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Downtown Alliance Testifies on Lower Manhattan Holiday Shopping Initiatives

New York, NY (December 16, 2011) – The Alliance for Downtown New York today submitted the following testimony on its annual campaign to showcase all that Lower Manhattan has to offer during the holidays. The testimony was presented to the New York City Council Committees on Small Business and Sanitation & Solid Waste Management.

Testimony of Elizabeth H. Berger On the Downtown Alliance's Holiday Shopping Campaign Prepared for the Committees on Small Business and Sanitation & Solid Waste Management New York City Council, December 16, 2011

Good afternoon, Chairpersons Reyna and James.

I am Elizabeth H. Berger, President of the Alliance for Downtown New York. Thanks to you, Council Member Chin and the entire Committee for the opportunity to discuss our holiday shopping campaign—now in its fourth year—which helps promote hundreds of small businesses in Lower Manhattan.

While the Downtown Alliance promotes Lower Manhattan's restaurateurs and retailers all year long, we take it up several notches during the holidays with a comprehensive drive-to-web advertising campaign that encourages workers, residents and visitors to shop and dine in the district.

In specific, our 2011 holiday campaign uses extensive print and outdoor advertising, promotions, direct mail and a brand-new edition of our *Shopping & Dining Guide* to showcase everything Lower Manhattan has to offer. In addition, we constantly update our web-based event calendar and searchable map to reflect holiday offerings. And, we use social media such as Facebook and Twitter, along with the Downtown Alliance blog at <http://blog.downtownny.com>, to promote seasonal events and activities.

The visual centerpiece of the campaign is a holiday ad poster [see attachment 1], a branded design that we first launched in 2008. The ad appears on CEMUSA outdoor newsstands and

bus shelters in Lower Manhattan, on the World Financial Center ferry terminal kiosk, in PATH trains and stations, on South Street Seaport kiosks and in our Downtown Connection buses as well as local and citywide media like the *Downtown Express*, *Tribeca Trib*, *Battery Park City Broadsheet*, *Our Town Downtown*, *Downtown Magazine*, *The Commercial Observer*, *Time Out New York* and *New York Magazine*.

The ad announces our holiday campaign and directs shoppers and diners to a special Downtown Alliance holiday webpage, DowntownNY.com/holiday, which features:

- A link to our just-updated *Shopping & Dining Guide* that lists more than 1,300 stores, restaurants, bars, museums, organizations and services in Lower Manhattan
- Offers from restaurants and retailers
- A listing of holiday events in the district

This year, we coordinated the release of our updated *Shopping & Dining Guide* with the holiday marketing campaign, distributing 30,000 copies and e-mailing thousands of key stakeholders about the campaign [see attachment 2].

Timing is key to the success of this campaign, which we officially launched in anticipation of “Black Friday” with a press conference featuring New York City Consumer Affairs Commissioner Jonathan Mintz and J&R Music CEO Rachelle Friedman [see attachment 3]. We publicized the launch in an e-mail distribution to about 15,000 people.

We also participated in the Small Business Saturday promotion advanced by the City’s Department of Small Business Services in late November, urging local retailers to take advantage of the event’s free advertising opportunities and incorporating the promotion into our holiday retail campaign.

For the 16th year, meanwhile, the Downtown Alliance has made the neighborhood brighter and more festive with the installation of 167 shooting stars and 41 star clusters above the streets [see attachment 4].

And, on November 22, we rolled out our brand-new fleet of Downtown Connection buses—just in time for the holidays [see attachment 5]. These free buses travel the perimeter of Lower Manhattan and the shopping corridors of Warren and Murray streets from Battery Park City to Broadway.

The Downtown Alliance is proud to bring more sparkle and convenience to the holiday season for 309,000 workers, 56,000 residents and nine million annual visitors in Lower Manhattan. With more than 1,300 places to shop, dine and explore, we want everyone to discover that Lower Manhattan is *the* place to shop and celebrate the holiday season.

Thank you.

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