Buenas noches, I’m Elizabeth Yeampierre, the Executive Director of UPROSE. Brooklyn’s oldest Latino community-based organization and a national grassroots leader in the climate justice movement. Today, we face the biggest challenge of our era; the climate crisis. One created by the extractive economy that currently governs us and that values development for the sake of profit. I’m here to testify against the Industry City rezoning as it stands and to urge you to uplift our community-led alternative; the Green Resilient Industrial District (GRID).

The GRID is a comprehensive plan that builds on years of community-based planning and organizing in Sunset Park to target climate adaptation and help build a Just Transition for our community. On the other hand, Industry City’s rezoning proposal is nothing more than a repackaged and rebranded formula focused on further cushioning Jamestown Properties’ bottom line. Their proposal is built on the argument that manufacturing is dead and the answer is a concept they’ve yet to define; the Innovation Economy. There is nothing innovative about luxury hotels, commercial and destination retail. The future is different, we’ve codified it here in New York through the Climate and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) and the Climate
Mobilization Act (CMA) to transition our economy to a renewable one within the next thirty years. New York’s transition will not happen out of thin air, it needs infrastructure. It can either be built here, and we can reap the benefits locally, or it can be shipped-in increasing end costs.

As one of NYC’s last remaining, and largest Significant & Maritime Industrial Area (SMIA), Sunset Park is uniquely positioned to be the place where we build for New York and the region’s climate adaptable future. As we continue to design and implement a Green New Deal, the entire nation will move to transition as well. We can’t afford to allow developers to continue to displace existing industrial businesses and space, sacrificing our city’s infrastructure and industrial assets.

If Industry City wants to develop in Sunset Park, they must do so in context. We demand that you ask them to incorporate the amendments and restrictions outlined in the GRID’s Subarea C to their proposal so we can pilot a local GRID that will become a model for the nation.

For more information, please refer to UPROSE’s full-length written testimony and visit our website at www.uprose.org/the-grid.