Department of Education

Testimony of the New York City Department of Education
on Proposed Intros 563-A and 566-A
Before the New York City Council Committee on Education

November 18, 2011

Kathleen Grimm, Deputy Chancellor, Division of Operations

Good afternoon, Chair Jackson and all the members of the Education Committee here today. My name is Kathleen Grimm and I am the Deputy Chancellor of the Division of Operations at the Department of Education. Joining me are Jeffrey Shear, my Chief Operating Officer; Lorraine Grillo, President of the School Construction Authority (SCA); Ross Holden, Executive Vice President & General Counsel of the SCA; John Shea, Chief Executive Officer of DOE's Division of School Facilities; Nancy Clark, Assistant Commissioner for the Bureau of Environmental Disease Prevention at the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and Ariella Maron, Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Energy Management at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS). Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Proposed Intros 563-A and 566-A.

As you may recall, in April, I appeared before this Committee to discuss the City's Comprehensive Plan: Greener, Healthier Schools for the 21st Century. Released in February 2011, this is an unprecedented effort to increase energy efficiency and improve environmental quality in 754 public school buildings, including the removal and replacement of all lighting fixtures that may contain polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, throughout the entire school system. In total, the City is committing $850 million in capital funds towards this plan over the next 10 years. In the end, this initiative will result in annual energy savings of $95 million for the City over time while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions by more than 200,000 metric tons per year – the equivalent of removing more than 40,000 cars from the road. I am happy to report that the plan is moving forward on schedule and we have already replaced lighting fixtures in 57 school buildings.

By way of background, and briefly recapping what I shared in April, between 1950 and 1978, PCBs were legally produced for use in lighting fixture ballasts and building caulk in newly constructed and upgraded buildings, including schools. In 1978, the federal government banned the manufacture of PCBs, but until recently, has provided little guidance regarding how municipalities should address PCB-containing materials in existing buildings.

In January 2010, the City, SCA and United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) entered into a Consent Agreement and Final Order (CAFO) that established a pilot program to help develop strategies to manage PCBs in a school environment. There have been two important findings as a result of this work:

First, we learned that the PCB air levels in the pilot schools have generally been very low and within the margin of safety used by the EPA to set guidelines for PCBs in air. There is no immediate health concern and health effects from long term exposure to the air in school buildings are unlikely to occur at the PCB levels seen in the City schools. These conclusions are supported by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and existing scientific studies, which have not shown PCB exposures from building materials to cause health effects in building occupants.

Second, we learned that lighting ballasts in older-style fluorescent lighting fixtures are a more important source of PCBs.

To address these pilot study findings, the City has contracted with energy service companies (ESCOs) and other vendors to complete comprehensive energy audits and retrofits. The work will include the replacement of all lighting fixtures that may contain PCBs with energy efficient – PCB-free – lighting systems as well as other cost-effective energy saving conservation measures.

The Plan gives top priority to building-wide replacements at all sites where any ballast leaks have been observed. To this end, we have issued a protocol reviewed by the EPA that instructs all of our building custodians to perform periodic visual inspections for ballast leaks. Any such schools brought to our attention with confirmed ballast leaks will be advanced in priority for light fixture replacement.

We took advantage of existing construction contracts and summer vacation at schools to expand the work begun last spring to remove all light fixtures in buildings with confirmed PCB ballast leaks. As a result, we have completed work at 57 school buildings. Please note that this includes a number of buildings with small numbers of PCB light fixtures, none of which were reported to be leaking. In addition to the completed work, 13 buildings are in progress for replacement of older fluorescent lighting fixtures. A full list of these 70 buildings is included in the proposed November 2011 Amendment to the 2010-2014 Capital Plan.

Our five year capital plan allocates $171 million which includes an additional $30 million as a result of an agreement between the Council and the Administration. This will allow us to complete building-wide projects in 155 additional buildings. We are finalizing contracts with the five ESCOs selected through a Request for Proposal and are on track to begin the energy audit process at 20 buildings in calendar year 2011.

We take the presence of PCBs in schools seriously and recognize that many in our school communities are concerned about the potential health impacts on learning and working in a building that has materials that contain PCBs.

To this end, we have made parent and community engagement a core element of our lighting replacement program. Throughout the pilot program and in connection with our lighting replacements, we have made a concerted effort to meet with individual school communities,

elected officials, and other concerned parties to discuss this issue and share the City's plans to address it.

Each time a leaking ballast in a school building is observed and confirmed as involving PCB-containing material, we notify the principal(s) of the affected school(s) and provide a letter to backpack home. In addition, we advise school communities when work will commence and when building-wide lighting replacements will be completed in their building. We also inform school communities of lighting fixture replacements that are in progress.

In addition, we have created a web site exclusively devoted to regular status reports. This site has been updated monthly since its launch in February. Among other useful information, this site contains a list of all buildings in which work has been completed and all buildings with confirmed PCB ballast leaks.

With respect to the proposed legislation, we share the Council's interest in assuring the prompt and regular notification of parents, school communities, elected officials and other stakeholders regarding our progress and new developments, as evidenced by our current PCB notification protocols. We do, however, have concerns regarding the requirements in Proposed Intros 563-A and 566-A, as they are currently drafted. In addition, some of the definitions and specific provisions in both bills require clarification.

With regard to Proposed Intro 563-A, again, we are committed to notifying school communities in a timely and prompt manner; however, this bill does not account for the requisite time needed to draft a customized, comprehensive notification letter and translate it into multiple languages for our school communities. Additionally, further thought needs to be given on how best to handle notification during summer vacations when principals, staff, and parents are difficult to reach.

With regard to Proposed Intro 566-A, we question the usefulness of counting the exact number of affected light fixtures and floor tiles in each school building. As you know, our Comprehensive Plan identifies 754 schools that potentially contain light ballasts with PCBs and plans lighting replacements for them all. Counting the exact number of light fixtures will slow down the process of completing the plan and potentially cost additional dollars.

Reporting based upon the number of lighting replacement projects completed, which we already publicly share, is more illustrative of the City's progress in this area than tracking the number of light fixtures removed and replaced. In this way, we can track meaningful progress toward the ultimate goal of ridding the schools of PCB lighting fixtures.

The replacement of floor tiles for PCB-related reasons is a rare occurrence. Moreover, tiles in schools are replaced only if there is evidence of staining from leaking ballasts from above.

Finally, the CAFO with the EPA contains reporting requirements on test results, community participation, corrective actions and remedial measures. In several respects, the requirements of the proposed legislation duplicate the requirements of the CAFO.

In the end, the City is continuing to lead the nation on this issue. We remain the only city in the country with a comprehensive plan to address all PCB-containing light fixtures, and we are proceeding in a responsible manner that we believe will yield the best results for our school communities. We will continue to be open with our school communities and the public about the presence of PCBs in schools and our efforts to address them, and we will continue to work with school communities to ensure that they are informed about our work and its progress.

We are grateful to the Speaker and the Council for its support of this unprecedented effort and look forward to our continued work with the Council on this issue. With that, I am happy to answer your questions.

