

Dear Speaker/Advocate Corey Johnson,

I'm writing to you and all addressed in this reply to please ask you to review the sudden revocation of their license with DHS to evict them from their place of business inside of The Fort Washington Armory.

I'm sure you've been inundated with all sorts of information about GDS and perhaps their relationship with the "guardian" of the building, The Armory Foundation. I'm not going to waste your time by restating what has already been said about years that not only has GDS been treated in a hostile manner by The Armory Foundation but by DHS as well.

GDS is being punished for the actions of people outside of his organization working to demonstrate that The Fort Washington Armory is both underutilized and restricting the community and local not-for-profit organizations from accessing the space simply by cost. At the same time, The Armory Foundation is renting out its space for enormous fees that only for-profit and private organizations can pay.

GDS is a more than a successful organization that has an absolutely solid track record for providing much needed and vital support services to at-risk and disenfranchised students of not just northern Manhattan but the Bronx as well.

I am a teacher with more than 2 decades of experience in the DOE and have worked with many not-for-profit organizations charged with providing these kinds of services for our children. At the same time, I have also sat on the community board's youth committee as a public member years ago as well as having been formerly appointed to DYCD's Neighborhood Advisory Board. I have some experience in reviewing assessing similar organizations that receive city funding.

I have tried to convince my friend that even with this notice, there cannot be a removal without due process. He should even though this should not be happening, his day in court.

To close, not much speculation is needed to understand that the actions of DHS's revocation of GDS's license at the Fort Washington Armory is in retaliation to a news feature shown on NY1's Noticias about The Armory and how it operates. The letter written and not properly served to GDS was within days of this news story airing on television.

I'm a lifelong resident of Washington Heights. I'd like to GDS's license restored and their being given the opportunity to have greater access to available space inside of The Armory.

I also believe that the building and its contracts be reviewed and we find a way to properly make this space available to residents of the community and especially for our senior citizens who have been priced out of using the track for their exercise during the winter months. I also believe that the building should be designated as a Cooling Station on extreme heat and bad air quality days.

There's so much more that could be said about this entire situation. I implore you to please bring a fresh and objective pair of eyes to this situation and help us to end this eviction and demand that DHS sit down with us as they were already asked by other elected officials. DHS has turned a deaf ear and is not listening or responding to anyone about this.

I sincerely thank you for your time and consideration in advance.

Truly,

Deborah Cardona