



# TWIN TOWERS ALLIANCE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## The Twin Towers: Knocked Down by Bin Laden, Kept Down by GSA?

New York, NY | August 8, 2007 — A citizens' group sent a letter to key officials in Congress before they recessed, challenging the wisdom and legitimacy of the General Services Administration pledge to lease space in the "Freedom Tower" and calling for an urgent General Accountability Office audit of the commitment. In a letter that is posted on their website, [The Twin Towers Alliance](#) asked New York's Senior Senator, Charles Schumer (D-NY) and House Ways & Means Chairman Charles Rangel (D-NY) a simple question: "Do you respect the people who are footing the bills – or not?"

"The whole sorry six years of 'rebuilding' have been rife with lies and corruption – and all the recently touted 'progress' can't change that or confer legitimacy on the results of a dishonest process," according to Alliance spokesman Richard Hughes. "Shame on those who think that doesn't matter."

He went on to point out that the GSA mission promises "responsible asset management" and charged that the agency was politically manipulated into propping up a project that would not otherwise be viable: "It is a terrible disgrace that can still be corrected without setting us back in the long run," he insists. "The exhilaration of rebuilding the Towers would take us two steps back and ten leaps forward. If our officials just stop pandering to special interests, we can still prevent a terrible mistake.

"Most Americans have long thought rebuilding the Twin Towers was the most fitting course, so we're asking our representatives for the facts: Why are We the People being overruled? Why were the few allowed to shut down the debate before it ever got started?" Hughes asked. "And why were they allowed to mischaracterize the process as open and inclusive, when it was closed and dismissive? There was no chance of pleasing everyone, but a much wider consensus could have been achieved if we, the citizens who finance the government, had been considered stakeholders, instead of just moneybags.

"Now, without GSA participation, the project cannot go forward. We have to draw the line somewhere. Otherwise, we effectively lose control of our country to those with the power and money to defeat the will of the people." Hughes says it is well known that rebuilding the majestic Twin Towers is vastly preferred to the current plans for many reasons – including the key strategic message that it would send. "How could we show Bin Laden greater deference than this conversion of the Twin Towers' spacious, sun-drenched lobbies into the 20-story bunker at the base of the so-called 'Freedom Tower'?"

"And why? So taxis can cut through the site on Greenwich and Fulton Streets! The World Trade Center 'superblock' these streets would destroy was both an oasis from the city streets and a moat around the Towers. Why would the GSA be part of a project that, on top of all its other shortcomings, is so environmentally regressive? Why would it underwrite more traffic, more pollution – less public space and quiet? What is at work behind the scenes to force this scheme on us? There's a Pulitzer Prize waiting for the one who exposes the scandalous truth."

The group noted that while Lower Manhattan is now revitalized and booming, the public is still waiting for an accounting of how the 20 billion taxpayer dollars were spent. "How much of it was wasted, diverted, or used to frustrate the public's will? One billion? Ten billion? That reckoning is past due. The Twin Towers could have already have been returned to the skyline. Under a Kennedy or a Reagan they would have been. Turning the rebuilding process into a bizarre architectural beauty pageant was an abuse of power. We all know what the real World Trade Center looks like. All that was ever needed was to improve it, not abandon it to its fate – but the fix was clearly in.



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“We expect that most of those who voted for the expenditures thought that they were helping to heal our nation. It is unlikely that they realized that rebuilding what had been demolished *was never an option* – or that people were tricked into wasting thousands of man-hours in a sham process for propaganda purposes that advanced narrow special interests, while depriving us of our rightful part in the decision-making. But now we are making sure that they all know what occurred and are calling on them to correct it. Is this still the government of, by, and for the people or isn’t it?

“It’s not too late. Rather than allowing the issue to be framed by the minority that always disliked the Twin Towers, why not start listening to the majority that loved them? A Harris Interactive poll commissioned by The Architects Institute of America to celebrate its 150th anniversary this year found that the Twin Towers placed in the Top 20 of ‘America’s Favorite Architecture’ out of 150 finalists – exposing the lie that they weren’t popular or important to us.”

Hughes concludes: “We can’t allow a giant tombstone to go up in their place – with its hateful inscription: ‘Bin Laden was here.’ Some people will never get it, but most of us get it all too well.”

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