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Committee on Education
New York City Council

Hearing on Proposed Int. No. 563-A and Proposed Int. No. 566-A

November 18, 2011

re:

Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) in New York City Schools

Testimony of:

New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH)

submitted by:
David M. Newman, M.A., M.S.
NYCOSH Industrial Hygienist

USW

NYCOSH Testimony

re:

Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)

in New York City Schools

1. Who NYCOSH is

The New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH) is an independent, non-profit, union-based health and safety organization based in Manhattan. Over 200 local unions and other labor and community organizations in the metropolitan area are members of NYCOSH, as are several hundred individual workplace safety and health activists, public health professionals and advocates, and concerned citizens. NYCOSH has been providing technical assistance and comprehensive training in occupational safety and health to unions, employers, community-based organizations, and government agencies for over 30 years.

NYCOSH appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony concerning Proposed Int. No. 563-A and Proposed Int. No. 566-A and to urge their enactment into law.

2. NYCOSH's expertise and connection to PCB hazards

NYCOSH is particularly interested in the issue of PCB-containing ballasts and PCB-containing building materials as we work closely on environmental and occupational safety and health issues with unions that represent teachers, school maintenance workers, and contractors, all of whom are potentially impacted by exposure to PCB-containing materials in schools.

NYCOSH is well-situated to provide comments regarding PCB hazards and remedies. Through our grant relationships with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), the New York State Department of Labor, the Consortium for Worker Education, Red Cross, United Church of Christ Disaster Response Ministries, and other government and private agencies, we have provided training and technical assistance in a wide variety of occupational safety and health areas, including chemical safety, respiratory protection and personal protective equipment, engineering controls (including dilution and local exhaust ventilation), disaster response (including 29 CFR 1910.120, "Hazwoper"), and permit-required confined space operations.

NYCOSH has conducted hazardous waste training for New York City Transit for approximately 20 years. We have provided technical assistance to the New York City Department of Environmental Protection regarding hazard assessment and remediation of multiple contaminants, including PCB caulk and transformer PCBs, at a New York City wastewater treatment plant. We have worked closely with a major New York City hospital to provide training for hospital-based first receivers of victims of mass casualty incidents that involve the release of hazardous substances and to provide technical assistance with decontamination of personnel, facilities, and equipment.

3. NYCOSH supports proposed Intros. No. 563-A and 566-A

NYCOSH supports the concept of parental and worker "right to know" about exposure or potential exposure to confirmed or presumed PCB contamination in New York City public schools (Intro. 563-A). Absent this information, parents cannot make informed decisions pertaining to the safety and well-being of their children and workers may lack the basic information necessary to avoid unnecessary and harmful exposures. In addition, we support quarterly reporting by the New York City Department of Education on the progress of PCB removal from public schools (Intro. 566-A). These measures together constitute an appropriate and necessary first step in establishing a systematic

and transparent protocol for identifying, assessing, monitoring, and controlling PCB hazards in schools.

Proposed Intro. 563-A might be strengthened by clarification as to what constitutes notification of "any polychlorinated biphenyl contamination." NYCOSH suggests that parents and employees should be notified of all test results, regardless of whether contamination is found. Notification should consist of any "environmental monitoring or measuring, including personal, area, grab, wipe, or other form of sampling, as well as related collection and analytical methodologies, calculations, and other background data relevant to interpretation of the results obtained"[1] and/or "a chemical inventory or any other record"[2] which reveals where PCBs are present.

4. Additional precautionary and protective steps are necessary

With regard to establishing a comprehensive program for effectively addressing the widespread presence of a highly toxic substance in multiple indoor environments, the prior regulatory experience with asbestos demonstrates that limiting requirements to inspection, notification, and reporting its presence in schools, while essential, was not be sufficient to result in the implementation of appropriate protective measures. Similar requirements for PCBs that are limited to reporting are also not likely to result in effective protection of the school community, broadly defined.

In the early 1980s, as concern mounted nationally about the unregulated presence of asbestos-containing materials (ACM) in public schools, EPA promulgated requirements that schools inspect for ACM and report findings to parent-teacher associations. Agency officials anticipated that notification would spur parents to demand corrective action and encourage schools districts to be responsive. However, an EPA investigation found that

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[1] 1910.1020(c)(5)(i)

[2] 1910.1020(c)(5)(iv)

school districts in most cases failed to take any actions to protect students or staff. The EPA investigation determined that the chief reason for inaction was the lack of a legal requirement that ACM be removed or safely maintained in place.[3]

Promulgation of inspection and reporting requirements for ACM in schools, in the absence of mandatory removal or safe management in place, did not result in precautionary and protective measures to protect students and staff. Mandatory inspection and notification requirements for PCBs in schools today are likely to be similarly unsuccessful at provoking implementation of additional appropriate precautionary and protective measures.

5. A template for a comprehensive PCB program already exists

It is not necessary to reinvent the wheel. The same comprehensive approach that EPA ultimately implemented to address asbestos in schools can serve as a model for effectively addressing PCBs in schools.

On October 26, 1986, President Reagan signed into law the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1986, 15 U.S.C. 2601, which became Title II of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). AHERA required EPA to develop regulations that established a comprehensive framework for addressing asbestos problems in public and non-profit private elementary and secondary school buildings. The Asbestos-Containing Materials in Schools Rule (the "AHERA Schools Rule," 40 CFR Part 763, Subpart E) became effective on December 14, 1987.

In general, the AHERA Schools Rule establishes a detailed process that ensures the identification and safe management of all asbestos-containing building materials

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[3] P.Shabecoff. "Study Cites Lack of E.P.A. Action on Asbestos Peril in U.S. Schools", *New York Times*. February 1, 1984, http://www.nytimes.com/1984/02/01/us/study-cites-lack-of-epa-action-on-asbestos-peril-in-us-schools.html?scp=1&sq=&st=nyt.

(ACBM). It requires that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) fulfill many responsibilities, including designating a person (Designated Person) to ensure that the requirements of the AHERA Schools Rule are properly implemented [§763.84(g)]; conducting inspections for friable[4] and nonfriable asbestos in each school building that the LEA leases, owns, or otherwise uses as a school building [§763.85(a)]; developing a maintenance and operations (management) plan for each school [§763.93]; and selecting and implementing response actions in a timely manner [§763.90]. The LEA must ensure that such activities are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the AHERA Schools Rule [§763.84(a)].

The LEA also must ensure that any person who performs inspections, develops management plans, or designs or conducts response actions must be accredited [§763.84] by either an EPA-approved training provider or equivalent. Provisions of the AHERA Schools Rule also apply to contractors who perform inspections and/or re-inspections, prepare management plans, and design and/or conduct response actions, agencies that collect bulk or air samples, and laboratories that analyze samples.

AHERA requires schools to "ensure that workers and building occupants, or their legal guardians, are informed at least once each school year about inspections, response actions, and post-response action activities, including periodic re-inspection and surveillance activities that are planned or in progress" [§763.84(c)]. Such notification must be done in writing and a copy placed in the management plan. Suggested notification methods may include publication of an article in a school district newsletter or via a separate written notice distributed to staff and sent home to a student's parent or legal guardian.

