



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 463

Resolution urging the New York State Public Service Commission to immediately set a competitive electrical rate at the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal in order to facilitate the use of shore-based electrical power by cruise ships that wish to cease idling in ports and reduce the amount of emissions released into the surrounding neighborhoods.

By Council Members Nelson, Chin, Fidler, Gentile, James, Koppell, Lander, Palma, Rose, Williams, Rodriguez, Levin, Gonzalez and Halloran

Whereas, Bunker fuel, a heavy petroleum product that is left behind after the distilling process, is one of the dirtiest fuels and is used to power most cargo ships because it is much cheaper than other fuel sources; and

Whereas, Bunker fuel releases gases such as carbon, nitrogen oxides, and sulfur dioxide when it is burned and therefore, 43% of particulate matter in ports are due to marine vessels; and

Whereas, According to a study published in the journal of the American Chemical Society, pollution from cargo ships in 2002 was linked to the premature deaths of 60,000 people worldwide; and

Whereas, When cruise ships dock, their engines idle at the terminal in order to keep the electrical systems on the ship running; and

Whereas, Environmentalists believe that a ship docked for one day emits as much exhaust as 10,000 cars; and

Whereas, To avoid idling, ships have begun to employ a process called shore power, or cold-ironing, in which a ship plugs into an electrical power supply at the port, allowing the ship to turn off its engine; and

Whereas, Shore power permits a large extension cable from the pier to be plugged into the ship, giving it power to operate its machinery without running the engine; and

Whereas, According to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, implementing cold-ironing at the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal would reduce annual nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide emissions by 100 tons each, particulate matter by 6 tons, and carbon dioxide emissions by almost 1,500 tons; and

Whereas, The Port Authority also estimates that reducing emissions by switching to shore power would create \$9 million per year in health benefits; and

Whereas, Shore power is already in use at ports such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, Long Beach, and San Diego; and

Whereas, In order to bring shore power to the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal, the Port Authority has committed to invest \$15 million in capital for infrastructure improvements and the Environmental Protection Agency awarded the Port Authority \$2.85 million to support improvements as well; and

Whereas, Carnival Cruise Lines has also committed to investing \$1 million to \$2 million per ship to enable the vessels to connect to electric power; and

Whereas, A major obstacle, however, that is standing in the way of implementing shore power at the cruise terminal is the price of electric power, which can cost millions of dollars more than leaving the ship idle; and

Whereas, Con Edison's electric rates for shore power are too costly and must be lowered in order to be competitive with the cheaper bunker fuel that is used while idling; and

Whereas, New York City and the Port Authority have both lobbied the New York State Public Service Commission to institute a shore power tariff that is economically viable for cruise ships; and

Whereas, An appropriate shore power tariff in New York City would discontinue the use of high polluting diesel engines, improve the air quality of Brooklyn and New York City in general, and provide the potential for the establishment of shore power throughout the ports of New York; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the New York State Public Service

Commission to immediately set a competitive electrical rate at the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal in order to facilitate the use of shore-based electrical power by cruise ships that wish to cease idling in ports and reduce the amount of emissions released into the surrounding neighborhoods.

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