



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 64

Resolution calling upon the state legislature to reintroduce and pass and Governor to sign the 2017-18 Assembly bill A. 4118 that relate to the protection of public health from radon in natural gas.

By Council Member Levin

Whereas, Radon is a colorless and odorless naturally-occurring radioactive gas, the long-term exposure to which is known to cause lung cancer in humans; and

Whereas, The United States Environmental Protection Agency estimates that radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among people who do not smoke, and is the second leading cause of lung cancer overall; and

Whereas, Radon is estimated to cause approximately 21,000 lung cancer-related deaths each year, with 2,900 of those deaths among non-smokers; and

Whereas, Radon can enter homes through cracks in and between concrete slab and blocks, slab-footing joints, exposed soil, loose fitting pipes, water, and natural gas that contains radon; and

Whereas, Radon has a half-life of 3.8 days, decaying through a series of steps during which alpha radiation is released; and

Whereas, Historically, natural gas coming to New York City has travelled from distant locations such as the Gulf Coast, allowing additional time for any radon in the gas to decay prior to entering homes; and

Whereas, Although New York State banned hydraulic fracturing, there is hydraulic fracturing occurring in the Northeastern United States and the resulting natural gas, and any radon it contains, may travel shorter distances to get to New York City, which would allow less time for the radon to decay; and

Whereas, Radon, if present in natural gas, could enter homes via stoves that burn such natural gas; and

Whereas, If radon did enter homes in sufficiently high amounts, and if it didn't disperse through

ventilation or other means, it could accumulate and expose people to health risks; and

Whereas, Radon levels in natural gas can be monitored in natural gas pipes prior to distribution to homes; and

Whereas, Assembly bill A. 4118, sponsored by Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal (D-NYC), requires local distribution entities to undertake continuous monitoring of natural gas for radon and disclose monitoring results to the public, and take mitigation measures if radon or radon progeny levels crossed any of several different thresholds in order to reduce those levels to below such thresholds, and further establishes a State compliance assurance system to include periodic physical inspection and measurement and an enforcement program for gas corporations that fail to comply; and

Whereas, Such actions would be sufficient to protect the public health from any potential impacts from radon in natural gas; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the state legislature to reintroduce and pass and Governor to sign the 2017-18 Assembly bill A. 4118 that relate to the protection of public health from radon in natural gas

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