In addition, schools "shall make management plans available for inspection to

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[4] "Friable" means asbestos-containing material that can be easily crumbled with hand pressure. In this condition it is likely to emit asbestos fibers which are available for inhalation, with the potential to cause significant harm to human health.

representatives of EPA and the State, the public, including parents, teachers, and other school personnel within 5 working days after receiving a request for inspection" [§763.93(g)(3)]. Furthermore, "the local education agency shall notify in writing parent, teacher, and employee organizations of the availability of management plans and shall include in the management plan a description of steps to notify such organizations, and a dated copy of the notification. In the absence of any such organizations for parents, teachers, or employees, the local education agency shall provide written notice to that relevant group of the availability of management plans and shall include in the management plan a description of the steps taken to notify such groups and a dated copy of the notification" [§763.93(g)(4)].

NYCOSH urges the New York City Council to enact Intros. No. 563-A and 566-A.

We also urge the Education Committee and the Council to adopt and enact additional requirements for comprehensive, written PCB Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Programs. These requirements should be modeled on EPA's guidance for asbestos O&M programs[5] and should include, but not be limited to:

1. Bulk sampling and analysis to identify in-place PCB building materials and ballasts and PCB-contaminated materials and to determine concentrations.

2. Labeling of in-place PCB building materials and ballasts and establishment of building inventories of PCB-containing or PCB-contaminated building materials.

3. Establishment of clear and specific science-based criteria, action levels, and timely procedures for removal and disposal of PCB-containing and PCB-contaminated building materials, and a significantly accelerated program to

[5] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Waste and Chemical Management. "How to Manage Asbestos in School Buildings", EPA 910-B-96-001, January 1996, http://www.epa.gov/region2/ahera/e23.pdf.

replace all PCB-containing ballasts, including proactive identification and immediate removal of leaking ballasts.

4. Regular area and personal sampling to monitor changes in air concentrations in order to provide early warnings of deterioration or disturbance of PCB materials and inform decisions concerning worker protection.

5. Regular visual inspection of PCB-containing and PCB-contaminated building materials and ballasts by competent, qualified persons to ascertain their condition and the potential for exposure.

6. Recordkeeping of inventory, sampling, and inspection results, and of work activities that disturb or have the potential to disturb PCB-containing materials and devices and could thus accelerate the release of PCBs into the indoor or outdoor environment..

7. Training of building maintenance workers and contractors in engineering and administrative controls, safe work practices, and appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

8. If and where appropriate, training in and provision of proper NIOSH-approved respirators as per the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard, 29 CFR 1910.134. Prohibition of the use of paper dust masks.

9. A program to inform workers, contractors, other adult building occupants, and parents where PCB materials are located and to notify them of planned or ongoing disturbance activities.

None of these suggested measures for PCBs in schools is currently in place or is proposed by City authorities.

6. School maintenance workers are the "canaries" for the school community

The school population likely to have the highest exposures and the highest risks are the school maintenance workers and contractors who maintain and replace PCB caulk, ballasts, and other PCB materials. These disturbance activities can release PCBs into the air where they are available for inhalation and dispersion into the indoor school environment. Anecdotal information indicates that the employers of these worker populations (i.e., the Department of Education and many of the contracted vendors) do not conduct PCB-focused job hazard assessments and do not provide training on PCB hazards, safe work practices, use of appropriate personal protective equipment, and prevention of additional contamination of the school environment.

These school maintenance workers are the proverbial canaries in the coal mine for the school community. The best way to protect students, teachers, and staff against PCB exposure is to protect school maintenance workers at the source.

NYCOSH thanks the Council Committee on Education for initiating Intros. No. 563-A and 566-A and for this opportunity to comment on them.

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

For the Records

SCOTT M. STRINGER
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

Testimony of Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer

Before the Committee on Education,
On the Consideration of Intro Numbers 563-A and 566-A
November 18, 2011

I would like to thank Chairman Robert Jackson of the Education Committee for holding this important hearing to consider Intro numbers 563-A and 566-A. These two critical bills, introduced by Council Member Vincent Ignizio, will help ensure that the Department of Education (DOE) notifies New York City public school parents in a timely manner when it finds Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) in school buildings. The legislation will also require the DOE to provide the City Council with quarterly reports about progress the DOE has made on PCB removal and remediation.

PCBs are highly toxic chemicals used in lighting ballasts and caulk in buildings constructed between 1950 and 1978. These toxins are known to result in significant health problems, such as cancer, immune system impairment, and infertility. Even minimal exposure to PCBs during pregnancy can negatively impact newborns and children.

Earlier this year the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) identified PCBs in a sampling of schools in each of the five boroughs. According to New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI), EPA Region 2's spot inspections identified a 93% rate of failure and leakage in T12 lighting, which exists in some 700 New York City public schools. Further, PCB-contaminated caulk remains in roughly one-third of schools built in the PCB caulk era.

The DOE is now in the early stages of a PCB remediation plan it says will take 10 years to complete, a timeframe that is, at best, inadequate. I and numerous others have stated in the past year, the DOE's current remediation plan moves far too slowly to reach the critical goal of ensuring safe, toxin-free environments for the children and adults learning and working in our schools. Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal proposed state legislation earlier this year that would require replacement of 50 percent of all affected light fixtures within three years and the remainder within five. This is an infinitely more reasonable timeframe than what the DOE has proposed, given the significant threat posed by prolonged exposure to PCBs.

I strongly support Intros 563-A and 566-A, which offer a final, missing piece in the PCB puzzle: Beyond the need to improve the scope and timeframe for PCB remediation in our schools, the DOE must provide detailed and timely information about its plans to remove these highly toxic chemicals from schools, and it must effectively communicate those plans to parents, students and school employees.

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City schools need to be centers for learning, not toxins. Parents deserve to know that their children are not risking contamination every time they walk through their school doors. Likewise, teachers and principals are entitled to a workplace that is safe and clean.

Thank you again for hosting this hearing and a huge thank you to Council Member Vincent Ignizio for authoring such important legislation.

Thank you.

TESTIMONY
OF THE
UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

BEFORE THE
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

HEARING ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION REQUIRING
NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING OF PCB CONTAMINATION
IN NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NOVEMBER 18, 2011

Good afternoon, Chairman Jackson and distinguished members of the Education Committee. My name is Chris Proctor, and I am the Director of the Safety and Health Department of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). Thank you for this opportunity to be heard on these important pieces of legislation.

The UFT strongly supports these bills requiring transparency and notification of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) exposure because we believe it is imperative that students, their parents and guardians and school staff be informed when evidence of it is found in schools. The dangers of such exposure are well documented and cannot be dismissed or disregarded. All stakeholders in school communities should have access to all pertinent facts in order to make informed decisions in cases where health concerns are an issue.

We also believe that such information should be reported to the City Council so that it can take steps to monitor potential risks and ensure that schools are maintained as healthful working and learning environments in full compliance with city, state and federal safety regulations.

We certainly want the DOE to be required to report emergency situations involving PCBs. Knowing about such a requirement calling for immediate action on the part of the city could help assuage the anxiety of parents concerned about potential PCB exposure in their children's schools. Emergency situations could include instances of smoke or burning odors being emitted by T-12 light fixtures, or oil dripping from a fixture.

It's worth noting that when PCB-related emergencies occur in schools, there are protocols that schools need to follow, including evacuating and isolating the room or area by closing the door/s and opening windows, to help ventilate the space. Use of a fan to exhaust through the windows may be used to assist in ventilating the room, and steps should also be taken to prevent recirculation of the air if there is a general ventilation system. The power to the affected fixture should be interrupted and the bulbs removed.

