

The Honorable Melissa Mark-Viverito
Speaker
New York City Council

Dear Speaker Mark-Viverito:

I'm writing on behalf of PETA and our 36,000 New York City supporters. I oversee PETA Latino.com and wanted to bring to your attention an alarming 45-second video that we just posted of a New York City carriage driver spewing racist, sexist hate speech in Spanish at a Latina who merely expressed concern for his horse:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cY0m9g_3ImU.

The driver, Frank Rodden—who also co-owns the main Manhattan carriage-horse stable—calls her a "whore" and quips that she "probably has six or seven kids," in addition to other vulgar taunts in front of passersby. Because Rodden represents the city to countless tourists in what is supposedly a hospitality trade, we ask that you urgently write to the driver's union and demand a public apology. [Speaker Quinn wrote a similar letter](#) to the union after [another driver berated a mixed-race lesbian couple](#) as a "f#\$king dyke" and a "f#\$king [n-word]"—on a busy public street during Gay Pride. The driver has never apologized and is still allowed to interact with tourists.

We also ask that this ongoing issue of hate speech from carriage drivers be addressed by the council's Black, Latino and Asian Caucus, which I have copied here. As the council debates Mayor de Blasio's plan to retire the carriage-industry horses to sanctuaries, it is essential that each member sees the shocking subculture of racism, sexism, and homophobia that thrives in this controversial little trade. These bullies disregard not only the suffering of animals but also the basic rights of caring New Yorkers and tourists.

We eagerly await your reply.

Kind regards,

Renée Saldaña
PETA Latino

P.S. Frank Rodden's Clinton Park Stables is linked to two current cruelty cases: It's home to [Blondie](#), the horse forced to work for days with a painful hoof infection, and it's where [records were falsified to mislead the Department of Health](#) into thinking that a sick 22-year-old horse was really a healthy 12-year-old. These revelations are especially shocking, considering that this is the stable where [Liam Neeson and Frank Rodden posed for cameras](#) and hosted council members to declare the place "humane."