support that helped us secure a tax credit through the Excelsior Jobs Program and obtain preliminary approval for ASTEP. They also helped us complete our applications by helping us interpret unclear requirements and addressing areas where guidance was limited.

During our site search, SBIDC helped us navigate zoning questions across multiple locations and get clarity on Department of Buildings-related delays impacting certain potential sites. These are not questions you can resolve through a website or a general



SAKEBROOKLYN

hotline. Rather, the SBIDC's relationships with local agencies allowed us to access information that would otherwise have been out of reach.

At every stage, SBIDC has reduced friction, shortened timelines, and made it possible for us to invest in New York City rather than looking elsewhere. There is no equivalent resource that provides this level of place-based, relationship-driven support for industrial businesses. Programs like SBIDC are not duplicative of SBS—they are complementary and, in many cases, irreplaceable.

If the IBSP program is eliminated, businesses like ours will lose one of the only organizations equipped to help navigate the complex intersection of industrial development, public incentives, and local government.

I strongly urge the City to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like SBIDC. Their work directly enables projects like ours to move forward, create jobs, and contribute to New York City's industrial economy.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Leslie Fox
Co-Founder & COO
SakeBrooklyn Brewing Company LLC
leslie.fox@sakebrooklyn.com
703-568-7368



March 23, 2026

Dear Committee Chair Thomas-Henry and members of the Committee on Small Business,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of the Industrial Business Services Provider (IBSP) program and specifically, the IBSP provider The Business Outreach Center (BOC) Network. My name is Daniel R. Garcia, founder and owner of Salsa Caterers and Special Events. We are an MBE certified business located in the Port Morris Industrial Business Zone in the Bronx with an additional location in East Harlem. We have been operating in NYC for 35 years and currently employ 50 people.

For years we have worked with the Business Outreach Center (BOC) Network where they have supported our growth via capacity building programs and through one-on-one technical support. Importantly, the BOC Network helped Salsa Caterers access \$750,000 in contract financing so that we could keep our doors open while we were in desperate need due to debilitating delays with payments on City agency contracts. Without the support of the BOC IBSP team, we would have faced significant uncertainty which my business may have not survived.

Industrial businesses like mine provide stable, good-paying jobs and produce essential goods and services for New York City. Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies like mine have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing local residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few systems that helps industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like BOC Network that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel R. Garcia".

Daniel R. Garcia

President/CEO

Salsa Caterers & Special Events

909 E. 135th Street, Bronx NY 10454

718-716-2020 / daniel.garcia@salsacaterers.com



Prequalified **MBE** with NYCSCA, NYCSBS, MTA, & PANYNJ
Prequalified **WMBE** with DASNY & NYSESD
Prequalified **DBE**

SH5 Construction Corp.

2169 West 5th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11223

P: (718) 259-2625 | F: (718) 259-5024

E: info@sh5construction.com

March 23rd, 2026

Dear Committee Chair Thomas-Henry and members of the Committee on Small Business,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of the Industrial Business Services Provider (IBSP) program and specifically, the IBSP provider The Business Outreach Center (BOC) Network. My name is Yasmeen Latif, owner of SH5 Construction Corp. We are an MWBE certified business located in Gravesend, Brooklyn. We have been operating in NYC for 22 years and currently employ 40 people.

For years we have worked with the Business Outreach Center (BOC) Network where they have supported our growth via numerous capacity building programs and through hands-on one-on-one technical support. Importantly, the BOC Network has helped SH5 Construction Corp access critical financing so that we could keep operating while we have faced significant challenges and slow payments. Without the support of the BOC IBSP team, we would have faced significant uncertainty which my business would have most likely not survived.

Industrial businesses like mine provide stable, good-paying jobs and produce essential goods and services for New York City. Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies like mine have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing local residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few systems that helps industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like BOC Network that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Yasmeen Latif", is written over a horizontal line.

Yasmeen Latif

President

SH5 CONSTRUCTION CORP.

2169 West 5th Street

Brooklyn, NY 11223

Tel: 718-259-2625

Email: YL@SH5CONSTRUCTION.COM



78 Gerry Street, Brooklyn, NY 11206
718.599.4583 | 718.599.1250
www.shanghaimks.com

March 20, 2026

To NYC Council Small Business Committee

My name is Ernie Wong. I'm the owner of Shanghai MKS, a company located at 78 Gerry Street, Brooklyn, NY 11206. We design, build, service and maintain mobile food trucks and trailers for New York City, the Greater New York area, and beyond. We have been located in North Brooklyn since 1992 and currently we have 7 employees.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program. For 44 years, we have benefited from the support and services provided through this program, particularly through Evergreen Exchange, and that assistance has been critical to our stability and growth. We want to ensure that Evergreen continues to receive the essential City resources it needs to carry on this work—advocating for and supporting small industrial businesses so that our community can continue to thrive.

I have been a member of Evergreen since 2008, joined its board in 2011, and have served as Board Secretary since 2022. I strongly support Evergreen for its unwavering commitment to the industrial community. They have helped us, and many others in countless ways, including advocacy, guidance, education, and funding securement.

