



TWIN TOWERS ALLIANCE

WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT — WHAT NEW YORK NEEDS — WHAT AMERICA DESERVES

March 17, 2008

Gov. David Paterson
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Gov. Paterson,

Congratulations on becoming our 55th governor. We hope you will be a great one. If you do aspire to greatness, one of the first decisions you should make as governor is to rebuild the Twin Towers. That has been the popular choice all along, for both New Yorkers as well as our fellow Americans. Poll after poll has shown this, going back to the days right after 9/11.

Yet both Governors Pataki and Spitzer took no account of what the people wanted and instead listened to a few elitists who had an anti-democratic, anti-Towers agenda. We have the feeling you are a man of the people, not an elitist. Therefore, we have the audacity to hope that you will give the people what they've wanted all along – new Twin Towers.

Some people would have you believe that it's too late to change course – that we're stuck with a bad plan and that's that. We beg to differ. True, the bride is about to go down the aisle. But does she really have to marry the wrong man, just because the hall is hired and the guests are assembled? Should she ruin the rest of her life just to save herself some embarrassment? Or does she get up in front of her family and friends and say, "I'm terribly sorry, I can't go through with this. It's the wrong thing to do."?

Yes, there would be some money wasted, but the plans exist that could result in Twin Towers open for business by 2011. Yes, a few people might get angry. But a tragedy would be averted. Building what we're planning to build at the WTC site would be a terrible mistake. It needs to be stopped before it's too late. Larry Silverstein originally pledged to rebuild the Twin Towers before he was blocked from doing so by Gov. Pataki. Under the right circumstances, we believe he would be open to exploring that option now.

Otherwise, we're saddled with buildings that few want, that fail to inspire, that are a gross diminishment of what once stood there, that in every way represent failure and capitulation. The current plans for Ground Zero are the triumph of trendy mediocrity over classic greatness.

The Twin Towers were *the* symbols of New York. They were twin icons. They were recognized instantly all over the world as emblems of New York. They were a visual shorthand for our city. Virtually every film director who made a movie in New York used an establishing shot of the Twin Towers to set the scene. You knew instantly you were in New York City.



People United To Rebuild The Twin Towers, Inc.

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A city that fails to rebuild its core symbols when they are destroyed is a city that is on the way out. These are trying times for New York. Wall Street is in chaos. Tens of thousands of jobs in the financial industry are about to be cut. London has supplanted New York as the financial capital of the world, with Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Dubai nipping at our heels. Dubai is building the tallest skyscraper in the world in its bid to become the commercial capital of the Middle East.

And what is New York doing? In place of two of the most famous buildings on the planet we're putting up a mediocre and unmemorable jumble that belongs in Houston or Mumbai, not in what was once the most famous skyline in the world.

We know you have other projects to think about as well. One of them is whether or not to build Moynihan Station. As you know, this is a multi-billion-dollar attempt to try to rectify one of the worst mistakes in New York history – the wanton destruction forty years ago of one of the most glorious structures ever built in America – the old Penn Station. As Daniel Patrick Moynihan pointed out, to our everlasting shame, we tore down one of the greatest buildings in the nation so we could put up a basketball court over a hole in the ground.

That was the kind of disastrous short-term thinking that existed in New York then and still exists today. If it is allowed to rule at Ground Zero, the new World Trade Center will be a colossal disappointment. But it doesn't have to be. You have the power to stop this madness and give us buildings to inspire us again – new Twin Towers.

Wouldn't it be ironic if you, a man who was tragically deprived of his sight at birth, a man who never saw the original Twin Towers, were the one to have the vision to rebuild them?

We have had two governors in a row who have claimed to listen to the people, but arrogantly refused to hear. Everything we have read about you tells us you are a man who hears. Hear the people. Trust them. Rebuild the Twin Towers. Make New York *New York* again.

Sincerely,

Richard Hughes and Margaret Donovan
for the Twin Towers Alliance