

March 16, 2012

Testimony In Support of HB-5455

Thank you, Representative Gentile and Senator Cassano and all of the members of the Planning and Development committee for allowing me to speak in support of House Bill 5455, An Act Concerning Penalties for and the Investigation of the Operation of Illegal Massage Establishments.

I am a resident of the Black Rock section of Bridgeport, Representative Grogin's district. My husband and I bought our house in this seaside neighborhood 7 years ago because we loved the area. We wanted to start a family and understood the local elementary schools were excellent.

Fast forward to present day, and we are proud parents of a five year old and a three year old. And it is on their behalf, and on behalf of all of the children and families in the neighborhood and really, throughout Bridgeport, that I stand before you to urge the passing of this bill.

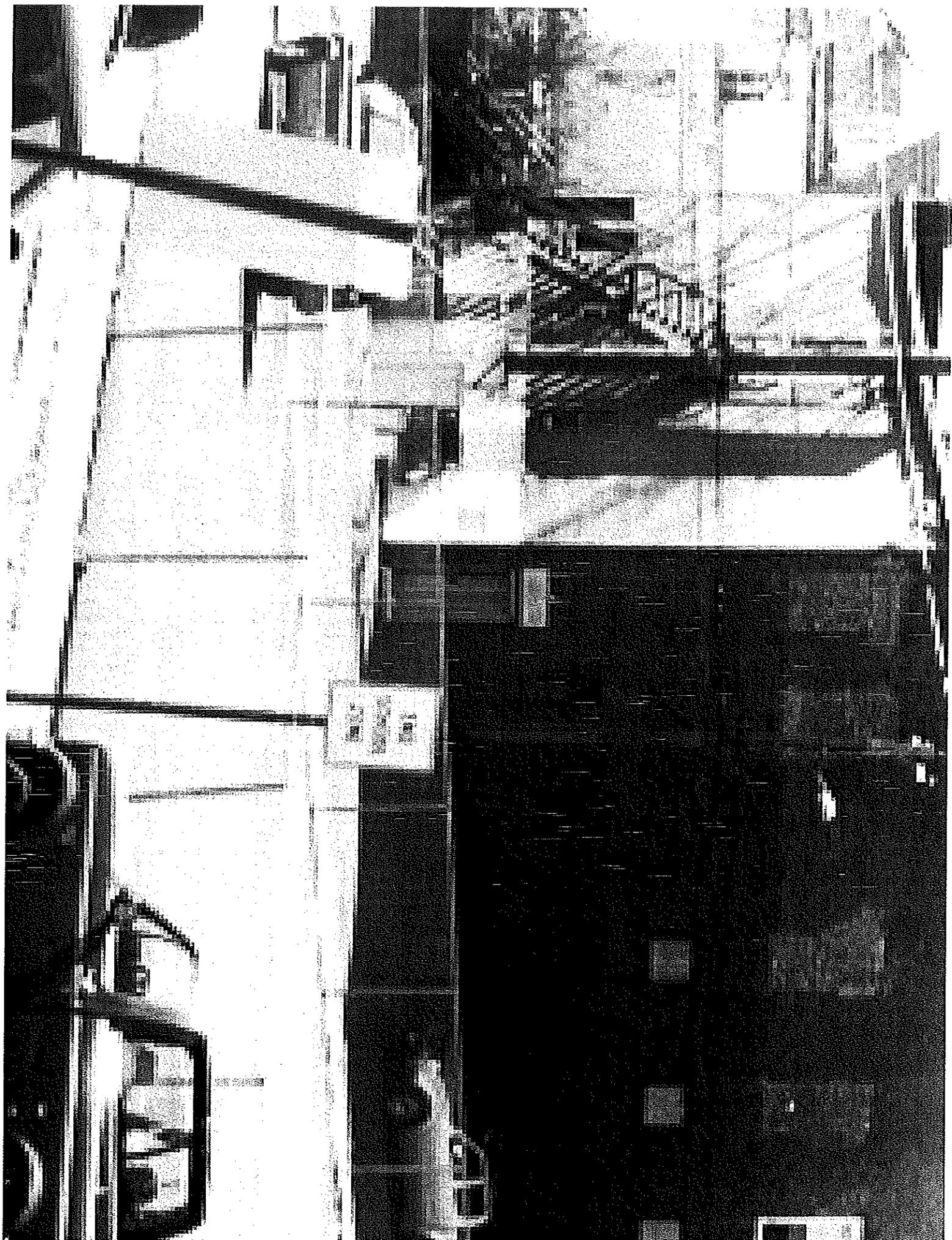
One of the 4 massage parlors in Black Rock sits about 20 yards away from the playground of my Kindergartner's school. The fact that an establishment participating in prostitution can be seen by the children in the playground and that the customers and employees of the same business similarly have eyes on the playground is deeply disturbing to me. I am very concerned that illegal and lewd behavior is occurring in a systematic and routine way in such close proximity to where hundreds of children are in direct line of vision, one whom is my own.

