



For Immediate Release

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Empire State Building Lights Went Dark for Asian Americans

(December 12, 2007 -- New York) The management of the Empire State Building denied recognition of the Lunar New Year by rejecting a request to light the building in red and gold in celebration of one of the most cherished occasions for Asian Americans, defying a custom that has been put in place since 2000.

"It is simply outrageous for the Empire State Building to deny over one million Asian Americans in the city the recognition of this most important holiday by rejecting the request to light the building," said John Wang, President of the Asian American Business Development Center (AABDC), the group that has been responsible for organizing the Lunar New Year celebration at the Empire State Building.

Since 2000, AABDC, with the support of the Empire State Building, has been organizing an annual lighting ceremony at the top of the Empire State Building where federal, state and city officials would present proclamations in recognition of the Lunar New Year. The event has attracted wide attention throughout Asia and the Asian American community in the United States.

Two months ago, AABDC was asked to fill out an application for the lighting request when a new management company took over the Empire State Building then asked AABDC to submit detailed responses on how the organization can help to promote and publicize the Empire State Building. The management company has refused to commit itself to light the building in recognition of the Lunar New year.

"I am deeply proud of AABDC's several years of effort in turning the lighting ceremony into a globally recognized event. The event has come to be the embodiment of New York City's recognition of the Asian American's contributions. The decision of not allowing the lighting of the Empire State Building is a smack of arrogance from a real estate company without any civic pride for this diverse city," commented Elizabeth Kay, President of Fusia Communications, marketing partner of AABDC.

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