



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0706-2004, **Version:** *

Res. No. 706

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to vest the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene with authority to inspect and enforce regulations governing the operations of slaughterhouses in New York City.

By Council Members Comrie, Avella, Brewer, Fidler, Gerson, Liu, Martinez, Monserrate, Nelson, Sanders, Seabrook, Sears and Weprin

Whereas, Slaughterhouses have typically been described as lacking light, ventilation and appropriate waste disposal; and

Whereas, Publications such as New York Newsday and the Queens Tribune report troubling conditions, such as standing water and feces on floors where live birds were being kept, rat droppings in storage areas, and accumulations of feathers and organic matter in water in scalding tanks located in “kill” or “picking” rooms; and

Whereas, In recent years, there have been frequent and recurring complaints about the proximity of slaughterhouses to residential neighborhoods in New York City, as well as the inhumane and unsanitary conditions in these establishments; and

Whereas, Legislation has been introduced in the State Legislature to address the public health problems created by siting slaughterhouses in close proximity to residential neighborhoods, such as S.7707, which would prohibit the New York State Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets from granting a license to any establishment in cities of one million or more that slaughters animals or fowl within a twenty-five hundred foot radius of a residential dwelling; and

Whereas, Supporting materials to such legislation notes that the City has not been able to adequately control the poor air quality or the numerous health threats that have resulted from the proliferation of live

poultry markets in residential and retail communities; and

Whereas, Jurisdiction over slaughterhouses is currently spread between a number of federal, state and city agencies, including the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the United States Department of Agriculture; and

Whereas, The Queens Tribune has noted that existing regulations may fail to adequately address the public health and nuisance concerns caused by slaughterhouses, since the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets has reportedly never closed such an establishment down for repeated failed inspections and unwillingness to correct issues, the standard for closing such businesses; and

Whereas, The New York State Department of Agriculture and Market's licensing regulations currently do not require an applicant seeking a license for a slaughterhouse to show that he or she has obtained a certificate of occupancy issued by the Department of Buildings or that the slaughterhouse is in compliance with zoning laws, thus limiting the ability of the City to regulate the public health and nuisance problems caused by slaughterhouses located near residential areas; and

Whereas, Granting the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene with authority to inspect and enforce regulations governing the operations of slaughterhouses would give the City a more effective tool with which to protect the public health and quality of life of New Yorkers; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to vest the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene with authority to inspect and enforce regulations governing the operations of slaughterhouses in New York City.

BK/db
LS# 1896
11/16/04