



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1137-2000, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1137

Resolution calling upon the appropriate committee of the Council of the City of New York to hold hearings to determine the practices used by all hospitals in New York City, including all transplant hospitals, to prevent outbreaks of Legionnaire's Disease at their facilities.

By Council Members Oddo, Malave-Dilan, Freed, Miller, Nelson, Reed, Rodriguez, Abel and Golden; also Council Members Foster, Harrison, Leffler, Pinkett, Povman, Provenzano and Rivera

Whereas, Patients admitted to hospitals in New York City are entitled to receive health services without incurring the risk of further disease and sickness; and

Whereas, An estimated 8,000-18,000 cases of Legionnaire's Disease occur each year in the United States, 5% to 15% of which result in death; and

Whereas, Legionnaire's Disease has been detected in hospitals and medical centers nationwide, with outbreaks in hospitals in New York, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Arizona, Ohio and Texas; and

Whereas, In particular, the Disease was found in a Maryland Hospital where there have been six deaths since June of 1999, and caused more than 40 suspected cases and three deaths in Ellenville, New York; in Tuscon, Arizona, researchers found that the disease may have been active for 17 years, killing 12 people without being discovered; 11 out of 12 hospitals in San Antonio had the bacteria in their water, and 5 out of 6 hospitals in Pittsburgh had contaminated water systems; and

Whereas, Legionnaire's Disease is an acute bacterial disease caused by Legionella pneumopila, bacteria that typically live in water and are commonly found in drinking water, water cooling towers, hot water heaters, hot tubs, and shower heads; and

Whereas, The main source for the outbreak of Legionnaire's Disease in hospitals has been in the drinking water, with bacteria growing and surviving at temperatures between 20-50 degrees celsius; and

Whereas, While it has been determined that hospital-acquired Legionnaire's Disease can be effectively avoided by curtailing the growth of the bacteria through a number of different precautions, most hospitals do not test their water, and

Whereas, Effective controls have been identified, such as copper-silver ionization al superheat al flush disinfecting measures of hospital potable water supply, intensive surveillance for hospital-acquired legionella, and periodic testing of immunocompromised patients, particularly the elderly; and

Whereas, It has not yet been determined whether hospitals in the New York City area currently take any of the aforementioned precautions to prevent potential outbreaks of Legionnaire's Disease; and

Whereas, A determination of hospital practices regarding the protection of patients from Legionnaire's disease, and a discussion of the causes of the disease and the available remedies in the case of outbreaks, would be beneficial for the protection of the sick and elderly admitted into New York City hospitals; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the appropriate committee to hold hearings to determine the practices used by all hospitals in New York City, including all transplant hospitals, to prevent outbreaks of Legionnaire's Disease at their facilities. Referred to the Committee on Health.