On a personal note, in 2006, Evergreen provided critical advocacy when my business faced a major crisis and was threatened by disposition authority under the Broadway Triangle Urban Renewal plan. Leah and her team fought tirelessly against entrenched political pressures. Evergreen has been instrumental in our business's survival, development, and growth.

Many more industrial businesses like ours need their help. Businesses face a plethora of challenges in NYC, such as regulatory issues and navigation, human resource development and training, capital borrowing and securement, employee and transportation logistics, and much more. Evergreen continues to lead the pack, staying ahead of the curve, and always punching above their weight. Year after year, I have personally observed the Evergreen team deliver on their mission statement.

Organizations like Evergreen deliver impact far beyond the resources they receive, serving as a critical bridge between industrial businesses and City agencies, and ensuring that firms can effectively navigate government, access incentives, and grow. Their work is essential to strengthening and sustaining the industrial sector—one of New York City's most important economic engines and a proven pathway to high-quality, working-class jobs. In North Brooklyn alone, industrial businesses support tens of thousands of jobs, generate billions in economic activity, and provide wages that significantly outpace many other sectors, often without requiring advanced education.

For businesses like mine, Evergreen's support is not abstract—it is fundamental. Their advocacy, guidance, and deep connection to both industry and government make it possible for companies to operate, expand, and continue providing stable, well-paying jobs to our communities.



78 Gerry Street, Brooklyn, NY 11206
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www.shanghaimks.com

I strongly urge the City of New York, this Committee and the Council to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like Evergreen that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alney (Ernie) Wong", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Alney (Ernie) Wong
President
Shanghai MKS

March 26, 2026

To: NYC Committee on Small Business
Via upload to Hearing Testimony Registration

From: Elli Papadopoulos
Founder, Skopos Collective LLC
504 Halsey Street, Brooklyn, NY
elli@skoposcollective.com

Re: Written Testimony in Opposition to the Proposed Elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) Program

My name is Elli Papadopoulos and I am the Founder of Skopos Collective LLC. I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

I have worked in small business, community, and economic development since 2005. During the 2008 recession, when banks turned their backs on small businesses, organizations like Evergreen and SBIDC showed up. At the time I was working for a Community Development lender — Grow America Fund — and these IBSPs were our eyes and ears on the ground. When an industrial business needed financing and no one else was willing to help, they were the lifeline that made it happen.

I say this not only from memory, but from current experience — I work with these organizations today, providing small business finance education to their members. They engage real businesses on real issues and deliver real answers from real professionals. That is rare and valuable.

Generalist organizations simply do not understand the specific needs of manufacturers. IBSPs do. A manufacturer navigating flood-proofing, industrial leases, or environmental permitting has fundamentally different needs than a restaurant or retailer. Folding them into a one-size-fits-all program with the same budget and a rotating staff member covering an entire borough is not a reform — it is a funding cut in disguise.

Industrial businesses pay better wages, generate significant economic and social value, and are woven into the fabric of our neighborhoods. They deserve more investment, not less. Eliminating the IBSP program would further disenfranchise this community at precisely the moment they need support most.

I urge you to reject this proposal.

Respectfully submitted,



Elli Papadopoulos

City Council and Electeds Testimony and Support Letter for SBIDC

Testimony of Will Wytias-Sobel of Slow Burn Ceramics - NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing March 23, 2026

My name is Will Wytias-Sobel, and I am the owner of Slow Burn Ceramics, an industrial business located in Gowanus. Our business brings ceramic and pottery production and education to the local community, and we currently employ 6 New Yorkers.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

Organizations like Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) provide critical support to small industrial businesses like mine. SBIDC has helped our company get a better understanding of our finances, including understanding the costs of our goods sold and better envision a path to growth and longevity. Through their educational seminars I have been put in contact with other creative industry professionals in our neighborhood in order to get better pricing, establish contact with local supplies and be opened up to a network of support. SBIDC connects us with resources that allow us to operate and grow in New York City. Without their assistance, it would be far more difficult for small businesses like ours to thrive in NYC.

Industrial businesses like mine provide stable, good-paying jobs, produce essential goods and services for New York City, and are the backbone of an economic justice future. Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies like mine have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing local residents. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few programs that help industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like SBIDC that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of my business and that of my employees depends on it.

Sincerely,
Will Wytias-Sobel
Co-Founder
Slow Burn Ceramics
65 15th Street, 2F & 3, Brooklyn, NY 11215
720-496-6075 / will.wytias.sobel@gmail.com



SBIDC

Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation

4223 1st Avenue, Suite 2
Brooklyn, NY 11232
718-965-3100 fax: 718-577-5858
SBIDC.org

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Executive Director

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Mike Stamatis
Red Hook Container Terminal

Eileen Vázquez Thornton
Flushing Bank

March 23rd, 2026
Re: Small Business Preliminary Budget Hearing

Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC), thanks Committee Chair Thomas-Henry, and members of the Committee, for the opportunity to submit testimony on small business-related proposals for the Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget.

For over 40 years, SBIDC has served the industrial businesses and workers of Sunset Park, Red Hook, and Gowanus — neighborhoods that have powered Brooklyn's working waterfront since the nineteenth century, and that remain essential to how this city functions today.

