



May 20, 2013

Mr. Michael Myers  
Real Bronx Tours  
244 5th Avenue, Suite 2189  
New York, NY 10001-7604

Dear Mr. Myers:

It has been brought to our attention that your company regularly offers a tour of the Bronx that professes to give visitors to our city “a ride through a real New York City ‘GHETTO.’” As elected officials representing some of the areas you visit on the tour, we are sickened by the despicable way in which you portray the great borough of the Bronx to tourists. We strongly urge you to stop profiting off of a tour that misrepresents the Bronx as a haven for poverty and crime, while mocking everything from our landmarks to the less fortunate members of our community who are availing themselves of food assistance programs.

According to a May 19<sup>th</sup> article in the *New York Post*, your tour guide presented an incredibly negative picture of the South Bronx, focusing on a troubled history that obscures the progress that Bronx neighborhoods – and neighborhoods across the five boroughs – have made since the 1980s. Today in the Bronx, we have the lowest crime rate that we have had since 1963, but you would never know it from this tour, which encourages tourists to be afraid of being pickpocketed on our streets. The tour guide also mocked the Grand Concourse and made a joke out of Bronxites waiting on line at a food pantry.

The goal of bringing tourists into local communities – especially those outside of the Manhattan core – is an honorable one. We are more than happy to welcome tours to our community that celebrate the rich culture and history of our neighborhoods, treat Bronx residents with dignity and encourage visits to our wonderful landmarks and beautiful parks. However, using the Bronx to sell a so-called “ghetto” experience to tourists is completely unacceptable and the highest insult to the communities we represent.

We urge you to radically change the way this tour is marketed and presented to the public. We would also ask that you communicate an apology to our constituents who call the Bronx home for the terrible depiction of our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruben Diaz Jr." in a cursive style.

Ruben Diaz Jr.  
Bronx Borough President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Mark-Viverito" in a cursive style.

Melissa Mark-Viverito  
New York City Council Member