



DANIEL O'DONNELL
Member of Assembly
69th Assembly District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIR
Committee on Tourism
Parks, Arts and Sports
Development
COMMITTEES
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Education
Environmental Conservation

Hon. Eric Adams
Mayor-elect
New York City

Dec 9, 2021

Dear Mayor-elect Adams,

I write to you to request that, upon taking office, you urgently dedicate City resources to address a long-standing concern that is plaguing our neighborhood: rats. I know that as a Borough President and former State Senator, you are no stranger to this recurring issue and have successfully marshaled City resources to address the issue before. Unfortunately, the rats have returned with a vengeance in our neighborhood in recent months - causing serious concerns about the health, cleanliness, livability, and economic recovery of our community. After repeated and unsuccessful attempts to get City agencies to take urgent action to combat the long-standing and worsening rat infestations in our neighborhoods, I am writing to request renewed attention to the matter and stress the need for a full scale “de-rat-ing” operation on the Upper West Side, Manhattanville, and Morningside Heights.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, my office has received a deluge of rat complaints from our neighbors. While New Yorkers have reported more than 23,000 rat sightings to 311 this year, compared with 15,000 in the same period in 2019, an increase of 30% citywide, statistics from the Department of Health show that the greatest number of Manhattan sightings are on the Upper West Side, in Morningside Heights, and in Manhattanville. These sightings are not just minor inconveniences -- they negatively impact health and livability in a city still rebounding from the devastation of the pandemic.

My constituents and I request aid from the Mayor's office in organizing a robust response that marshals the necessary forces from the Department of Sanitation, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Buildings, and other city agencies to remediate identified hotspots, as well as implement larger systemic fixes. For New York to earnestly reopen, the city must prove itself capable of addressing the issues that had been brushed aside during the COVID-19 pandemic. As of now, rat reduction programs are underfunded, in limited geographies, and hamstrung by staff who are overburdened with other responsibilities.



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Consequently, large swaths of the city are being neglected and excluded from existing rat prevention programs.

I have been sorely disappointed by the City's lack of leadership in recent months, despite repeated requests from my office to the DOT, DSNY, and current Mayor's office for targeted action. Nonetheless, I believe that the Adams administration will be well equipped to address this crisis. To protect the safety, health, and quality of life of our community, I request that action be taken to devote new rat prevention resources to the Upper West Side, Manhattanville, and Morningside Heights to remedy the rat crisis in our neighborhood.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent and important matter. My office and I look forward to working with you to implement a solution to this persistent problem for our community.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Daniel O'Donnell'.

Danny O'Donnell
NYS Assembly Member
69th District