Across these neighborhoods, more than 2,000 industrial firms anchor these local economies — from food production and garment manufacturing to film and television, fabrication, wholesale, logistics, utilities and transportation. SBIDC has deep, decades-long relationships with these businesses. We know the pulse of these sectors. We are the local intermediaries who connect them to government, to resources, and to opportunity.

Each year, SBIDC supports over 250 businesses through direct technical assistance and advocacy. Since 2017, leveraging our deep connections with industrial employers, we have helped place more than 2,000 New Yorkers into quality, family-sustaining jobs. We are a proud member of the Industrial Jobs Coalition, working alongside IBSPs across all five boroughs — organizations that together form the only coordinated public infrastructure dedicated to the industrial sector.

All that work is now at risk.

What the City Is Proposing — and Why It Matters

The NYC Department of Small Business Services is proposing to eliminate the Industrial Business Service Provider program — the only City program dedicated to supporting small manufacturers and industrial businesses. For SBIDC, this represents a 20% cut to our annual budget. For the sector citywide, it threatens the loss of specialized support that no generalist program is equipped to replace. This is being framed as streamlining. It is not. This is policymaking in the name of efficiency — with very real, and very foreseeable, consequences.

If the goal is truly efficiency, then we must be clear about what efficiency means in practice. For industrial businesses, the greatest barrier is not a lack of willingness or capacity — it is navigating an increasingly complex regulatory environment. These businesses are among the most heavily regulated in the city, yet the systems meant to support them are fragmented, opaque, and difficult to access without deep, place-based knowledge.

No one is better positioned to cut through that complexity than IBSP organizations. We translate regulation into action. We shorten timelines. We prevent costly mistakes.

Every hour a business owner spends trying to decipher permitting requirements, compliance standards, or agency processes is an hour taken away from production, from hiring, from investing back into their business. Those lost hours have real consequences: fewer jobs created, fewer benefits provided, and less capital circulating in local economies.

This is not just an operational issue — it is an economic justice issue. Overregulation without specialized support directly limits the availability of quality jobs with low barriers to entry. When businesses can more quickly and effectively navigate the regulatory landscape, they are better positioned to grow, to hire locally, and to provide stable, quality jobs to the communities that have historically faced the greatest barriers to economic opportunity.

Removing IBSPs does not streamline government — it shifts the burden of complexity onto small businesses least equipped to carry it.

Industrial businesses operate within highly specialized systems: land use, logistics, workforce development, environmental compliance, and regulation. The nuances of zoning across industrial neighborhoods, the nuances of incentive programs such as ICAP, IDA or REAP, the financing landscape for a small garment manufacturer, the permitting complexities for a company dealing with explosives — these are not things a generalist can absorb in a rotation. They are built through years of sustained presence, expertise and trust. The proposed replacement model — a single rotating staff member per borough, housed in a Business Solutions Center — cannot replicate what IBSPs do, and it is not designed to. A single employee cannot possibly serve the hundreds of businesses our organizations serve each year across every borough.

What We Actually Do — and What Would Be Lost

The clearest way to explain what is at stake is to show what this work looks like on the ground.

When Workspace 11, a Gowanus-based fabrication firm, faced displacement due to eminent domain, SBIDC was the first organization to inform them — and the partner that helped them navigate everything that came next. We guided them through negotiations, financing options, and relocation logistics, ultimately helping them stay in the neighborhood and preserve more than 30 jobs. That outcome did not happen because someone made a phone call. It happened because we personally canvassed every company on their block to let them know, knocked their door and they knew our name. Because we knew the

landscape of industrial real estate in Southwest Brooklyn, and because we had the trust of every agency involved in the process.

When Button Down Factory, a garment manufacturer who had recently relocated from the Garment District to the Brooklyn Army Terminal, was risking defaulting on their payroll during the pandemic, SBIDC helped stabilize their operations at a moment of acute crisis. We supported them in securing a New York Forward Loan, PPP funding, and a \$100,000 line of credit. We helped them expand into government procurement and retain more than 50 employees. Today, Button Down Factory is growing — they recently secured a multi-million-dollar government contract — and they are now part of a revitalized garment manufacturing ecosystem taking root in Sunset Park. That is not a coincidence. It is the result of sustained, specialized support at exactly the right moment.

SBIDC is also deeply engaged in the forward-looking dimensions of the industrial economy. We have been actively involved in the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal's transition into a major offshore wind hub supporting the Empire Wind 1 project — a site with the potential to generate over 1,000 union jobs and anchor long-term renewable energy infrastructure in Brooklyn. We advocated to preserve its maritime and industrial designation, and we partnered with Equinor to launch Wind Connections, a program that helps local businesses access contracts in the offshore wind supply chain. Similarly, through We Source NYC, we provide targeted technical assistance and market access support to manufacturers and suppliers, ensuring that emerging green industries generate real opportunities for the businesses and workers already here — not just for companies arriving from elsewhere.

This is what place-based industrial support makes possible. It is not backward-looking. It is infrastructure for the future.