Arrangements should be made to inspect the interior of the light fixture as soon as possible. If it is determined that the ballast contains PCBs or is assumed to contain PCBs or if the light fixture housing or components have staining that could have come from oil within the fixture:

- The fixture should be removed and replaced.

- The floor/room contents below should be visually inspected for signs of possible leakage. If there is leakage or staining the affected materials should be removed.
- The room should be well ventilated prior to occupancy.

As we noted previously during a Council oversight hearing on the PCB issue last April, we are concerned about the likelihood that hundreds of our schools might contain elevated levels of PCBs that could leak from faulty fluorescent light fixtures.

While we are pleased that the city Department of Education (DOE) is acting to address concerns about PCB contamination through a citywide plan to remove and replace lighting fixtures assumed to contain PCBs, we believe the city's proposed 10-year timeline is far too long for students and staff to wait. As we stated previously, we think it is wiser to expedite the citywide removal and replacement of pre-1979 light fixtures containing PCBs. We feel that the DOE fails to appreciate the need for urgency and is making the cost of the removal program a higher priority than the potential health risks. We would prefer to see a schedule of two years duration at best and certainly no more than five years at the latest.

Thank you again for your diligence in addressing this issue of great concern for thousands of New York City parents as well as thousands of educators and students.

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New York City Council Public Hearing on

Proposed Intro. 563-A and Proposed Intro. 566-A in relation to PCBs Contamination in Schools

November 18, 2011

Testimony of

Mike Schade, Campaign Coordinator
Center for Health, Environment & Justice

Good Afternoon. My name is Mike Schade, and I work for a national organization, the Center for Health, Environment & Justice or CHEJ. CHEJ is one of the leading groups in the country on toxic chemical and hazardous waste issues. Our Executive Director, Lois Gibbs, was a community leader who organized the relocation of over 800 families away from the infamous Love Canal toxic waste site in Niagara Falls in the late 1970's which ultimately led to the creation of the Federal Superfund program. For 30 years, CHEJ has worked with New York communities exposed to toxic hazards, including many community and parent groups concerned about schools impacted by air pollution and hazardous waste sites.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify at this hearing on the New York City Council's legislation, Proposed Int. 563-A and Proposed Int. 566-A in relation to PCB Contamination in Schools from lighting ballasts.

We support the intent and substance of Proposed 563-A to provide timely and adequate notification to parents, students and school employees within 3 business days of receiving test results that show PCBs contamination in a school. This is an important right-to-know policy proposal that is critical for the exposed school population and concerned parents. We also support the requirement for the city department to include in the notification the steps to be taken by the department and the time frame. We ask that the sponsors include an amendment to have notices sent to all parents and school employees if a school is potentially contaminated with PCBs, and a timeframe on when it will be tested.

In relation to Proposed Int. 566-A, we support the requirement for the city department to issue quarterly reports on the status of PCBs removal from schools and specific information on the removal of both light fixtures and caulking. This is an important right-to-know and government accountability policy proposal. We ask that the sponsors consider amending the proposed bill to: 1) require the city to also provide the number of light fixtures, floor tiles and caulking that have PCB contamination and have not yet been removed; and 2) to require the city to provide a timetable on when they will test all schools that have not yet been tested.

We also urge the sponsors of both bills to include an amendment requiring the department to remove all sources of PCBs within two years of the discovery of any contamination.

In the interests of preventing children and school personnel from being exposed to an especially hazardous chemical, CHEJ strongly urges this two year timeframe for removing all sources of PCBs, including an aggressive plan to test all schools that have may have the old toxic lights or caulking.

The two year timeframe recommendation is based on some key facts.

First, children are much more vulnerable and sensitive to toxic exposures. For example, children absorb about 50% of the lead to which they are exposed, while adults absorb only 10–15%.

Second, environmentally linked diseases in children are on the rise in America and every effort should be made to eliminate toxic exposures to children to turn around this disturbing trend. Cancer is the number one disease-related cause of death in children. Childhood learning disabilities, hyperactive behavior and asthma have soared nationwide.

Third, PCBs pose a serious health risk, especially to sensitive populations like children. PCBs are highly toxic compounds that were banned by Congress in 1979 to protect human health. Both the Environmental Protection Agency and the International Agency for Research on Cancer have determined that PCBs are probably carcinogenic to humans. According to the federal Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry, studies have found that exposure to PCB can cause the following health impacts: liver damage, anemia, acne-like skin conditions, liver, stomach, and thyroid gland injuries, behavioral alterations, depression and fatigue, irritation of the nose and lungs and gastrointestinal discomfort.
(http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/PHS/PHS.asp?id=139&tid=26, *ATSDR Toxicological Profile on PCBs)*

The city should not subject children and teachers to exposure to a chemical that substantially increases cancer risks and can cause many other injuries.

A two year time frame to remove sources of PCBs will greatly reduce children's exposure to PCBs and is the only timeframe that is health protective and responsible.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and considering our comments.

LINDA B. ROSENTHAL
Assemblymember 67th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIR
Subcommittee on Mitchell-Lama

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TESTIMONY OF ASSEMBLYMEMBER LINDA B. ROSENTHAL BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ON INT. NO. 563 AND INT. NO. 566-A REGARDING POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS (PCBS) IN NEW YORK CITY SCHOOL BUILDINGS

November 17, 2011

Good afternoon. I am Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal and I represent the Upper West Side and parts of Clinton/Hell's Kitchen in Manhattan. Since April 2008, when PCBs were first discovered in the window caulking in P.S. 199 in my district during a routine window replacement project, we have learned that PCBs may be present in the lighting ballasts and caulking in nearly 800 school buildings in New York City. After this shocking discovery, I introduced legislation in the New York State Assembly that would require testing of the window caulking in all New York City school buildings and also (A.5374) to require the City to remove all PCB lighting ballasts, determined to be a significant contributor to PCB contamination in schools, within three to five years. Since then, I have been visiting schools to help educate parents, and have facilitated or attended countless rallies and meetings with then Deputy Mayor Walcott, the officials representing Region 2 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Education officials, parents, teachers and other concerned community members.

Following the introduction of that legislation, the City released the details of its ten-year plan to make legally mandated energy efficiency upgrades to school buildings, part of which would include the removal of PCB lighting ballasts. Within that ten-year time frame, the City will conduct energy audits of nearly 800 schools, replace boilers and non-PBC but energy inefficient lighting and make numerous other energy efficiency improvements to schools buildings. While the City's energy efficiency goals are certainly laudable, removal of potentially carcinogenic toxic PCB lighting ballasts must come first.

As we are all aware by now, PCBs are a suspected human carcinogen and have been shown to cause cancer in laboratory testing on animals. In addition, they are a known neurotoxin and have been linked to cognitive disorders in children, such as attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. PCBs have also been shown to have negative impacts on the endocrine system and pose serious risks to women's reproductive systems, particularly in women who are pregnant or of child-bearing age. With all of these known and suspected health risks, particularly the fact that our students' schools may be inhibiting their ability to learn, it is inconceivable that the City would not act swiftly to remove these known dangers.

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Not only is ten years much too long to allow our school children, teachers, administrators and staff to spend in a PCB-contaminated building, the lighting-ballast remediation can be done much faster. The City can and must enter into low-cost contracts with energy service companies (ESCOs) and also use funding available to it through the New York Power Authority (NYPA) to complete the remediation in no more than three years. It is reprehensible that the City has placed financial concerns above the health and safety of our students and staff at New York City schools. Our children deserve better.

