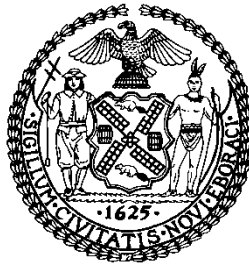


Transportation Committee Staff:
Kelly E. Taylor, Counsel
Gafar Zaaloff, Policy Analyst
Jonathan Masserano, Policy Analyst
Chima Obichere, Finance Analyst
Rui Xu, Finance Analyst



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

COMMITTEE REPORT OF THE HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION
Matthew Gewolb, Legislative Director

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Chair

April 20, 2016

RES. NO. 1013-A:

By Council Members Rodriguez,
Constantinides, Chin, Menchaca, Lander
and Van Bramer

TITLE:

Resolution calling upon the City of New York
to make Earth Day 2016 a car-free day for
private and all non-essential city vehicles

INTRODUCTION

On April 18, 2016, the Committee on Transportation, chaired by Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, held a hearing on Proposed Res. No. 1013-A, a Resolution calling upon the City of New York to make Earth Day 2016 a car-free day for private and all non-essential city vehicles. This was the second hearing on this resolution. The first hearing was held on April 4, 2016 at which the Committee heard testimony from the New York City Department of Transportation (“DOT”) and other interested stakeholders.

ANALYSIS OF RES. NO. 1013-A

Res. No. 1013-A would state that Earth Day is an internationally-recognized event that began in 1970 and is celebrated on April 22nd each year. Res. No. 1013-A would assert that the central purpose of Earth Day is to raise awareness around the importance of protecting the environment. Res. No. 1013-A would state that New York City has a long history with this commemoration of our planet, as 45 years ago, for the inaugural event, Mayor John Lindsay shut down Fifth Avenue and made Central Park available for the celebration.

Res. No. 1013-A would state that according to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the planet is getting warmer as a result of anthropogenic climate change. Res. No. 1013-A would assert that according to NASA, not only have the 10 warmest years ever taken place during the last 12 years, but Antarctica lost 36 cubic miles of ice between 2002 and 2005, and the amount of carbon dioxide absorbed by the oceans has increased by 2 billion tons each year. Res. No. 1013-A would note that New York has, over the last several years, taken concrete steps toward limiting its carbon footprint.

Res. No. 1013-A would state that specifically, according to the de Blasio Administration’s “One New York” Plan, the City has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by

19 percent since 2005, and according to the 2014 inventory of New York City Greenhouse Gas Emissions, the city reduced total energy consumption by 8%, and increased biofuel usage in buildings by over 1,000 percent between 2002 and 2005. Res. No. 1013-A would also note that the 2014 inventory of New York City Greenhouse Gas Emissions stated that, in 2013, the city emitted 11.4 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, 24 percent of which, or 2.8 million tons, came from the city's 2 million vehicles.

Res. No. 1013-A would state that the 2014 inventory of New York City Greenhouse Gas Emissions also noted that Mayor de Blasio committed to reducing the City's greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050 and 35 percent by 2025. Res. No. 1013-A would further state that New York City has a major leadership role on issues of importance both nationally and worldwide, with a population larger than that of 38 states and a gross domestic product equivalent to that of South Korea, so City government should take the lead on car-free Earth Day by encouraging New Yorkers to use alternate forms of transportation, other than their own personal vehicles, on that day.

Res. No. 1013-A would state that based on data from the 2014 inventory of New York City Greenhouse Gas Emissions, vehicles account for 24 percent of the 48 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent that are emitted each year, which is 11.5 million tons per year, or 31,000 tons per day. Res. No. 1013-A would note that based on the above figures, declaring Earth Day 2016 a car-free day - with the exception of essential vehicles - could reduce carbon dioxide emissions by about 30,000 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, and would send a strong message nationally and worldwide that reducing greenhouse gas emissions is of the utmost importance.

Finally, Res. No. 1013-A would state that the Council of the City of New York calls upon the City of New York to make Earth Day 2016 a car-free day for private and all non-essential city vehicles.

UPDATE

On April 18, 2016, the Committee on Transportation passed Res. No. 1013-A by a vote of eleven in the affirmative and zero in the negative, with one abstention.

Res. No. 1013-A

Resolution calling upon the City of New York to make Earth Day 2016 a car-free day for private and all non-essential city vehicles

By Council Members Rodriguez, Constantinides, Chin, Menchaca, Lander and Van Bramer

Whereas, Earth Day is an internationally-recognized event that began in 1970 and is celebrated on April 22nd each year; and

Whereas, The central purpose of Earth Day is to raise awareness around the importance of protecting the environment; and

Whereas, New York City has a long history with this commemoration of our planet, as 45 years ago, for the inaugural event, Mayor John Lindsay shut down Fifth Avenue and made Central Park available for the celebration; and

Whereas, According to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the planet is getting warmer as a result of anthropogenic climate change; and

Whereas, According to NASA, not only have the 10 warmest years ever taken place during the last 12 years, but Antarctica lost 36 cubic miles of ice between 2002 and 2005, and the amount of carbon dioxide absorbed by the oceans has increased by 2 billion tons each year; and

Whereas, New York has, over the last several years, taken concrete steps toward limiting its carbon footprint; and

Whereas, Specifically, according to the de Blasio Administration's "One New York" Plan, the City has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 19 percent since 2005, and according to the 2014 inventory of New York City Greenhouse Gas Emissions, the city reduced total energy consumption by 8 percent, and increased biofuel usage in buildings by over 1,000 percent between 2002 and 2005; and

Whereas, The 2014 inventory of New York City Greenhouse Gas Emissions stated that, in 2013, the city emitted 11.4 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, 24 percent of which, or 2.8 million tons, came from the city's 2 million vehicles; and

Whereas, The 2014 inventory of New York City Greenhouse Gas Emissions also noted that Mayor de Blasio committed to reducing the City's greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050 and 35 percent by 2025; and

Whereas, New York City has a major leadership role on issues of importance both nationally and worldwide, with a population larger than that of 38 states and a gross domestic product equivalent to that of South Korea, so City government should take the lead on car-free Earth Day by encouraging New Yorkers to use alternate forms of transportation, other than their own personal vehicles, on that day; and

Whereas, According to the Guardian, Paris, another major global city, saw its nitrogen dioxide levels plummet by as much as 40 percent in parts of the city during its recent vehicle-free day on September 27th; and

Whereas, Oslo, Milan, Dublin, Madrid, and Brussels have all announced, since the beginning of 2014, plans to convert parts of their respective city centers into car-free zones; and

Whereas, Based on data from the 2014 inventory of New York City Greenhouse Gas Emissions, vehicles account for 24 percent of the 48 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent that are emitted each year, which is 11.5 million tons per year, or 31,000 tons per day; and

Whereas, Based on the above figures, declaring Earth Day 2016 a car-free day – with the exception of essential vehicles - could reduce carbon dioxide emissions by about 30,000 tons of

carbon dioxide equivalent, and would send a strong message nationally and worldwide that reducing greenhouse gas emissions is of the utmost importance; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the City of New York to make Earth Day 2016 a car-free day for private and all non-essential city vehicles.

LS# 6410
4/12/15
MK/jm