The Economic Stakes

The industrial sector is not a footnote in New York City's economy. It is one of its load-bearing walls.

Across the five boroughs, the industrial sector supports more than 500,000 jobs and generates over \$1.7 billion in annual tax revenue. **In Southwest Brooklyn alone, more than 37.6 thousand residents work in this sector. These are accessible, living-wage jobs — held disproportionately by immigrants, workers of color, and workers without college degrees, the New Yorkers most often left out of the city's prosperity.** The industrial sector remains one of the most reliable pathways to economic mobility in a city where the cost of living has put that mobility out of reach for too many.

The IBSP program costs the City approximately \$1.2 million annually. Set against the billions of dollars in economic activity and hundreds of

thousands of jobs this sector supports, that is not a line item — it is a leverage point. **Efficiency in this context is not about reducing that investment — it is about reducing friction for the businesses that power local economies.**

City funding enables organizations like ours to mobilize philanthropy, private capital, and earned revenue that multiplies its impact many times over. Eliminating it does not save money. It dismantles the infrastructure the City relies on to deliver its own programs, execute its own strategies of reducing red tape, and respond when crises come.

And crises do come. When they do, it is the industrial sector — and the organizations that support it — that the City turns to first. During the pandemic, manufacturers pivoted to produce PPE and hospital gowns for NYC Health + Hospitals. During Hurricane Sandy, IBSP organizations brought the Mayor directly to flooded firms and served as real-time conduits between government and industry. When city agencies need rapid data collection, community feedback, or emergency service delivery in industrial neighborhoods, they call us — because we have the relationships, the trust, and the capacity to respond.

That capacity is not a given. It is built over decades. And it cannot be rebuilt once it is gone.

Land Use, Advocacy, and the Long Game

SBIDC's work extends beyond individual business assistance into the structural conditions that determine whether industrial businesses can survive in New York City at all. In the Gowanus rezoning process, we negotiated and secured affordable industrial space and then helped new tenants like Brooklyn Grain and Mill and Hazel Village occupy these spaces. This kind of advocacy — at the intersection of land use policy, real estate, and programmatic support — requires exactly the sector-specific expertise and long-term neighborhood relationships that the IBSP program makes possible. A rotating generalist assigned to an entire borough cannot do this work.

The industrial waterfront is also a landscape with environmental dimensions that matter. These neighborhoods sit at the edge of the city's most vulnerable coastlines. The businesses that operate here — and the organizations that support them — are part of how New York City builds resilience, not just economic resilience but physical resilience, in the face of climate change. Keeping production local, investing in circular supply chains, connecting manufacturers to green economy opportunities: this is not peripheral to industrial policy. It is its future.

What We Are Asking

We are not asking the City to preserve the status quo. We are asking the City not to dismantle the infrastructure that makes improvement possible.

Specifically, we urge the Committee to advocate for the following:

- **Remove industrial business support from the Business Solutions Center RFP.** Industrial firms require specialized support that a general small business program is not structured to provide.
- **Extend existing IBSP contracts for two years** to ensure continuity of services and prevent the immediate collapse of relationships and capacity that cannot be quickly rebuilt.
- **Work with industrial organizations to co-develop a modernized, sector-specific program** — one that addresses industrial real estate pressures, workforce development, green economy transition, and the emerging needs of a sector that is ready to grow if the City will invest in it.

The industrial businesses of this city have been here through recessions, superstorms, pandemics, and displacement. They have kept this city fed, supplied, built, and moving. They have done it without fanfare and without adequate recognition.

They have had your back.

Will you have theirs?

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Miquela Craytor
Interim Executive Director, SBIDC
4223 1st Ave 2nd Floor
Brooklyn, New York 11232

Testimony

To: NYC Council Committee on Small Business
From: Frank Lanmg, Director of Affordable Housing Policy & Advocacy
St. Nicks Alliance
2 Kingsland Avenue,
Brooklyn, NY 11211
Date: March 24, 2026
RE: Department of Small Business Services – Importance of funding Individual IBZ

St. Nicks Alliance is a not-for-profit community development corporation was founded 51 years ago to protect the rights of low-income residents and businesses in North Brooklyn. It was a time of dramatic disinvestment in working class communities throughout New York. Residential properties were abandoned and taken into foreclosure by the City of New York. The businesses in the industrial zones received no support despite providing critical opportunities for employment for residents.

St. Nicks Alliance and key business owners saw the need for a Local Development Corp. to support the industrial businesses to sustain their operations and continue as valuable employers. Evergreen was founded in 1982 and worked to address issues of vandalism, illegal dumping and provide technical assistance to business owners to navigate the regulations of operating in New York City.

The success of Evergreen and fellow industrial development organizations is due to their intimate knowledge of the local neighborhoods where they work. They understand the unique challenges found by businesses on the Northside of Williamsburg are different than those in East Williamsburg near Flushing Avenue. Proximity to highways, retail corridors and residential properties differ in each neighborhood. This necessitates a different strategy for the employer. Businesses operating in Sunset Park have dramatically different circumstances as well.

