My name is Saúl Nieves and I've been a resident of Sunset Park for 27 years. I'm also a member of the Protect Our Working Waterfront Alliance (POWWA), convened by UPROSE; Brooklyn’s oldest Latino community based organization. I was a union member for 18 years at SEIU-Local, and 32BJ spearheading member engagement in the union affairs. I strongly believe that now more than ever, unions need to connect with their members in our struggle for our only planet. Climate disruption is a reality. We are moving to climate catastrophe within our generation and it’s our responsibility to fight back. I’m here today providing testimony because I’m concerned --not only about the fact that the Industry City rezoning proposal will disrupt the character of the Sunset Park working waterfront-- but that it will continue to displace existing blue collar jobs and kill the opportunity to grow good green jobs that are the future of industrial manufacturing.
As New York City’s Largest SMIA (Significant and Maritime Industrial Area), Sunset Park has the potential to host the industries and jobs needed to transition to a renewable economy. Earlier this year, New York passed the CLCPA (Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act), which is the most ambitious climate legislation in the country. Among other things, the CLCPA is expected to create over 150,000 new green jobs. The thing is, these jobs need industrial infrastructure to ensure benefits are enjoyed locally through sustainable economic development.

I urge Community Board 7, as representatives of the community voice, vote and best interest to reject the Industry City rezoning proposal as it stands. Our community doesn’t need more service jobs catering to middle and high income folks. We don’t need more luxury retail or hotels. What we need is development that addresses existing Environmental Justice concerns, and helps us address climate change while creating well paying jobs for existing community members. New York can’t continue to displace working-class people in favor of deep pockets. The people who live in Sunset Park today, need a better quality of life and development that meets their needs.

UPROSE and the Protect Our Waterfront Alliance put together an amazing alternative proposal that does this. It’s the first time a community based organization has done this and It’s called the Green Resilient Industrial District (GRID). The GRID supports the 197-A plan and an updated vision of a Just Transition for Sunset Park. All the while taking advantage of the new climate legislation that puts us on the path to a renewable economy. CB7 should vote no on Industry City’s rezoning proposal, or vote yes with the
condition that Industry City modify its proposal to incorporate all of the GRID’s recommendations for the area where their property is located.