



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0444-2004, **Version:** *

Res. No. 444

Resolution calling upon the City of New York to advance the percentage of clean natural gas-fueled vehicles in its fleet and to place particular emphasis on replacing medium- and heavy-duty vehicles with clean natural gas-fueled vehicles; to pursue public-private partnerships and grants and other incentives from federal, state and local agencies for the acquisition and deployment of clean alternative fuel vehicles and infrastructure; and, to promote the operation of clean natural gas-fueled taxi cabs in New York City.

By Council Members Oddo, Yassky, Avella, Barron, Brewer, Clarke, Comrie, Fidler, Gentile, Jackson, Liu, Nelson, Recchia Jr., Sanders Jr., Weprin, Vallone Jr., Gerson and Lopez

Whereas, According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), mobile source emissions represent the largest source of air toxics - those pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health and environmental effects; and

Whereas, Diesel exhaust from motor vehicles contains particulate matter, smog-forming nitrogen oxides and other toxins; and

Whereas, According to the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), motor vehicles generate 53 percent of the New York City metropolitan area's ozone-depleting smog and 70 percent of the overall toxic chemicals in the region's air; and

Whereas, According to the EPA's National Air Toxics Assessment, based on 1996 data, New York City is among the areas of the country with the highest modeled ambient air concentrations of diesel particulate matter; and

Whereas, The EPA has classified New York County as being in "moderate" nonattainment for the particulate matter (PM-10) standard; and

Whereas, The EPA has classified diesel exhaust as a likely carcinogen and the California Air Resources Board has classified diesel exhaust particulate as a toxic air contaminant; and

Whereas, Exposure to diesel particulate matter may result in such adverse health impacts as inflammation of lung tissue, decreased lung function, chronic bronchitis, aggravated asthma and cardiovascular disease and premature death; and

Whereas, The EPA has classified the New York metropolitan area as being in "moderate" nonattainment for the 8-hour ozone standard and in "severe" nonattainment for the 1-hour ozone standard; and

Whereas, Ozone may result in various respiratory problems, including aggravated asthma, significant

temporary decreases in lung capacity and inflammation of lung tissue; and

Whereas, According to the April 2003 edition of “NYC Vital Signs”, a publication of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH), about 700,000 adults and 300,000 children in New York City have been diagnosed with asthma at some time in their lives; and

Whereas, New York City has the highest rate of asthma mortality in the nation; and

Whereas, Children and the elderly are particularly susceptible to the adverse health impacts of diesel exhaust; and

Whereas, According to the NYCDOHMH, asthma is the leading cause of school absenteeism and childhood hospitalization in New York City; and

Whereas, According to the NYCDOHMH, in 2000, children were almost twice as likely to be hospitalized for asthma as children in the United States as a whole; and

Whereas, Children often ride on school buses, and therefore are frequently exposed to harmful air pollution where these buses operate on diesel fuel; and

Whereas, New York City’s elected leaders have demonstrated a past and future commitment to find solutions that reduce asthma and, by this action, strengthen this commitment to the continued reduction of asthma cases in New York City; and

Whereas, A majority of refuse haulers, street sweepers, and other heavy-duty maintenance, construction and transport vehicles, as well as school buses in the New York metropolitan area continue to use standard diesel fuel and thus emit high levels of particulate matter, nitrogen oxides and other toxins; and

Whereas, A majority of the taxis in New York City continue to use gasoline as fuel; and

Whereas, The use of gasoline results in the emission of high levels of pollutants; and

Whereas, Conventional fossil fuel technology, such as gasoline and diesel, used by the overwhelming majority of motor vehicles, is highly dependent upon foreign sources; and

Whereas, Clean natural gas-fueled buses, refuse haulers, street sweepers and other heavy-duty maintenance, construction and transport vehicles, as well as taxis, are currently on the commercial market and have demonstrated the ability to satisfy operators’ needs in a safe and effective manner; and

Whereas, Infrastructure for the sale and distribution of cleaner burning natural gas as a transportation fuel needs to be in place to ensure the commercialization of clean natural gas technology vehicles; and

Whereas, New York City recognizes that the development of public or shared access infrastructure is necessary to build a network of natural gas stations to fuel interstate and intrastate trucking and would help to significantly reduce toxic emissions and associated health problems (i.e. asthma) from transportation sources; and

Whereas, New York City, through its permitting and procurement authority, has the opportunity to provide

leadership in the development and implementation of alternative fuel, clean air technologies; and

Whereas, It is the objective of New York City to use its leadership position to employ public funds in the most cost-effective manner, including consideration of all direct and indirect costs, including costs to public health, safety and welfare; and

Whereas, There exists public funding from federal, state and regional sources to be used for the advancement of clean air transportation technologies; and

Whereas, Those funds can most effectively be used when combined in public-private partnerships for the deployment of clean natural gas vehicles and infrastructure; and

Whereas, Such public-private partnerships are tremendously successful in leveraging public and industry dollars to achieve the synergistic goals of reducing air and noise pollution, asthma and foreign oil dependence; and

Whereas, It is the goal of New York City to promote the use of cleaner burning alternative fuels; reduce the public's exposure to harmful air contaminants; reduce our dependence on energy from foreign sources; and, promote the development and advancement of local businesses in environmentally and economically sound areas; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the City of New York to advance the percentage of clean natural gas-fueled vehicles in its fleet and to place particular emphasis on replacing medium- and heavy-duty vehicles with clean natural gas-fueled vehicles; to pursue public-private partnerships and grants and other incentives from federal, state and local agencies for the acquisition and deployment of clean alternative fuel vehicles and infrastructure; and, to promote the operation of clean natural gas-fueled taxi cabs in New York City.

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