It is vital that the NYC Department of Small Business Services continue to directly fund the local development corporations in each Industrial Business zone. A city-wide or Borough wide focused approach cannot provide the individual assistance needed by these businesses at the community level. The local LDCs are not only responsive to the individual business they understand the other stakeholders in the neighborhood. The local LDC is helping to educate the rest of the community on the vital role of the IBZ. A broad borough wide focus is not going to have the credibility of the local LDC as other real estate interests look to reduce the industrial zoned areas to develop market rate residential.

St. Nicks Alliance strongly advocates that the New York City Council Committee on Small Business confirm that the current Industrial Business zone LDCs are funded directly and even increase their funding to ensure these working-class jobs are not lost from our City.

My name is Tamika Mapp, and I am the District Leader for the 68th Assembly District, Part D.

I stand here today on behalf of the small businesses in East Harlem—the barbers, beauty salons, childcare providers, restaurants, bodegas, and street vendors—who are the backbone of our community and our local economy.

Let me be clear: small businesses are not failing because they lack hustle—they are being pushed out by policies that do not protect them.

Every day, I speak to business owners who are dealing with rising rents, increased utility costs, excessive fines, and complex licensing requirements that feel designed to trip them up instead of support them.

We cannot say we support small businesses while allowing them to be buried under systems that large corporations can navigate—but small, local businesses cannot.

In East Harlem, small businesses are more than storefronts—they are job creators, community anchors, and safe spaces. They hire locally, support our youth, and reinvest right back into the neighborhood.

But right now, they are struggling.

And I want to acknowledge that the City Council has taken some steps in the right direction.

We've seen efforts to reduce excessive fines and shift toward education instead of punishment. We've seen movement on expanding opportunities for vendors and creating more structure and support. And there have been investments in grants and small business services.

But let's be honest—these steps are not enough for what our small businesses are facing right now.

Because while some fines have been reduced, businesses are still navigating a system that is too complex, too slow, and too expensive.

While opportunities are expanding, many are still struggling with enforcement, access, and long-term stability.

And while funding exists, too many small business owners in communities like East Harlem are not seeing that support directly.

Most importantly, commercial rent continues to crush our small businesses every single day—forcing them out of the very communities they helped build.

That is not a free market—that is displacement.

We also need to address access to capital.

Too many of our Black-, immigrant-, and women-owned businesses are locked out of funding opportunities. If we are serious about equity, then our investments must reflect that—with targeted grants, low-interest loans, and funding that actually reaches our communities.

And let's be clear—family childcare providers are small businesses.

For years, working families relied on them for flexible, trusted care. But instead of investing in them, we shifted children into systems that were not prepared—leaving providers underpaid and families underserved.

We must reinvest in them as part of our small business ecosystem.

As District Leader, I see this every day:

When small businesses close, we lose jobs.

We lose culture.

We lose stability.

So today, I am calling for real action:

Stabilize commercial rent.

Reform fines and licensing.

Increase access to capital.

And invest directly in the small businesses that have always invested in us.

Because if we do not protect our small businesses now, we will not recognize our communities tomorrow.

Thank you.

Tamika Mapp





**Testimony of Dan Marks of TerraCRG
NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing**

March 23, 2026

My name is Dan Marks, I am the CEO of TerraCRG. Our company advises commercial property owners throughout Brooklyn across many asset classes and a large part of our business is working with industrial property owner and operators.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

Organizations like Evergreen: Your North Brooklyn Business Exchange provides critical support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses. Evergreen regularly connects our clients with resources that allow them to operate and grow in New York City. Without their assistance, it would be far more difficult for small businesses to thrive in NYC.

Industrial businesses provide stable, good-paying jobs and produce essential goods and services for New York City. Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Programs like IBSP ensure that small companies have the support they need to remain in the city and continue employing local residents.

Eliminating this program would remove one of the few systems that helps industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like Evergreen that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The livelihood of these businesses depends on it.

Sincerely,

Dan Marks

Dan Marks
CEO
TerraCRG
634 Dean Street
Brooklyn, NY 11238
718-768-6888 / dmarks@terraarg.com



March 23, 2026

Re: FY2027 Preliminary Budgetary Hearing - New York City Council Committee on Small Business

Dear Chair Thomas-Henry and Members of the Committee on Small Business,

The [Five Borough Jobs Campaign](#) welcomes this opportunity to submit testimony for the Committee's FY2027 preliminary budgetary hearing. The Five Borough Jobs Campaign is a New York City-wide coalition of local economic development corporations, business improvement districts, and businesses. We are guided by a fundamental idea: New York City thrives when every New Yorker has access to a good-paying job.

We submit testimony to express our strong support for measures and resources which protect the job-creating engines of our City – our small businesses. Last year, more small businesses closed than opened for the first time since COVID. If we want every neighborhood in our City to flourish, we need to make sure local job creators have the ability not just to stay afloat, but to expand and create jobs here at home.

We regularly hear from small business owners about the weight of excessive and bureaucratic red tape. From July 2023 to October 2025, the two [most common violations](#) issued by DCWP – outside of tobacco and cannabis-related violations – were for not having a sign that explained a store's refund policy and for failing to display a price on the shelf next to each item. We can provide real enforcement, without nickel and diming small businesses struggling with margins.