I fully support the passage of Int. Nos. 563 and 566-A, which respectively would require the City to provide parents with near-immediate notice of the discovery of PCBs in their children's school building and would require the City to keep the New York City Council apprised of its remediation efforts and their subsequent efficacy. However, I demand that the City conduct immediate testing of all New York City public school buildings suspected to be PCB contaminated, either because of caulking, lighting ballasts or both, and to make the results of that testing available to the public immediately and by posting on the Department of Education's website. Further, the City can and must release the list of all schools suspected to be PCB contaminated and the order in which the City has prioritized remediation of each. It is imperative that school administrators, parents, teacher, advocates and elected officials are armed with information that will empower them to make important decisions regarding the health and safety of their children.

Until now, the City has been flagrant in its disregard for the welfare of school children and their teachers. The Administration now has an opportunity to change course and make right the wrong that it has perpetrated with respect to PCBs in schools. This City must make PCB-remediation a priority; it is not a matter of dollars and cents, but one of health and safety. I urge the Council to pass Int. Nos. 563 and 566-A and further urge the City to speed up remediation and release to the public the list of schools suspected to be PCB contaminated and the order in which those schools will be remediated.

Council of School Supervisors & Administrators, New York City

New York State Federation of School Administrators
Local 1 American Federation of School Administrators, AFL-CIO

READ INTO RECORD

MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

New York City Council
Int. No. 563-A and Int. No. 566-A

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Brooklyn, NY 11241-1003

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The *Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA)* strongly supports Int. 563-A, a local law to amend the New York City Charter, regarding the notification of information related to polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in schools, and Int. 566-A, a local law to amend the New York City Charter, regarding the required reporting of information related to PCBs.

The amendments proposed in Int. 563-A call for the DOE to notify parents and school staff of any and all PCB contamination along with a plan of action to remove the contamination. Additionally, the amendments proposed in Int. 566-A hold the Chancellor accountable to the City Council to ensure that progress of PCB removal is moving at an adequate rate and that the DOE is in compliance with the notifications required in Int. 563-A.

The proposed legislation protects our students and staff from the dangers of PCBs and mandates that effective communication strategies be implemented to keep all parties informed. These measures are necessary to ensure that our students and school staff maintain a healthy work environment, and that the DOE is transparent in its efforts to remove any potential contamination.

CSA is Local 1 of the American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA), AFL-CIO, located in Washington, DC. CSA is also affiliated with the NYS Federation of School Administrators (NYSFSA), which is, in turn, a member of the NYS School Administrators Consortium (NYSSAC). CSA represents nearly 6,100 Principals, Assistant Principals, Supervisors and Education Administrators who work in the NYC public schools, 400 Directors and Assistant Directors who work in city-subsidized Day Care Centers, and 11,000 retired school supervisors and their spouses and domestic partners.

Michelle Ciulla Lipkin
Testimony – City Council Hearing, November 18, 2011

Hello, my name is Michelle Ciulla Lipkin. I am Co-President of the PS199 PTA. As part of the pilot program, PS199 has been involved with every detail of PCB remediation and knows far too much about this dangerous toxin. My concern, however, does not lie only with my children's school. As Co-President of the District 3 Presidents' Council and as Secretary of the Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council, my concern spreads to my district and throughout the whole city where there are so many schools that have not been tested and so many children at risk from PCB exposure.

I greatly appreciate the City Council's efforts to push the Department of Education to expedite their parent notification process as it relates to PCBs in schools. I also agree with the efforts to make the DOE submit reports on the progress of PCB removal. I fully support both of these bills and urge the council to pass them.

We must also work together to speed up the plan for PCB light ballast removal. The ten-year timeline presented in "NYC Schools Comprehensive Plan: Greener, Healthier Schools for the 21st century" is simply not good enough. A ten-year timeline means a child in first grade has a good chance of going through elementary school and middle school without any PCB remediation happening in their school buildings. A decade to handle this issue is unfair to our children and way too risky to their long-term health. We must put pressure on the DOE and the city to expedite these efforts. PCB removal must be prioritized over other green efforts because its risks are far too great.

In order to address this PCB issue with more urgency, many Community Education Councils are passing a resolution that outlines steps that should be taken immediately regarding the PCB issue in NYC Schools. I wholeheartedly agree with the resolution and urge the council to support the steps outlined below:

1. Immediately conduct a thorough physical examination of the light fixtures at all schools that have fixtures potentially contaminated by PCBs.

2. Replace within two years of the passage of this resolution all light fixtures contaminated by PCBs, as well as replace all fixtures that can potentially become contaminated with PCBs due to a future failure of PCB light ballasts.

3. Immediately disclose to the public the name and location of each school that is identified as having PCB contaminated lights.

4. Conduct air tests in all NYC schools likely to have caulk containing PCBs and release the results of the tests to the public.

5. Take immediate steps to remediate the caulk that is releasing PCBs upon completion of the PCB light remediation.

The issue of PCB contamination in NYC schools must be addressed with urgency. I greatly appreciate the City Council taking this matter seriously. I hope to see your continued support in all efforts to keep our kids healthy and safe. Thank you.

Testimony of Leon Tulton
Parent, Co Op City, the Bronx.

RE: New York City Council Education Committee Public Hearing on Intros. 563-A and 566-A.
Friday, November 18, 2011

Good Afternoon Chair Person Jackson and Council members of the Education Committees. My name is Leon Tulton and I am the father of a child who will soon be enrolled at PS 178 in Co Op City, which is our neighborhood school and has been identified as having high levels of PCBs. I'm also a member of the PCB-Free School Coalition, a group formed by parents and individuals concerned about the presence of Polychlorinated Biphenyls, also known as PCBs, in the City's public schools and the risk that these toxic chemical pose to students.

I'm here to demand two things from the City Council to protect my daughter. **First, the Council must demand that DOE replace PCB-tainted light fixtures in two years instead of the mayor's proposed 10 year plan. Second, the Council must demand that the Department of Education (DOE) conduct citywide testing of the public schools for all sources of PCBs.** Not neighborhood-wide or just those within a borough, but all the public schools in New York City. Even at low doses, PCBs are known to be harmful to human health. We shouldn't gamble with our kids' health during the eight years or more they spend in school by risking exposure to PCBs. While I understand that DOE must be fiscally responsible, I won't stand by and allow the agency to put a price tag of the health of our children, especially my daughter's. Ten years is unacceptable.

I would like to thank Council Members Ignizio and Levin for sponsoring the two bills being discussed today. They will help inform parents such as myself as to the PCB contamination in New York City schools. I would ask that they add to their bills that parents be notified if it is very likely that their child attends a school with PCB lights or caulk.

DOE's main responsibility is to provide a safe environment for our kids to learn and grow. Schools should not only be a safe haven from the violence outside, but from dangerous toxins inside as well. Council Members of the Education committee, I urge you to join us in helping to protect the life of my daughter and all New York City school children by replacing PCB-tainted light fixtures within the next two years and then turning your attention to other sources of PCBs by conducting citywide testing of all public schools.

Thank you.

