



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 320

Resolution calling on the state of New York to phase out Number 4 and Number 6 fuel oil in power plants in its plan to meet carbon dioxide reduction goals as set by the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan.

By Council Members Constantinides, Chin, Cornegy, Koo, Rose and Kallos

Whereas, On June 2, 2014, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed regulations under the Clean Air Act known as the Clean Power Plan (CPP) to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuel burning power plants by 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2030; and

Whereas, If the CPP is finalized through the rulemaking process, each state will need to put a plan into place to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by an amount prescribed by EPA for that state by 2030; and

Whereas, Although the EPA has provided a set of cost-effective tools for states to use in their plans, EPA recognizes and encourages states to include other strategies that they develop on their own to cost-effectively cut emissions; and

Whereas, Under a mandate established by the New York State Reliability Council and the New York Independent System Operator, approximately 80 percent of the electricity used in New York City must be generated in the city; and

Whereas, As a result, a significant number of power plants operate in the city; and

Whereas, Due to zoning, historical land use decisions, and needs of power plants such as access to water, these plants are often clustered together; and

Whereas, The production of electricity from the consumption of fossil fuels generates a number of pollutants, such as small particulate matter and oxides of nitrogen, that can negatively impact human health,

including contributing to asthma attacks, heart disease, and cardiovascular disease; and

Whereas, These health problems are amplified where fossil fuel burning power plants have been clustered; and

Whereas, Number 4 and Number 6 fuel oil produce significantly greater amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> and other pollution than their alternatives, such as Number 2 fuel oil and natural gas, and therefore are more harmful to human health and greater contributors per unit of energy produced to climate change gases; and

Whereas, Number 2 fuel oil and natural gas are abundantly available; and

Whereas, Renewable energy, such as from wind or solar, could also be used to replace some of the electricity produced from burning fossil fuels; and

Whereas, The city of New York is currently in the process of phasing out Number 4 and Number 6 fuel oil from use in residential and commercial building boilers, replacing them with Number 2 fuel oil and natural gas because of the benefits to human health; and

Whereas, According to a report by Environmental Defense Fund titled “The Bottom of the Barrel: How the Dirtiest Oil Pollutes our Air and Harms Our Health, switching from Number 6 fuel oil to Number 2 fuel oil in boilers reduces PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions by about 94 percent, SO<sub>2</sub> by about 68 percent, nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) by about 65 percent, and CO<sub>2</sub> by about 7 percent, and switching from Number 6 fuel oil to natural gas in boilers reduces PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions by about 96 percent, SO<sub>2</sub> by over 99 percent, NO<sub>x</sub> by about 75 percent, and CO<sub>2</sub> by about 30 percent; and

Whereas, Con Edison recently converted three large steam plants that burned Number 6 fuel oil to natural gas, which cost about \$100 million but which, due to the low cost of natural gas, they expect will save \$240 million over five years; and

Whereas, Phasing out Number 4 and Number 6 oils would be a cost-effective way to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> and other emissions from power plants in New York City and elsewhere; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the state of New York to phase out Number

4 and Number 6 fuel oil in power plants in its plan to meet carbon dioxide reduction goals as set by the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan.

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