

CHEKPEDS

Clinton/Hell's
Kitchen Pedestrian
Safety Coalition



400 W 43rd Street - #33-N
New York, New York
10036

(646) 623 2689

excom@chekped.com

OUR MEMBERS

- 9th Avenue Association
- 43rd Street Block Association
- 44SW • 44th Street Block Association
- 45th Street Block Association
- 46th Street Block Association
- 47/48th Street Block Association
- 55th Street Block Association
- 344-348 West 38th Street Tenants Corp.
- Actors TempleTheater.
- Baryshniko v Arts Center
- Brazil Brazil
- Central Fish Market
- Chimichurri Grill
- Clinton Housing Development Corp.
- Cupcake Café
- Domus
- Econolodge Times Square
- Hartley House
- Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association
- Housing Conservation Coordinators
- Hudson Crossing Tenants Association
- International Foods
- Jezebel
- J. Seffens Studio
- L'Allegria
- Larissa Designs
- Le Madeleine
- Manganaro's Food
- Manhattan Plaza
- New Dramatists
- OsteriaGelsi
- Poseidon Bakery
- Project FIND
- R/GA
- Revolution Rickshaws
- Rockrose Development
- Sea Breeze
- Saint Vincent Midtown Hospital
- Sunnyside Records
- Smiley's
- Sonja Wagner Gallery
- St. Lukes Theater
- Studio LLC
- Tagine
- Tartare
- The Ritz
- The Door Lounge
- Trattoria Pesce Pasta
- Urban Affiliates
- Zipper Theater

www.chekped.com

Speaker Christine C. Quinn
New York City council
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

February 27, 2007
Testimony Hand Delivered

Dear Speaker Quinn, Ladies and Gentlemen

My name is Christine Berthet, co-founder of the Clinton Hells kitchen coalition for Pedestrian safety. We are grateful that you are holding such hearings crucial to the diversity of New York City. We also acknowledge Speaker Quinn's dedication to improve police efficiency in our district well before she became speaker.

In our neighborhood recent survey shows that 75% of residents are afraid for their safety because of cars, while 6% are afraid of crime. 90% of our residents are pedestrians. who are scared and feel discriminated against by the traffic police. In recent months three incidents illustrate this point:

At a crossing, while the pedestrians had the light, an agent stopped them and let cars pass even though the flow was fairly light. I told the agent that it was "our turn", he looked at my jogging shoes and told me: "Lady, let the working people pass first". The implication here was that a pedestrian is not a working person. Although I am.

Few weeks later, a large van was stopped in the middle of the school crossing forcing children and pedestrians alike to cross right in the heavy traffic. I requested of the traffic agent- idling at the corner- that he makes the van move. I then talked to the driver of the van. The traffic officer put himself between the van and me and asked me to leave while he protected the van from... me! The van needs protection, not the pedestrian, not the children, right in the pedestrian crossing, one block away from the most dangerous school to walk to in Manhattan.

Two days ago, a car refused to yield and critically wounded a young woman while she was in the crossing with the light. A ranking officer that I respect told me "one of the factors was that the pedestrian used an umbrella and was not watching the street when she crossed (on a pedestrian crossing with the green light)."

I do not blame this officer since his remark is simply a reflection of the accepted truth in the police. However, it reminded me of ages ago when after a rape everyone would say, "she sent the wrong signals"!

First, more police must be dedicated to pedestrian safety and traffic law enforcement. Second the police needs training so that job number one is to protect pedestrians. Third, safety and traffic laws must change to give the police better tools to get dangerous drivers off the road. In the last three pedestrian killings, all in the crossing, with the light, the drivers walked away with a summons.

Thank you.

Christine Berthet, co-founder
CHEKPEDS