We see Mayor Mamdani's early-2026 Executive Order as a first step toward fulfilling his campaign pledge to cut fines and fees by 50%. If realized, a 50% reduction would ease red tape and administrative burdens holding back small businesses. That said, mayors over the past several decades have also promised common-sense review of fine structures and curtailing over-enforcement. That promise, in and of itself, is not progress. We need to see the Mayor build upon the Executive Order.

If the goal of New York City is truly to support small businesses, lasting and measurable reform will require the Mayor explicitly setting clear targets for agencies to reduce fines. During his campaign, Mayor Mamdani identified an estimated \$20M in fines and fees, and pledged to redirect 50% back to its small business community, which could be used more productively for local job creators' operational, overhead and personnel costs. We look forward to working with the City of New York to arrive at common sense solutions that strengthen the fiscal health of our small businesses.



We also welcome the appointment of Kenny Minaya as the new Commissioner for the Department of Small Business Services (SBS), and we look forward to working with him on shepherding in new opportunities and protections for our small businesses. Yet we must underscore that we are concerned about current understaffing at SBS, and urge the City Council and the Mamdani Administration to prioritize ensuring that the agency has the requisite operational and fiscal resources necessary towards meeting the shared goal of promoting the growth and success of our small business community.

This means maintaining staffing levels which can, at a minimum, produce more effective, streamlined communication with our small business leaders, faster processing of strategic resources needed to keep businesses afloat, and assistance in navigating the intricacies of City regulation and avoiding penalties altogether. These interactions are the difference between a new small business succeeding and expanding, or it having to close its doors – repeated across the city. Every dollar spent better supporting our small businesses in proven, effective ways is a dollar that will bring even more fiscal value back to the city's coffers.

Finally, we are deeply concerned about recently introduced City Council legislation doubling the minimum wage for small businesses. NYC already has one of the highest minimum wages in the country and, per New York State law, will automatically be indexed to inflation starting in 2027. Small businesses are already feeling the burden of increased costs for everything from insurance to rent and utility rates, and this proposal will only accelerate the trend of shuttering small businesses.

We urge you to read our full [Affordability Agenda for Job Creators](#). We are confident that we can continue to promote the best possible ecosystem for our small business community and its workforce to grow and thrive.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

The Five Borough Jobs Campaign



Testimony to the New York City Council

Committee on Small Business

Preliminary Budget Hearing for FY2027

March 23, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the Committee on Small Business on the crucial issue of industrial business services. The Western Queens Community Land Trust (WQCLT) aims to steward permanently affordable community controlled sites in NYC in response to the high-rent crisis facing both residential and commercial tenants. **We recognize that while the housing crisis is overwhelming and deserving of immediate action, so too is the crisis for business owners and workers who are facing rising and unsustainable commercial and industrial rents.** We are offering our testimony today to urge the SBS to retain the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) Program.

Industrial businesses support the city's architectural design & development sector, its fashion cluster, its specialty food sector, and its performing arts sector. The city's EDC, as part of its green economy initiative, has been partnering with Industrial Business Service Providers to help develop and capitalize neighborhood-based businesses that can be the future of the clean energy and building retrofit supply chains. The IBSP program is a key part of the city's private business ecosystem, and it would be a terrible mistake not to retain support for IBSPs in the FY 2027 budget.

In Long Island City's industrial zones, manufacturers have thrived for many decades. But the steady increase in industrial rents has made it difficult for commercial leaseholders to remain in business. Recent up-zonings of manufacturing land to residential and mixed use incentivize teardowns or luxury commercial retrofits of existing industrial buildings. This reduces the amount of manufacturing space on the market and exerts upward pressure on rents. Businesses in NYC's industrial areas have never



been more in need of the types of assistance provided by the IBSPs as they face high rents, pressure to vacate, and tariff shocks.

WQCLT is currently advocating to retain a large city-owned industrial building in Long Island City (the so-called “DOE building” at 44-36 Vernon Boulevard), which would offer much needed permanently affordable space to small manufacturers, food distributors, working artists, and nonprofit organizations focused on youth development education and workforce training. Indeed, the demand for such spaces is so high that 64 business owners, artists, and organizational partners submitted letters in support of our proposal, with 40 expressing strong interest in becoming tenants in the building. Last summer, along with the Pratt Center and Made in NYC, WQCLT conducted a [survey](#) of Queens-based manufacturers. Many of these businesses are Black, immigrant and women-owned. Most responded that they are at risk of displacement due to rising rents, and many said they’d love to rent space in the DOE building if WQCLT were to develop it as affordable space. These businesses, both large and small, are crucial providers of decent jobs.

The Long Island City IBSP is housed within the **Long Island City Partnership** and it has been an invaluable resource and partner to many of the businesses that our CLT interacts with. These businesses are in need of assistance to stay afloat: it’s inexplicable that the SBS would discontinue support for the Partnership’s IBSP function at this time.