TESTIMONY TO THE CITY'S COUNCIL OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON PCB DISCLOSURE AND FUTURE REMOVAL FROM NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS REGARDING PS75

Chairman Mr. Robert Jackson
NYC Council of Education Committee
250 Broadway, 16th Fl.
New York , N.Y.

November 18, 2011

I first want to thank Chairman Robert Jackson and the members at this Council for holding this Hearing and allowing us to testify, and also for introducing the two bills on the table today, namely No. 563-A and 566-A.

I am a parent at PS75, which has PCB contamination, I and represent the parents whom I have managed to contact and who have signed these petitions which I shall leave with you.

The two bills in question are a step in the right direction but we feel that they fall short of our objectives. Having parents and school staffs well informed is a good start, but in addition we should also work harder in expediting the PCB removal process and light fixture replacements at NYC Schools.

Many will be shocked to learn that the World Health Organization ranks the United Sates at No.37 among the world's health systems, right behind Costa Rica, and way behind countries like Colombia, Greece and the United Kingdom, and barely above Cuba, a No.39. As for Healthy Life Expectancy the U.S. is at No. 24, and this in spite of the its rank at No. 2 in Total Expenditure on Health as a percentage of the GDP, at 15%. I find this to be relevant to how poorly this country cares for the health of the American people, and more a propos, for the health of our children attending PCB contaminated schools. The rise of ADHD, of Diabetes, of all types of Cancers, and of a long list of ills in this country can and should be attributed to the prevalence of chemicals in our direct environment.

We seem to have a health care system which prefers to treat the sick with all kinds of potentially harmful and expensive drugs rather than aiming to prevent people from getting sick in the first place. The food most of us consume is full of pesticides, GMOs and untested chemicals. Likewise, the air we breathe is full of toxins, outdoors as well as indoors. PCBs are among the few properly tested and documented chemicals, and consequently banned given their toxicity, ranking up there with asbestos.

By making our children go through a projected 10 extra years of this PCB exposure at their schools, we subject their highly vulnerable developing brains to the damaging effects of these chemicals, banned as potential carcinogens since 1978. This is unnecessary: we all know that times are hard, and that the expense of retrofitting all the PCB containing light fixtures and removing the PCB laden caulk at all the city's public schools will be a significant cost. But we should also take into account that by retrofitting the lights with new, cleaner, and more efficient fixtures and bulbs we would also be saving considerably. According to an Energy Efficiency Consultant I recently spoke with, a standard retrofitting of a NYC building will result energy savings of about 40%. So what are we waiting for? Why 10 years?

Most parents I have spoken with at PS75 were not even aware of this PCB issue. On behalf of the children and staffs at PS75, and at all NYC schools, I commend you for making the right decision to care for our young and hopefully to speed up the process in the proper testing and cleaning up of PCBs in our schools, and in the prompt and proper notification to our school communities.

Thank you very much.

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Testimony of
CHRISTINA GIORGIO
On behalf of
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
Before New York City Council hearing on
Proposed Int. No. 563-A and Proposed Int. No. 566-A
November 18, 2011

Good Afternoon Council Members. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony concerning Proposed Int. Nos. 563-A and 566-A. My name is Christina Giorgio and I am a staff attorney with the Environmental Justice Department for New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI).

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

NYLPI was founded in 1976 to serve the legal needs of underserved, under-represented New Yorkers and their communities. What began as a small-scale staff working to link low income clients and organizations with attorneys willing to volunteer pro bono legal services has grown into an unparalleled resource for low income, community-driven legal representation. Our mission is to advance equality and civil rights, with a focus on health justice, disability rights and environmental justice, through the power of community lawyering and partnerships with the private bar.

Twenty years ago, NYLPI formed our Environmental Justice and Community Development Program to provide legal and organizing assistance to low income communities and communities of color in New York City on environmental and land use issues. These communities are disproportionately burdened by noxious and undesirable land uses and deprived of beneficial land uses. We work to strengthen communities' ability to assert their right to a healthy environment, while at the same time, promoting community-driven economic development, affordable housing, open space, and community services.

We want to thank Council Members Ignizio and Levin, and all those who have given their support to these bills, for responding to the concerns of parents and school communities regarding the City's failure to give parents and school staff the information they need to assess whether their schools are contaminated with PCBs.

PCB Health Risks

PCB contamination in NYC schools poses a serious health threat to students and school staff. PCBs are among the most poisonous man-made compounds, and are the only

chemicals banned outright by the Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA). PCBs are potent endocrine disruptors that also pose significant risks to the human immune and nervous systems, even at low exposure levels. PCBs accumulate in the human body. Chronic exposure to even low levels of PCBs increases PCB body burdens and attendant health risks over time. PCB exposure is associated with, *inter alia*, permanently depressed IQ, diabetes, heart disease, liver disease, asthma, hormonal disturbance, and childhood leukemia. Numerous agencies, including the National Toxicology Program of the National Institutes of Health, have declared PCBs to be probable human carcinogens.

When addressing issues of children's health, as we are here today, it is important to note that PCBs are developmental toxins; that is, after controlling for body weight and blood volume, they pose disproportionately high risks to the physical and cognitive health of children. PCB exposure also poses disproportionately high risks to the long-term reproductive health of girls and young women, including the female students attending NYC schools. We have attached to our testimony a summary of the health risks associated with PCBs.

DOE's and SCA's Failure to Disclose Vital Information

Given this serious health risk, the Department of Education (DOE) and the NYC School Construction Authority (SCA) have an ethical obligation to inform parents if their child is attending a school that is known or likely to be contaminated by PCBs. Yet, we know the City has fallen far short in this regard. Int. Nos. 563-A and 566-A would codify the City's ethical obligation into law as it relates to notifications and disclosure. We commend Council Members for sponsoring and supporting these bills, as they are both important steps forward in advancing parents' and school communities' right to know whether their schools are contaminated with PCBs. We would, however, like to suggest a few modifications to Int. No. 563-A that we believe would greatly enhance its effectiveness. Our recommendations are informed by our participation in the longstanding community campaign to eliminate PCBs from our City's schools, as well as our role as legal counsel in PCB litigation against the DOE and the SCA.

As you know, since April 2008, NYC has been home to a series of community efforts to rid schools of PCBs. Concerned parents, school maintenance workers, teachers, and community members from across the metro area have worked with elected officials and with environmental justice, environmental, labor, and other progressive organizations to advocate for action to reduce the exposure of children and school employees to these potently toxic compounds. In addition to our role as a partner in this campaign, NYLPI also represented one of its original Bronx members in litigation over the presence of PCB contaminated caulk in her daughter's elementary school.

The caulk litigation ultimately resulted in a consent agreement between Region 2 of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the City whereby the City agreed to launch a five-school caulk pilot program to test for and remediate PCB contamination caused by caulk in those schools. The consent agreement also mandates that the City develop a

citywide PCB remediation program, although the City has not agreed to implement the plan if the City and the EPA fail to agree on the City's proposed remediation. Approximately 850 schools are likely to have PCB contaminated caulk and would be subject to remediation under the citywide plan.

Currently, NYLPI represents the member organization New York Communities for Change (NYCC) in federal litigation against the DOE and the SCA brought on behalf of their members who are parents of children attending NYC schools contaminated and likely to be contaminated by PCBs. Specifically, NYCC has sued the DOE and SCA in federal court over alleged violations of TSCA and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) relating to leaking and historically leaked PCB light ballasts associated with obsolete T12 lighting present in 695 NYC schools.

