



Legislation Text

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Preconsidered Res. No. 1059

Resolution calling upon President George W. Bush to not decimate funding to the United States Department of Agriculture for activities to thwart the infestation of the Asian Longhorned Beetle.

By Council Members Addabbo, Jr., Comrie, Jennings, Nelson, Sanders, Sears, Serrano, Weprin and Yassky

Whereas, The Asian Longhorned Beetle, *Anoploplita glabripennis*, (ALB) is a non-indigenous insect to the United States and is believed to have entered the country from China about 13 years ago in wooden crates and packing materials; and,
Whereas, The ALB bores into the bark of a hardwood tree to lay their eggs and when the eggs hatch, the beetle larvae bore into the tree limbs killing tissue and cutting off the tree's supply of nutrients; and,
Whereas, More than half of New York City's 5.2 million trees are hardwoods; and,
Whereas, ALB infestations were first detected in New York City in 1996 and 1,600 trees in the Brooklyn communities of Williamsburg and Greenpoint had to be destroyed; and,
Whereas, To date, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials have removed and destroyed more than 4,095 trees in New York City; and,
Whereas, The ALB has infested scattered areas throughout New York, New Jersey and Illinois, killing thousands of trees and creating a crisis which could do more than \$41 billion in damage to the nation's economy; and,
Whereas, In April 2001, the USDA began a preventive program to combat the Asian Longhorned Beetle by injecting healthy, targeted trees with the insecticide, imidacloprid; and,
Whereas, Imidacloprid remains in a tree for 14 months, making it effective for only one season so that it must be applied annually; and,
Whereas, An evaluation of the effectiveness of the second phase of the eradication program was to be available by Summer 2003; and,
Whereas, According to a Congressional Report issued on September 3, 2003, the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) estimated that it needs \$46 million in fiscal year 2003 funding controlled by the President's Office of Management and Budget (OMB), in addition to \$27.6 million that was already appropriated and obligated by Congress to implement its plan to eradicate the ALB; and,
Whereas, OMB only provided \$7 million to the USDA for the eradication project; and,
Whereas, The Bush Administration has decided to cut the funding for the eradication of the ALB by over 85%, as federal funding for treatments used to kill the beetle dropped in fiscal year 2003 from \$13 million for New York City to \$1.9 million, while funding increased Illinois from \$3.4 million to \$5.2 million and in New Jersey from \$0 to \$100,000; and,
Whereas, Illinois has had 1,547 infested trees destroyed in Chicago and Jersey City, New Jersey has seen 113 trees destroyed, Islip, NY had 27 infested trees destroyed, Amityville, NY had 1,857 infested trees destroyed as compared to New York City's 4,095 trees; and,
Whereas, The USDA has chosen to spend zero dollars in Brooklyn and Queens, where the infestation has been the biggest scourge, with 3,038 trees being destroyed in Brooklyn and 952 in Queens but will continue to fund eradication in Manhattan, with 105 infested trees destroyed, as well as in Amityville, Islip, Jersey City and Chicago; and,
Whereas, The USDA has been forced to push back its timeline to eradicate the beetle, postponing its complete eradication by over a decade, to 2018; now, therefore be it
Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon President George W. Bush to not decimate funding to the United States Department of Agriculture for activities to thwart the infestation of the Asian Longhorned Beetle.

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