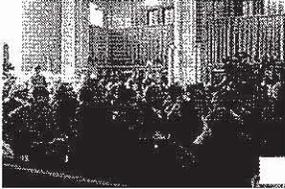


WNYC News Blog

Wal-Mart Critics Rip Retailer During Hearing

Thursday, February 03, 2011 - 02:54 PM

By Lisa Chow



wal-mart Hearing (Lisa Chow/WNYC)

Wal-Mart was ripped by sharp-tongued critics who oppose the retail giant's potential move into the city during a City Council hearing that drew more than 100 people to the former Emigrant Savings Bank in Lower Manhattan on Thursday.

The retailer, which has been mulling a move into the city, did not send a representative to the hearing and has not yet announced specific plans to open a store within the five boroughs but that did not stop naysayers from lashing out and protesting outside before the hearing shouting slogans like: "Down with Wal-Mart! Up with the people!"

"Wal-Mart is definitely not welcome in New York City," Councilwoman Melissa Mark-Viverito said. "It is a union-busting, tax-evading, wage-suppressing, job-destroying, civil rights-abusing, food stamp-denying, multinational corporation that has no place in New York City."

The Council said it's exploring legislative options to block Wal-Mart from opening a store in the city, but under city law a store only needs its approval if the space is more than 10,000-square feet in a manufacturing district. Wal-Mart has launched an aggressive PR campaign in New York but has yet to sign a lease.

"We will not be your slave workers in your plantation because that's what Wal-Mart is," Councilman Charles Barron said.

The mayor has supported Wal-Mart's interest in setting up shop in the five boroughs, pointing to studies that show city residents travel outside New York City to shop at Wal-Mart.

"This city should be open to business to anyone who wants to come here," Bloomberg said. "There is a big demand for shopping at Wal-Mart."

University of Illinois economist ^{UIC} David Merriman, whose testimony lasted nearly an hour, said Wal-Mart does not create new jobs. At a balance, he said, it's a wash.

New Yorkers! Meet the Candidate, Wal-Mart

When Wal-Mart Comes To Town

Read More: council hearing, wal-mart

More in: WNYC News Blog

Leave a Comment

Leave a comment

Register for your own account so you can vote on comments, save your favorites, and more. [Learn more.](#)

Please stay on topic, be civil, and be brief.

Email addresses are never displayed, but they are required to confirm your comments. Names are displayed with all comments. We reserve the right to edit any comments posted on this site. Please read the [Comment Guidelines](#) before posting. By leaving a comment, you agree to New York Public Radio's [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms Of Use](#).

Name*

Email address*

Comment*

Location

Post Comment * Denotes a required field