Concerned parents continue to pressure the DOE and SCA to address PCB contamination in the schools. Most recently, parents conducted their own PCB testing of caulk located in their children's schools. The majority of test results confirmed the presence of PCBs well in excess of EPA guidance of 50 parts per million. The DOE has refused to confirm the test results with their own tests and, in fact, has suggested it might bring trespassing charges against the parents who tested the caulk. Outraged by the DOE's response, NYCC and its community partners launched a right to know campaign, demanding that the DOE conduct the requisite tests to give parents the information they need to know whether their child is attending a school contaminated with PCBs.

The community campaigns and the legal cases are relevant to the proposed legislation in several ways. They point to the pervasive problem of PCB contamination throughout the City's school system, with over 1200 schools likely to be contaminated by PCBs either by caulk, T12 lighting or both. In addition, through the pilot program, we have learned that the DOE and SCA often withhold vital information concerning testing results that would enable parents and school staff to understand the health risks they and their families face each and every school day. Below are a few examples of the DOE's and SCA's evasive and antidemocratic approach to disclosure over the course of the caulk pilot study:

1. Their failure to release the post-remediation results of the air testing performed during the summer of 2011 at the pilot schools.
2. Their failure to release what testing, if any, was done at the pilot schools relating to caulk and PCB light ballasts during the summer of 2011.
3. Their failure to hold parent meetings at 4 of the 5 pilot schools concerning the testing and remediation done in summer 2011, despite their legal obligation under the consent agreement to keep school communities informed of the pilot program's progress.
4. Their failure to post the Citizen's Participation Plan until after half of the pilot study was already completed.
5. Their failure to post on their website the caulk testing results or ballast testing results from the summer of 2010; posting them only after NYLPI got the

information through a FOIA to the EPA and *The New York Times* ran an exposé about it.

6. Their failure to notify the public of drastic changes they made to the scope of the pilot study conducted at PS 3R and, to a lesser extent, PS 183Q.
7. Their failure to give timely and adequate notice to parents about the spring 2011 pilot study meetings, making it very difficult for parents to know of the meeting and even harder for them to attend.
8. Their failure to update and make easily available their list of schools with PCB lights.

Support for Passage and Amendment Recommendations

This lack of disclosure provides powerful support for not only passing both proposed bills; it also makes the case for strengthening the parental notification bill (Int. No. 563) in several key ways. Please note we are limiting our recommendations to parental notification, as we defer to the representatives of school staff to make recommendations concerning notifications directed to the non-parental school community.

Our recommended modifications are as follows:

1. Specify that the notice to parents be in writing and individually delivered, as opposed to simply posting the notice at the subject school or on the DOE's website.

2. Specify the minimum level of detail that must be included in the notice, including but not limited to a list of all testing that was done, what further test will be conducted, all test results and interpretative reports, and a question and answer fact sheet explaining the health threats associated with PCB exposure.

3. Add that the DOE must individually notify the parents of students who are attending schools built and/or renovated between 1950 and 1979 and/or which have T12 light fixtures and which have not undergone successful comprehensive PCB remediation relating to both caulk and T12 lights ("Potential PCB School"), that their child is attending an unremediated school with likely PCB sources, and, as such, is at risk of being contaminated by PCBs.

Item 3 warrants elaboration. As we understand it, the purpose of No 563-A is to notify parents and school staff that their school is contaminated with PCBs and, if so, what remediation efforts are taking place to address the contamination. The bill acknowledges that parents and school staff have a right to know whether their school is contaminated. However, the DOE and SCA refuse to inspect and test Potential PCB Schools for the presence of PCBs other than the five caulk pilot study schools subject to the consent agreement. Therefore, under the current language of the bill, parents and school staff will not be notified of PCB contamination until the DOE chooses to test a school other than the five pilot study schools. As such, parents and school staff will remain indefinitely in the dark as to whether they face health risks associated with PCB contamination.

This can be fixed by adding language that requires the DOE to notify parents and school staff if their school is a Potential PCB School. In fact, the City has already compiled this information in two lists: one identifies schools with T12 lights and one identifies schools likely to have caulk containing PCBs. By requiring the DOE to notify parents and school staff that their school is a Potential PCB School, parents and school staff will be better informed of the health risks associated with their daily environment and become active participants in reducing exposure and helping to create a safer school environment until testing and remediation is performed.

Larger Policy Recommendations

The above recommendations seem ready made for incorporation into Int. No. 563-A. Yet there is a broader policy concern that we would like to raise relating to the fact that, other than the five pilot study schools, the DOE currently is not testing Potential PCB Schools for PCBs. The true health risks will remain unknown until thorough testing is done at all Potential PCB Schools. To that end, we urge City Council to mandate that:

1. DOE immediately conduct citywide physical inspections of all T12 light fixtures for current or historically leaked PCBs;

2. DOE promptly notify parents if their child is attending a school where PCB leaking or historical leaks were found; and

3. DOE immediately remediate all PCB contamination caused by leaking or leaked PCB ballasts.

The next priority for protecting students and school staff from PCB exposure would be mandatory testing for the presence of PCBs in caulk in all the schools built or renovated between 1950 and 1979. We urge City Council to mandate such testing be done immediately and that the results of such tests be provided individually to the parents of the children attending the tested schools. Only with comprehensive testing and prompt notification will parents, school staff and school communities have accurate information regarding the health risks associated with their school environment.

Again, we thank Council Members Ignizio and Levin and the City Council for their leadership on this urgent public health issue and for the opportunity to address the Council.

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The Science of PCBs and Health: A Selective Summary

Compiled by New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

The articles in parenthesis are identified in full in the bibliography on the last page.

ATTENTIONAL DEFICITS AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION

- Adults who work in buildings in which window caulk is contaminated with PCBs showed higher rates of attentional deficits (Peper, 2005).
- Low-level prenatal exposure to organochlorine compounds including PCBs is associated with an increase in ADHD-like behaviors in children (Sagiv, 2010).
- Children who had prenatal exposure to PCBs had higher incidence of behavioral disorders and lower IQ scores when they were 9 years old (Stewart, 2008).
- Adolescents with elevated serum PCBs do more poorly on several tests of cognitive function than do adolescents with low PCBs (Newman et al., 2009).

CHILDHOOD LEUKEMIA

- Children's risk of developing the most common form of childhood leukemia, acute lymphocytic leukemia, increased by two-fold when PCBs were detected in the dust of a room in which the child spent a significant amount of time (Ward, 2009). (The Environmental Protection Agency, the World Health Organization, and the United States Department of Health and Human Services have long characterized PCBs as a known animal carcinogen and a probable human carcinogen.)

DIABETES

- After accounting for other risk factors, this study found that people who had high levels of PCBs were up to nine times more likely to be diagnosed with type 2 diabetes than those with very low levels of pollutants in their blood (Lee, 2011).
- Hospitalization rates for diabetes in communities near a toxic waste site containing PCBs were amplified (Kouznetsova, 2007).

DIABETES (continued)

- Elevated levels of PCBs are associated with an increased risk of having diabetes (Codru et al., 2007).

- Having elevated PCB levels early in life is predictive of developing diabetes later (Lee et al., 2010).

