



**Senate Committee on Ethics, Elections, and Local Government
Hearing on Senate Bill 31
Hearing Date- January 26, 2016**

**Written Testimony in Support of SB 31 on behalf of the City of Manhattan
By Kiel Mangus, Assistant City Manager**

Good morning Chair Bowers, Vice Chair Fitzgerald and honorable members of the Senate Ethics, Elections, and Local Government Committee. My name is Kiel Mangus, and I am the Assistant City Manager for the City of Manhattan.

The City of Manhattan supports SB31. The City of Manhattan supports legislation allowing cities to provide an effective and efficient method for dealing with the procedural challenges that are often faced when dealing with abandoned properties in the community. Often times there are non-responsive owners or other interest holders, ownership is in question or the city is not able to get an owner or interest holder to take responsibility for property maintenance on the structure. The bills helps amend the arduous process of determining what is abandoned in order to better allow cities to deal with blighted and debilitating structures before they become unsafe and ultimately are torn down.

- The health and welfare of the general public in Manhattan is important. This bill helps to better address some of those issues in abandoned houses, reducing the time those structures might pose a health and safety danger to others. The bill allows cities more flexibility to better deal with those abandoned homes and prevent that situation from occurring.
- The bill also allows cities to seek authority to rehabilitate abandoned housing. The City, or a non-profit organization, could rehabilitate the property for future use rather than the property ending up degrading further and ending up having to be demolished.
- Finally, the City supports this bill because it helps protect property values in the Community. Abandoned, dilapidated housing can drag down property values of homes around them. The City supports the ability to address those issues so property values are better preserved.

For all the above reasons the City of Manhattan supports SB 31. Thanks for your time and consideration.