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CARLINA RIVERA
COUNCIL MEMBER, 2ND DISTRICT
CITY OF NEW YORK

Testimony for 827-831 Broadway
January 9, 2018

My name is Carlina Rivera and I am the Councilwoman for District 2—a district that includes 827-831 Broadway. I want to thank the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) for the opportunity to testify today regarding 827-831 Broadway, and for your decision on October 31, 2017 to landmark these buildings. I am here because I stand with the residents, advocates and other elected officials who are asking that you deny the application for a 4-story addition to this site on aesthetic, artistic, and historic grounds.

My concerns for this application include the addition's size and design - as recently noted by LPC commissioners, the architectural and cultural significance of these buildings was the crux of its designation; the addition would overwhelm them. In its resolution of November 2017 opposing this addition, Manhattan Community Board 2 refers to the importance of these buildings within the context of our city's history in the arts, boasting 19th-century design and having housed 20th-century artists. This major alteration threatens both their historic and architectural integrity. The proposed hulk of glass atop the structures would be jarring from all angles of site and diminish the appeal and character of the existing buildings, not enhance them as stated by ownership.

I am also concerned about structural changes that may be made to the original buildings in construction of the addition. At an appearance before Community Board 2 on November 13, 2017, Mr. Jay Segal, representative of 827-831 Broadway made clear that there would be no landmark oversight beyond the façade. This, of course, is the same owning entity that intended to demolish the buildings before they were designated by LPC. The comment rings dismissive and defiant of the spirit of the community's preservation efforts. The addition would provide cause for ownership to extend major work to the base buildings, further risking their integrity and requiring justification for greater oversight of this construction project.

These are just some of the issues that lead me to request you heed the call of neighbors, experts and activists; preserve taste and the architectural legacy at stake; and deny the application for this addition. Thank you..

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carlina Rivera".

Carlina Rivera
Councilwoman, District 2