ELEVATED PCB LEVELS IN BLOOD DUE TO ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURE

- Teachers in PCB-containing schools had elevated levels of PCB congeners in their blood. In particular, they exhibited higher concentrations of lighter PCB congeners, which are more likely to come from non-dietary sources, such as building materials. These lighter congeners include several that are believed to be endocrine disrupting, and developmental toxins (Herrick, 2011).

- Workers disturbing PCB caulk had elevated PCB concentrations in their blood (Kontsas, 2003; Wingfors, 2006; Herrick, 2007).

ENDOCRINE EFFECTS

- Adolescent girls with high PCB levels reach puberty at a younger age than girls with lower PCBs (Denham et al., 2005).

- In adolescents, thyroid function is reduced if their serum PCB level is elevated (Schell et al., 2008).

- Higher PCB levels in men are associated with a reduction in the levels of the male sex hormone, testosterone (Goncharov et al., 2009).

FAILED *IN VITRO* FERTILIZATION

- Associations were reported between blood serum PCB concentrations at levels similar to the US general population and increased odds of failed implantation among women undergoing *in vitro* fertilization (Meeker, 2011).

HEART DISEASE

- Other than age, total serum PCB concentration is the strongest determinant of any range of blood pressure, including hypertension (Goncharov et al., 2010; Goncharov et al., 2010).

- Residents living in communities adjacent to the Hudson River, which contains high levels of PCBs, had an increased rate of hospitalization for coronary heart disease by over 35% and for acute myocardial infarction by nearly 40% (Sergeev, 2005).

- High levels of PCBs cause the liver to make more cholesterol and lipids, which then increase the risk of cardiovascular disease (Goncharov et al., 2008).

- Elevated blood serum concentrations of PCBs were positively associated with self-reported history of cardiovascular disease among females (Ha, Myung-Hwa et al. 2007)

IMMUNE SYSTEM

- PCBs are associated with immune system disruptions including increases in B cells and decreases in CD8+ and natural killer cells (Svesson, 1994).

- Babies, in this case Dutch newborns, with higher prenatal PCB exposures had reduced immune response after vaccination for measles, mumps and rubella (Weisglas-Kuperus, 2000).

- Reduced antibodies against diphtheria and tetanus later in childhood were associated with higher PCB exposure in toddlerhood (Barrett, 2010).

- PCB exposure altered lymphocyte distributions, decreased wheeze, and increased otitis media (Weisglas-Kuperus, 2004).

- Children living in the Faroe Islands where the diet includes PCB-contaminated whale blubber exhibited decreased antibody response after vaccination against tetanus and diphtheria. This effect was associated both with the concentrations of PCBs in their mothers' blood during pregnancy and milk soon after birth, and in the children's own blood at the time of the study (Heilmann, 2006).

INHALATION

- Inhalation of PCBs was associated with multiple system disturbances including "significant serum thyroid hormone elevation" and "[h]istopathologic changes ... in the urinary bladder, thymus, and the thyroid" during animal testing (Casey, 1999).

- Inhalation is a major exposure pathway for PCBs and may lead to a greater uptake of PCBs than ingestion (Currado, 2008).

LIVER DISEASE

- Low-level environmental PCB pollution was associated with the development of liver disease and suspected nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (Cave, 2010).

PERSISTENCE OF PCB BODY BURDEN OVER TIME

- Elevated levels of PCBs can persist in the human body over many years (Seegal, 2010).

PRENATAL & INFANT EXPOSURE

- Even low level prenatal exposure to PCBs may affect thyroid hormone homeostasis (Chevrier, 2007).

- Prenatal exposure to PCBs may affect growth, especially in girls (Lamb, 2006).

- Growth deficits were also seen among infants born in eastern Slovakia, where a chemical manufacturing plant produced PCBs until 1985 (Hertz-Picciotto, 2003)

- Lower thymic index, which is an estimate of the volume of the thymus, an organ that plays a role in the differentiation and maturation of t-lymphocytes (T-cells, a critical part of the immune system), was also observed in infants born near a PCB producing manufacturing plant (Park, 2008).

- Associations were reported between prenatal PCB and p,p-DDE exposures and poor attention in early infancy, including alertness, quality of alert responsiveness, and cost of attention (Sagiv, 2008).

RESPIRATORY EFFECTS

- Adults and children have an increased risk of asthma and infectious respiratory diseases when exposed to persistent organic pollutants, including PCBs (Carpenter, 2008; Ma, 2007).

- There is a relationship between PCB exposures and lowered levels of immunoglobulins M and A (IgM and IgA) and increases in respiratory infections (Nakanishi, 1985).

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Date: 11/18/11

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Name: CASSANDRA ALSTON TOWNSLEY

Address: _____

I represent: CEC 17, 2 VP

Address: _____

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Date: 11-18-11

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Name: Leon Tulton

Address: 140 Alcott Place

I represent: PCB-Free School Coalition

Address: _____

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Date: November 18, 2011

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Celia Green

Address: 157 East 46 Street Brooklyn

I represent: Parent Leader NYCE

Address: _____

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Date: 11/18/11

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Name: Chris Proctor

Address: Director Safety · Health Dept.

I represent: United Federation of Teachers

Address:

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Date: 11/18/11

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Name: Michelle Cuffa Lipkin

Address: 205 West End Ave #10H

I represent: Parents in public school

Address:

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Name: MIKE SCHADE

Address: _____

I represent: CENTER FOR HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND JUSTICE (CHEJ)

Address: 394 BROADWAY, 5TH FL. N.Y., NY 10013

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Date: 11/18/11

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Name: Laura Sametz

Address: 80 Central Park West

I represent: parent from PS199 / D3 Green Group

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lorraine Grillo

Address: President + CEO, SCA

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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Date: 11/18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lorraine Grillo

Address: President + CEO, SCA

I represent: DOE

Address: Deputy, Division of School Facilities

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Date: 11/16/2011

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jeffrey Shear

Address: 600 E. Division St. Operations

I represent: DOE

Address:

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Andres Veranes

Address: 250 W 103

I represent: PS 75

Address: 96th St and West End Ave

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Appearance Card

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☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/18/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christina Giorgio

Address: 151 W 30th St, 11th Floor, NY, NY

I represent: NY Lawyers for the Public Int

Address:

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Date: 11/18/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: David Newman

Address: 116 John St.

I represent: NY Committee for Occupational Safety + Health

Address: _____

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CHRISTINA GIORGIO

Address: NYLPI, 151 W 30, NYC, NY 10001

I represent: New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Address: _____

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Date: 11/18/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michelle Chapman

Address: 3112 Seymour Avenue Bx NY

I represent: New York Communities for Change

Address: _____

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Date: 11/18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nancy Clark

Address: _____

I represent: Asst Commissioner, DOT/PTH

Address: _____

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☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/18/11

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Name: Valerie Watnick

Address: 215 W. 98th St, 2D

I represent: Parent Av O'Shea - Manhattan Complex

Address: _____

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Aviella Mann

Address: _____

I represent: Deputy Commissioner, PCAD

Address: _____

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Date: 11/1/16

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Name: Ross Holden

Address: _____

I represent: General Counsel, SCA

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CC: Kathleen A Grimm

Address: Deputy Chancellor for

I represent: Division of operations,

Address: DOE

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