We strongly disagree with the findings of the Department of City Planning’s 2025 Industrial Plan, which recommends shrinking or discontinuing the Industrial Business Zone program initiated by Mayor Michael Bloomberg in 2006. The industrial sector requires investment, not eradication. In sync with an administration that champions affordability, living wage work, sectoral diversity, and a strong middle class, we implore the Council to maintain funding for Industrial Business Service Providers in the FY 2027 municipal budget.



Testimony of Alice Mok, Wonton Food Inc.

NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing
March 23, 2026

My name is Alice Mok, and I am the Assistant Vice President of Marketing & Public Affairs at Wonton Food Inc., a family-owned industrial food manufacturing company located in North Brooklyn. Our company produces noodles, wrappers, and fortune cookies, and we currently employ over 400 New Yorkers.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

Organizations like Evergreen: Your North Brooklyn Business Exchange provide critical support to industrial businesses like ours. Evergreen has been an important partner to Wonton Food, particularly in helping us stay informed on policy changes, connecting us with city resources, and representing the interests of manufacturers in broader economic and land use discussions. Their work has helped ensure that businesses like ours can continue to operate and plan for the future in New York City. Without their support, it would be significantly more difficult for companies like ours to navigate the challenges of doing business in NYC.

Industrial businesses like Wonton Food provide stable, good-paying jobs and produce essential goods that support New York City's food system. We employ a diverse workforce, including many immigrants and working-class New Yorkers, and offer accessible opportunities for individuals without advanced degrees. These are the types of jobs that sustain families and strengthen local communities. Programs like IBSP help ensure that companies like ours have the support needed to remain in the city and continue employing local residents.

At the same time, operating an industrial business in New York City has become increasingly difficult due to rising costs, limited industrial space, and growing regulatory complexity. Eliminating the IBSP program would remove one of the few dedicated support systems that help industrial businesses survive and adapt in this challenging environment.

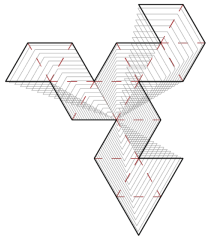
I strongly urge the City of New York to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like Evergreen that provide essential services to the industrial business community. The future of our business—and the livelihoods of the hundreds of New Yorkers we employ—depends on it.

Sincerely,

Alice Mok

Alice Mok

Assistant Vice President, Marketing & Public Affairs



WORKSPACE11

CUSTOM ARCHITECTURAL FABRICATION

Hearing Testimony

Mar 23, 2026

To the New York City Council Committee on Small Business:

SBIDC assisted my business in a major forced relocation that had the potential to completely decimate us if handled incorrectly. They were the first to inform us of the impending relocation and guided us through the entire process, making recommendations the whole way and helping us avoid what could have been a catastrophic disruption to our operations. At a moment when we were facing real uncertainty, they provided clarity, direction, and a path forward.

They have since remained a critical source of support through our company restructuring efforts and new business development. Their guidance has been practical, consistent, and grounded in a real understanding of what it takes to operate and grow a business in this environment. Our business simply would not be in the same position we are today without the existence of SBIDC.

From my perspective, organizations like SBIDC are not just helpful, they are essential. I ask that their funding remain consistent or increase so they can continue to provide these critical business services and keep the waterfront working.

Sincerely,

John P Coyle

Partner- Workspace11LLC

Please contact Workspace11 at (347) 725 3696 with any questions or comments.

Workspace11.com 322 3rd Ave Brooklyn, NY. 11215 Phone 484.725.5565 jp@workspace11.com

W X Y architecture + urban design

25 Park Place, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10007
Tel 212.219.1953 Fax 212.274.1953 Web wxystudio.com

Principals
Claire Weisz
Mark Yoes
Layng Pew
Adam Lubinsky

Testimony of Bahij Chancey of WXY Studio

NYC Council Small Business Committee Hearing March 23, 2026

My name is Bahij Chancey, and I am an urban planner, the Managing Director at WXY Studio, and the facilitator of the Gowanus Oversight Task Force (GOTF).

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

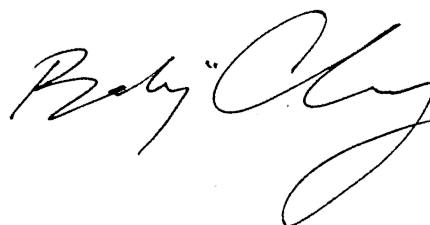
Organizations like Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC) provide critical support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses in many of the communities where I work. In addition to their business support, SBIDC plays a critical role as an advocate, a content matter expert, and a representative of the industrial business community in a number of critical community initiatives and planning efforts.

SBIDC's participation on the Gowanus Oversight Task Force ensures that the interests of the industrial business community are represented in our organization's efforts to deliver on the 56 Points of Agreement stated in the 2021 Gowanus rezoning and Neighborhood Plan. This includes critical efforts to support businesses in the Industrial Business Zone with expanded broadband access, and connection to city government resources like NYC Accelerator.

SBIDC also plays a critical role in regional planning efforts. SBIDC has been a key community representative on various planning bodies for the Brooklyn Marine Terminal, where their advocacy has ensured that manufacturing and industrial businesses can continue to thrive along Brooklyn's waterfront as the City redevelops the ailing port site. WXY also assisted SBIDC in the development of the Red Hook Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) study which identified critical avenues for industrial business opportunities and growth in an Environmental Justice community.

