



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.ManhattanCB4.org

J. LEE COMPTON
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

April 6, 2007

Hon. Robert M. Morgenthau
District Attorney, New York County
One Hogan Place
New York, NY 10013

Re: Prosecution of Prostitution Cases

Dear Mr. Morgenthau:

We in this community have a tradition of working together with your office and with the Police Department to better effect positive change in our neighborhoods. We are grateful for your responsiveness to our concerns in the past, and your willingness to work with us.

One area of continuing concern for us is the existence of prostitution, especially street prostitution, in our community. While the sheer volume of street prostitution has been greatly reduced from early-1990's levels, we do still see it here. We can see that most of the women out on the street are quite young – 17, 18 or 19 years old. We realize that Midtown Community Court runs some very good programs geared toward getting these young women out of prostitution permanently. Since most of the prostitution cases are heard at Midtown Community Court, these cases ideally would be linked to services by having them mandated and monitored by the social work staff and the Presiding Judge. It has come to our attention, however, that few young women ultimately are required to participate in these programs, and that many return to prostitution when their cases are completed.

We are hoping that there is something that your office can do to encourage these young people to participate in the anti-prostitution programs. From what we have learned this has been addressed by other boroughs with some success.

We have taken a strong stand against street prostitution in the past, not just because it is a cosmetic blight, but also because it pains us to see young girls exploited before our very eyes by the pimps who watch them from the sidelines and by the customers who drive in from suburbia. We know the violence and abuse that these girls suffer at the hands of their pimps. We are thus also concerned that the pimps and the johns do not seem to be arrested too often, and the message that that sends.

We would like to invite you or your representative to a Quality of Life Committee meeting, to discuss these concerns.

Sincerely,

J. Lee Compton
Chair, Manhattan Community Board No. 4