



Media Advisory
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Mayor de Blasio abandons “Progressive” principles again, second SBS appointment offers no help or hope for Mom & Pop

Dateline, NYC: December 28th, 2015: Mayor de Blasio recently announced the appointment of Gregg Bishop to Commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS). With this appointment, the Mayor maintains the status quo of corporate and real estate interests over the needs of the small business community. Elected on pledges of taking the City in a new direction from former Mayor Bloomberg and ending economic inequality, Mayor de Blasio continues to fail the City’s struggling small business owners and to abandon his “Progressive” principles.

Though disappointing, this appointment echoes his previous appointment of SBS Commissioner, Maria Torres-Springer. Ms. Torres-Springer was the former Executive Vice President and Chief of Staff at the NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC), an agency dominated by real estate interests, where she worked to marginalize the role small businesses play in our City’s economy. Ms. Torres-Springer has never owned or managed a small business nor does she have any record of advocating on behalf of small businesses and therefore could not relate to the real problems they face, and yet she was put in charge of serving them. Her failure and lack of commitment to stop the closing of long established small businesses, is likely to be repeated by the Mayor’s latest appointment to that role.

In 2014, the NYC Courts issued on average 488 per month eviction warrants to small business owners which is on par with the number of forced evictions under former Mayor Bloomberg. How was Commissioner Torres-Springer held accountable for continuing Bloomberg’s anti-small business policies causing over 1,000 small businesses to close in NYC each month, costing 8,000 NY’ers their jobs each month, and keeping NYC the worst environment for small businesses of any city in the nation? Mayor de Blasio gave her a promotion, and promoted Commissioner Torres-Springer to return to the Economic Development Corporation as President, a political appointment directed by the Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY).

Mayor de Blasio knows there is a real solution to end this crisis sitting in City Council, **which he championed when running for Public Advocate**, the [**Small Business Jobs Survival Act \(SBJSA\)**](#), which would level the playing field and give rights to protect long established businesses and stop their closings. As seen in the past, the role of the SBS Commissioner is to forward the interests of the EDC and REBNY and to never allow the SBJSA, or any legislation giving rights to business owners to reach the floor for a vote.

The Dept. of SBS has a policy of ignoring the real problems our businesses face, like exorbitant rent increases forcing good businesses to close, illegal extortion of mostly immigrant owned businesses, oppressive short term leases which hinders job creation, and the continued passing on of the ever growing property taxes from landlord to business tenant. Historically, SBS has not been a problem-solving agency. Instead it creates phony programs, loans, and assistance navigating through “red tape” while maintaining fealty to property owners, developers, banks, and Wall Street, and ignoring the real problems of whom they should be advocating for, our City’s small businesses. Sung Soo

Kim, Chairman of the Mayor's First Small Business Advisory Board, appointed by Mayors Dinkins and Giuliani, believes SBS hides behind "*useless programs and bureaucratic organizations controlled by special interests. SBS programs are ridiculous and worthless to the majority of NYC's hard-working immigrant owners. There is nothing more absurd than a loan program to businesses who can't pay their rent.*"

With SBS' dismal performance of dealing with the small business crisis, the SBS is the last place to find a leader who will advocate for our small businesses who are struggling to survive. Unfortunately, that is where the Mayor found his next appointment, another political appointment orchestrated by REBNY. Mayor de Blasio announced, "His [Gregg Bishop] resume speaks for itself. The work he has done to assist immigrants and women entrepreneurs proves no one is more qualified to support NYC's small business community and run the agency than he is." In reality, Mr. Bishop's resume shows, like Ms. Torres-Springer, he has never owned a small business nor has he managed a typical storefront business. He was board president of a social program for youth that was funded by several banks including Capital One, foundations run by Goldman Sachs and Forest City Ratner and government agencies like Port Authority. Mr. Bishop was also Deputy Commissioner of Dept. of Small Business Service's Business Development Division which empowers property owners and big banks while funding business organizations that do not represent main street businesses. It has continued the shameful SBS policy to be compliant with unscrupulous landlords who extort cash from mostly immigrant owners and force unfair short term leases (sometimes month to month) onto long standing owners in effort to find a new deep pocket tenant. SBS has turned its back on all the major problems facing small businesses and has taken no action which could impede achieving EDC's goals of establishing NYC as the world's center for real estate investment.

In any other city in the world, the right choice for Commissioner of an agency that should be advocating for small businesses, especially in a time of crisis, would have been a former small business owner. In fact, because Hispanics own the highest percentage of immigrant businesses in NYC, a Hispanic small business owner would have been most appropriate, unfortunately not under the Bloomberg or de Blasio's administration. The Mayor continues to disregard the needs of NYC's largest economic generator with the appointment of Mr. Bishop. Contrary to campaign promises, it's apparent that Mayor de Blasio is following the anti-small business policies established by Mayor Bloomberg and the continued sacrifice of our City's long established small businesses to corporate speculators and greed.

****TakeBackNYC is a direct action political lobbying organization representing a coalition of small business owners, residents, and advocacy groups formed with one goal, and one goal only: Empower and protect the rights of NYC small business owners. www.takebacknyc.nyc*