I urge the City Council to preserve funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like SBIDC that provide essential services to the industrial business community.

Bahij Chancey, MCP, AICP
Managing Director, WXY Studio
bahij@wxystudio.com
646-246-8402



TESTIMONY FOR NYC COUNCIL BUDGET HEARING

My name is Amy Louk. I am not a business owner, but I work for an independent industrial business. I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed elimination of the Industrial Business Service Provider (IBSP) program.

Organizations like **Evergreen: Your North Brooklyn Business Exchange** provide critical support to small manufacturers and industrial businesses. Evergreen regularly connects us with resources that allow us to operate and grow in New York City.

Industrial businesses provide accessible, well-paying jobs to New Yorkers who are too often left out of the city's prosperity—immigrants, people of color, and workers without college degrees. Eliminating this program would remove one of the few systems that helps industrial businesses survive in an increasingly difficult business environment.

I strongly urge the City of New York to reconsider the preservation of funding for the IBSP program and continue supporting organizations like Evergreen that provide essential services to the industrial business community.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/27/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Francesca Bore

Address: _____

I represent: Grand Street BID

Address: 246 Graham Ave BK NY 11206

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/23/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ligia Gualpa

Address: Workers Justice Project

I represent: Los Delinista Unidos

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Adrian Smith

Address: _____

I represent: Volunteers of Legal Service

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/23/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: GREGORY J MORRIS

Address: 121 6th AVE NYC 10013

I represent: NEW YORK CITY EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COUNCIL

Address: 121 6th AVE NYC 10013

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/23/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Khalif Annally - Rivera

Address: [Redacted] East 32nd St

I represent: Worker Cooperative Business Dev.

Address: Initiative

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Budget Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/23/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: William Greenburg

Address: 260 Broadway, Ste. 2, Bk, NY 11211

I represent: Build Up Justice

Address: 260 Broadway, Ste. 2, Brooklyn, NY 11211

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. budget Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Laura Rothrock

Address: 27-01 Queens Plaza North

I represent: Long Island City Partnership

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Matt Shapiro

Address: _____

I represent: Street Vendor Project

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/23/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Charles Dibona

Address: 2929 Third Ave Bronx

I represent: BOC NET

Address: 2929 Third Ave Bronx

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/23/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christopher Casey

Address: [Redacted] BW

I represent: ANHD

Address: 50 Broad St

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/23/2026

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: William Joyce

Address: 260 Broadway, Brooklyn, NY 11211

I represent: Build Up Justice NYC

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Seren Moray

Address: [Redacted] Brooklyn NY 11249

I represent: Crema Paint + Pigment Corp

Address: 57-52 58th Place Maspeth, NY 11378

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Emma Myers
Address: 75 Ninth Ave, Suite 610, New York, NY 10011
I represent: Hot Bread Kitchen
Address: same as above

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Forte
Address: 1 Liberty Plaza, NY NY 10006
I represent: The Department of Small Business Services
Address: 1 Liberty Plaza, NY NY 10006

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Haris Khan
Address: 1 Liberty Plaza NY NY 10006
I represent: Dept. of Small Business Services
Address: 1 Liberty Plaza NY NY 10006



Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kenny Minaya

Address: 1 Liberty Plaza NY NY 10006

I represent: Dept. of Small Business Services

Address: 1 Liberty Plaza NY NY 10006

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/23/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: William Joyce

Address: [Redacted] New Hyde Park, NY 11040

I represent: Build Up Justice NYC

Address: 260 Broadway Brooklyn, NY 11211

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tsetan Dekyi

Address: _____

I represent: Accompany Capital

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Emma Meyers

Address: _____

I represent: Hot Bread Kitchen

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Miguel Craytor

Address: [REDACTED] 1st Ave Brooklyn NY 11232

I represent: Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corp

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/23/06

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gary Goldenstein

Address: 164 Cook St Brooklyn NY 11206

I represent: Allison Eden Studios

Address: 164 Cook St. Brooklyn NY 11206

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3-23-26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Leah Archibald

Address: 2 Kingsland BK NY

I represent: Evergreen

Address: 2 Kingsland BK NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3-23-26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ALLISON EDEN

Address: 164 COOK ST

I represent: ALLISON EDEN STUDIOS

Address: 164 Cook St

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rebecca Lurie

Address: [REDACTED] BK NY

I represent: CWOP @ CUNY SU

Address: 25 W 43rd St

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/23

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Doug Young

Address: 182 Stewart Ave

I represent: Leerform

Address: 182 Stewart Ave

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 03.23.26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: FRANCO GOTTE

Address: [REDACTED] BROOKLYN NY 11211

I represent: TWOSEVEN INC.

Address: 221 MCKIBBIN ST. BKLYN NY 11206

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: TSETAN DEKYE

Address: [REDACTED] BRIARWOOD 11435

I represent: ACCOMPANY CAPITAL

Address: 11 BROADWAY SUITE 1515 NY 10004

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms