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THE COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
STEPHEN T. LEVIN

COUNCIL MEMBER, 33rd DISTRICT, BROOKLYN

January, 14, 2020

Mark Klotz, Director
Division of Water, NYS DEC
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233

Re: Reclassification of the Gowanus Canal

Dear Mr. Klotz,

In September 2019, the Gowanus Canal Superfund Community Advisory Group (CAG) voted unanimously on a resolution to submit a formal Reclassification Petition, requesting that the NYS DEC reclassify the waters of the Gowanus Canal, north of Hamilton Avenue, from their current industrial classification of Class-SD to Class-I - a classification more consistent with existing and future use of the waterway serving Gowanus and its surrounding neighborhoods.

This letter serves as further support from my office on the attached Reclassification Petition submitted to NYS DEC on behalf of the Gowanus CAG. I, Stephen Levin, NYC Council Member for District 33, support improved water quality standards, setting forth more stringent requirements for maximum allowable levels of chemical pollutants in the Gowanus Canal to protect and enhance the human and environmental health of the neighborhood.

The existing classification does not correspond to the existing uses of the Canal, which include primary contact recreation and habitat provision for a diverse range of aquatic flora and fauna. Furthermore, the existing classification does not correspond to the best near-term future use of the Canal, which will see substantial water quality improvements through the Superfund Clean-up, as well as increased access and residential population growth at the waterfront through the City's rezoning process.

The Gowanus Canal is a vital asset to the Community. In order to ensure the long-term health of the Canal and the community, regulations for improved water quality must be in place to protect and enforce non-compliance. For this reason I strongly urge the NYS DEC to take these matters seriously and prioritize the reclassification of the Gowanus Canal.

Sincerely,

Stephen T. Levin, NYC Council Member, 33rd District