



The City of New York

Manhattan Community Board 1

Anthony Notaro, Jr. CHAIRPERSON | Noah Pfefferblit DISTRICT MANAGER

**The New York City Council Committee on Consumer Affairs
Jointly with the Committee on Transportation
Hearing on Sightseeing Bus Industry
250 Broadway, Committee Room
Monday, September 26, 2016 at 1:00 p.m.**

Thank you, Chairman Espinal and members of the Committees on Consumer Affairs and Transportation for holding this important public hearing today regarding the sightseeing bus industry. My name is Noah Pfefferblit, and I am the District Manager of Community Board 1 in Lower Manhattan. Community District 1 includes most of Manhattan below Canal Street and south of the Brooklyn Bridge.

Our neighborhood is a very dense district that is a rapidly growing residential community, a business hub and a destination for tourists and visitors. As a result, Community District 1 has an enormous volume of vehicular traffic every day, making our streets among the most congested of any city in the country.

Certainly sightseeing buses are significant contributors to this congestion, as are the many tour and commuter buses which descend on our district every day and frequently park or layover on our streets, not to mention stopping or slowing down in the middle of traffic for viewing opportunities. According to the NYS Department of Transportation, the number of double decker sightseeing buses in New York City more than tripled from 57 to 194 between 2003 and 2013.

For this reason, on November 19, 2015, Community Board 1 unanimously passed a resolution in support of Intro. No. 0950-2015, New York City Council legislation to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to limiting the number of sightseeing bus licenses.

The other two pieces of legislation under consideration today are Int. No. 529-A and Int. No. 713-A. These would amend the administrative code of the city of New York to strengthen licensing requirements in the sightseeing bus industry and to require sightseeing bus operators to submit operating plans to the NYC Department of Consumer Affairs, respectively.

CB1 has not had the opportunity to consider these other two pieces of legislation and therefore cannot express a formal opinion about them at this time. However given the very heavy presence of double-decker and other tourist buses in our district, we believe it is very important for the City to find effective and meaningful ways to ensure that the buses and their drivers and operators are licensed and regulated in a way that will make them as safe and responsible as possible. The intent of all three pieces of legislation under consideration today appears to be consistent with those goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this afternoon.