

**Statement Presented to the New York City Council Parks Committee
Regarding the Proposed Randalls Island Ball Fields Franchise
Friday, November 3, 2006**

I'm against the scope of the plan and the fact that the City and State budget does not allow our Public School children, as well as poor and working-class families and little league clubs from the Bronx and East Harlem community, to enjoy new fields they can access at any time.

I believe in a certain amount of private investment of our public properties only when it is for the benefit of the public, not just the privileged few.

This administration is nurturing a harmful division between the poor and the wealthy of this city. In housing they are playing with words and numbers to introduce so-called affordable housing that only few can actually afford. And now, instead of figuring out ways to use these fields in Randall's Island to help get children off the streets and into sports activities they are looking to sell it off in the same way they are selling off the aspirations of our working-class citizenry.

I think it is a real shame the way poor and working-class people continue to be brushed away from this city. But if this administration is so enamored with turning over public property to private organizations, then I ask why stop there.

Let us cut to the chase and introduce a bill to convert City Hall into a corporation and distribute the stock evenly among the citizenry of New York City. Instead of elections we'll have shareholder meetings every year.

And if the executives are unable to produce a yearly dividend, they get ousted. At least everyone can get a piece of the action when things are bought and sold. Also, people will actually believe that the city belongs to them and not just the wealthy few because they'll have a stock certificate instead of an empty promise.

Voter turnout would be more inspired than it is now and the people could sell their stock if they want to move out. At least this way they'll walk away with something.

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