



NEWS RELEASE

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**Alliance Urges Caution in Considering Any Proposal to Hold 9/11
Terror Trials on Governors Island**

January 22, 2010 – New York. The Governors Island Alliance today urged that City and federal officials work aggressively to minimize the significant impact the trial will have on Lower Manhattan, including operations on Governors Island. In doing so, they asked that City and Federal officials carefully consider the long term consequences of any decisions affecting the Island.

“While we recognize the hardship that hosting the trials would impose on our partners in the Lower Manhattan community, the Governors Island Alliance is very concerned about the impact that relocating the trials to Governors Island will have on the Island's historic resources, our hundreds of thousands of annual visitors, and the millions of dollars now being invested by the public and private sector in its redevelopment,” said Robert Pirani, Executive Director of the Alliance.

“It is unclear to us whether locating the trial on-Island is truly viable, given the lack of secure facilities,” noted Pirani. “But we believe that any discussion of the feasibility of moving the trial there must also assess whether its use as a prison and courtroom meets the purposes that underlie the federal deed restrictions. It must also ensure that the Island's historic district remain open to the public and that permitted uses and current leases remain viable,” he added.

In 2009 alone, the Island saw over 275,000 visitors, a number that more than doubled from 2008. Governors Island provides a rare and affordable recreational venue for local families and contributes significant acreage to the small number of ball fields and green spaces in Lower Manhattan. The Island also serves as a venue for hundreds of local arts and cultural organizations. These organizations fill the Island's sixty-five historic buildings during the summer months and help to reactivate the Island as a great civic space.

The Island's three long-term leases that would also be adversely affected by relocating the trials there include Water Taxi Beach, which has an established concert and restaurant venue in the Historic District and has invested significant funds to develop programming for the coming summer season. The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council is nearly finished renovating a large multi-use building and has already signed on more than thirty artists to work and hold programs on the Island. The School Construction Authority has nearly completed renovating the historic buildings that will house the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School, a public maritime high school, that will open permanently on Governors Island in the Fall of 2010. Hosting the trial on the Island will set back the return on plans for the Island's overall redevelopment, plans for which the City and State have already invested \$ 140 million in capital.

First convened in 1995 by Regional Plan Association, the Governors Island Alliance is a coalition of civic, environmental, and preservation-focused organizations and individuals working to celebrate the Island's rich history, create memorable parks and public spaces, and ensure appropriate reuse of the Island and its historic structures. www.governorsislandalliance.org.

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