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July 30, 2020

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor, State of New York
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

Thank you for your leadership during this incredibly difficult time. We are writing to request your support regarding COVID-19, and the risks posed by live animal markets in New York City.

New York City, the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak in the U.S., contains the largest number of live animal markets in the country – more than 80 in all five boroughs. These facilities can act as breeding grounds for the emergence and spread of infectious diseases which can be easily transmitted from one animal to another and to humans.

1. **We stand with our colleagues in the New York State Senate and Assembly, and ask that you sign [S6252/A8009](#)**, which renews the existing moratorium on licensing of new live animal markets (also known as storefront slaughterhouses) within 1500 feet of a residence in New York City. The moratorium has been renewed twice over the past decade, and without renewal will expire in August 2020. Both chambers voted unanimously in February to extend the moratorium another 4 years, a critical step at this time to protect public health and safety.
2. **We call for testing for pathogens on each live animal markets' property** and testing of all animals including their flesh, excrement, and other bodily fluids and byproducts. Any pathogens present, from factory farms both within and outside of New York state, can be spread once they arrive and are immediately packed into the city's live slaughter markets.
3. **In the interest of public health and safety, we ask that the State legislature enact strict regulations of the operations and hygiene of live animal markets.** Taking into account the warnings and recommendations by the CDC and other leading health authorities, we ask for state inspections with stricter safeguards and protections with stronger enforcement; greater transparency and reporting; standardized and documented employee training; health hazard training and reporting; inventory reporting; limited delivery times; and graduated

penalties for repeated non-compliance with consequences including license revocation - at the minimum.

The CDC estimates that 75% of new and emerging diseases in people comes from animals. Many zoonotic diseases come from what we consider traditional farm animals, including, but not limited to, avian flu, mad cow disease, swine flu, anthrax, and the deadly Spanish flu pandemic. We must address this crisis by renewing the moratorium on live animal markets and crafting strong regulations to protect public health. The evidence is clear: live animal markets have the potential to be a source of the next deadly pandemic.

My colleagues and I appreciate your exemplary leadership during this crisis. We respectfully request that you address the inherent dangers to public health in the operations of live animal markets.

In Service,



Fernando Cabrera



Justin Brannan



Robert Holden



Diana Ayala



Deborah Rose



Helen Rosenthal

Sincerely,



ALAN MAISEL
Councilman-46th District