From a business perspective, these "spas" operate on the main thoroughfare through our community. I truly believe their presence discourages the kinds of shops and businesses that, as a community, would be welcome additions to the legitimate businesses already in place on the Avenue.

I respectfully submit to you that, for the reasons I've mentioned above, as well as those listed by my neighbors here with me, you enact this legislation so that these businesses can be regulated, monitored and shut down, if need be. Illegal Massage Establishments are a significant problem in our residential neighborhood and have a tremendously negative effect on our community and our businesses.

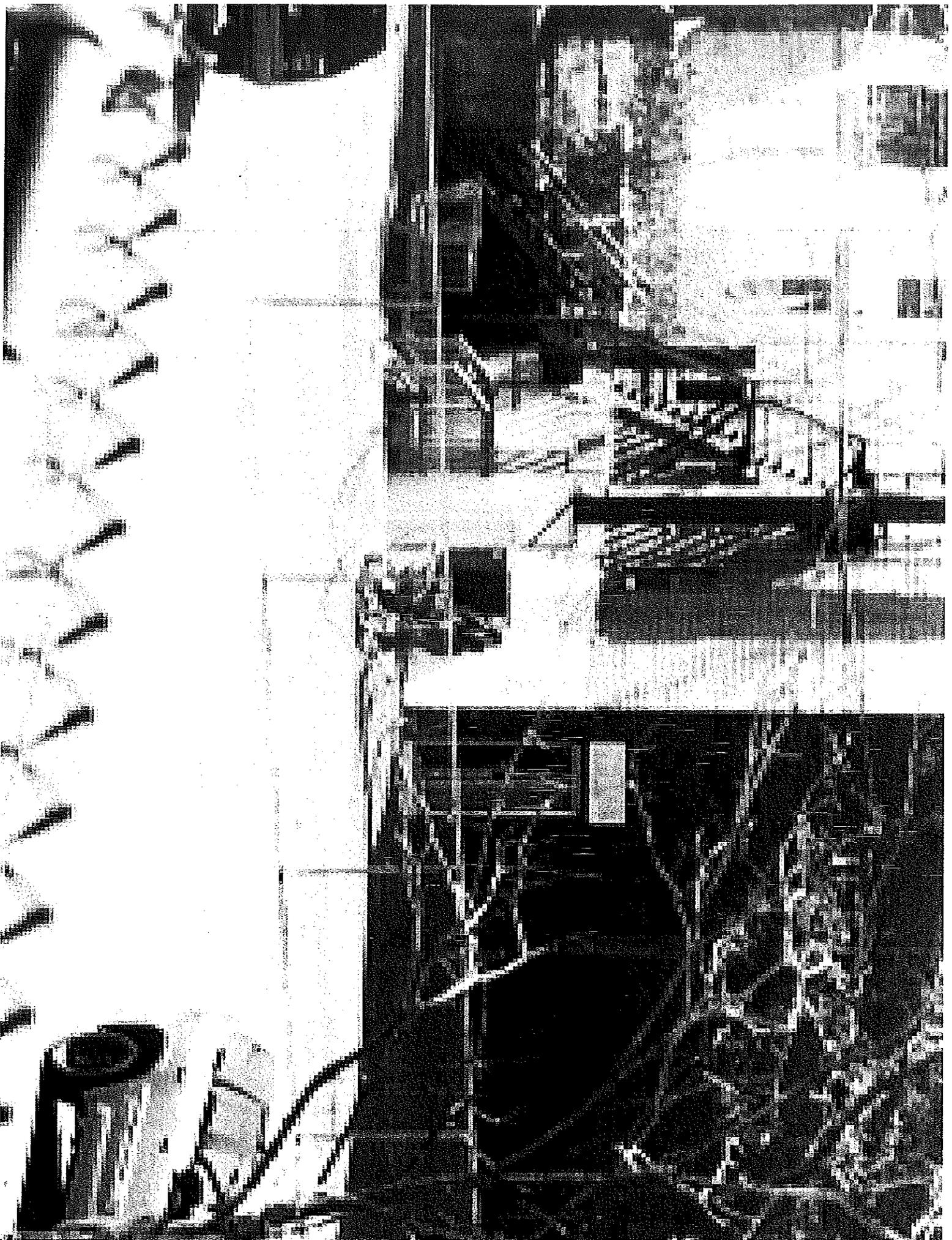
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Joy Cline Cadwallader
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