

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

We are writing in support of A9683/S6721 entitled the Non-Profit Homeland Security Preparedness Act. Non-profit institutions in New York State, such as the American Museum of Natural History, serve as major tourist attractions, economic engines, and places of public assembly that are potential targets of terrorist activity.

The American Museum of Natural History was founded by the State of New York in 1869 and is home to more than 32 million specimens and artifacts that serve as a record of life on earth. Scientists and visitors from around the world visit the Museum for its breadth of collections, exhibits, and educational programming. The Museum is open 363 days per year and serves more than four million visitors per year of which more than 500,000 are schoolchildren visiting in either a school or camp group. Additionally, the Museum has been recognized by Zagat's U.S. Family Travel Guide as the most visited family attraction in New York City and the third most visited in the country.

By working with the New York City Police Department and through the generous financial support from the City, the Museum has made tremendous improvements in improving its security infrastructure. The Museum has been able to increase its security personnel to 173 unionized guards thereby expanding floor and entrance coverage to acceptable levels during non-peak periods. In addition infrastructure improvements, such as security cameras, vehicular barriers, and magnetometers have assisted in our ability to provide a greater level of security in areas that were historically difficult to monitor without large investments in personnel. However, with a total of 26 interconnected buildings spread across 1.6 million square feet on a 17 acre campus, additional resources are required to ensure our technologies are up to date and our personnel are well-trained and sufficient in size during peak periods. This, in turn, will ensure the safety of the Museum's collections, staff, and visitors and allow us to continue our 140-year legacy.

The American Museum of Natural History fully supports the passage of this bill.

Sincerely,



Ellen V. Futter
President