



FOR THE RECORD

United Federation of Teachers
A Union of Professionals

March 10, 2009

Councilman Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.
250 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

Dear Councilman Comrie:

We strongly support the New York City Council Proposed Int. No. 57-A, which would:

- Make it illegal to sell used or reconditioned mattresses
- Create a task force to study the health concerns associated with bed bugs

Over the past several years we have seen an increase in the number of schools where bed bugs have been sighted, captured and confirmed to be bed bugs. The number of schools with confirmed bed bug specimens was 75 from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007 and then 125 from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. So far this year from July 1, 2008 through February 28, 2009, a total of 176 schools had confirmed bed bug specimens and over 50% of these schools have recurring bed bug sightings and confirmations.

The New York City Department of Education Division of School Facilities (DSF) Pest Control Unit visits each school where bed bugs have been confirmed. The DOE DSF Pest Control unit conducts a visual inspection of the affected rooms or areas and where necessary treats affected areas with an exempt product, safe for humans. *However, providing pest control services in the schools does not prevent bed bugs from being transported into the building by students or others who have bed bug infestations in the home.*

Bed bug infestations are extremely challenging to eradicate and even with professional extermination, a bed bug problem may be impossible to eliminate. We know of a number of schools where a student arrives daily with bed bugs as a result of a chronic infestation in the home. Parents can become overwhelmed in trying to get a landlord to deal appropriately with the infestation. We are concerned for the health and safety of students who are living in an environment with a chronic bed bug infestation as well as for the potential for such infestations to increase in our school communities.

Our school communities need the protection this legislation will provide. We urge you to pass Proposed Int. No. 57-A.

Sincerely,

Ellie Engler
UFT Assistant to the President