

# New York Metropolitan Area Joint Board UNITE HERE!

EDGAR ROMNEY  
MANAGER

MAY Y. CHEN  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

PETRA VELEZ  
CHAIR

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 10, 2008**

**Contact: Sherry Kane  
(212) 929-2600**

## **Garment Center Must Remain ‘Zoned for Fashion’**

The New York Metropolitan Area Joint Board UNITE HERE, the local union that represents thousands of workers in New York’s garment industry, continues to advocate for an adequate level of space for apparel manufacturing in the New York City Garment District.

“The union supports keeping good middle class jobs in both apparel manufacturing and hotels,” said Edgar Romney, Executive Vice President of UNITE HERE and Manager of the New York Metropolitan Area Joint Board. “It’s a positive development that transparency and public accountability of hotels has been assured with special permits, but we must also have a mechanism to safeguard our city’s manufacturing space.”

Discussions around zoning have focused on the amount of space needed to preserve a vibrant Garment District, given that a significant number of factories, suppliers and showrooms must be located in the area for it to maintain its place as a world class fashion center. Currently, about one million square feet is in use by the industry. Apparel business owners and the union insist that at least 350,000 square feet or more of production space is necessary to maintain a functioning ‘Garment Center.’

UNITE HERE has proposed the creation of a non-profit or public entity, such as a New York Fashion Space, to manage and safeguard the remaining space designated for the apparel industry. Without such an entity, the Garment Center’s future cannot be guaranteed.

###