



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 711

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.9990/S.9099, known as the bucks for boilers act.

By Council Members Williams, Hudson, Restler, Schulman, Cabán, Banks, De La Rosa, Hanif, Brannan, Brooks-Powers, Louis, Feliz and Riley

Whereas, The emission of greenhouse gases (“GHGs”) is the primary cause of climate change, which threatens to raise sea levels, increase the frequency of summer heat waves, and bring intense rainfall to New York City; and

Whereas, New York City has committed to achieve an 80% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050 and New York State has enacted the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (“CLCPA”), which aims to achieve an 85% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050 and produce 100% of electricity in the state’s grid from renewable sources; and

Whereas, One of the largest vectors of GHG emissions in New York City is the use of fossil fuels in residential, commercial and institutional buildings, which accounts for nearly 70% of citywide GHG emissions, and in particular the production of heat and hot water in buildings, which accounts for approximately 42% of emissions; and

Whereas, Most heat and hot water systems in New York City rely on fossil fuels, as natural gas powers approximately 65% of heating, over 1,700 buildings in the city rely on district steam heat, and according to energy use data for buildings larger than 25,000 square feet published pursuant to local law number 84 for the year 2009, at least 5,000 buildings burn heating fuel oil; and

Whereas, The electrification of building heating equipment would reduce citywide emissions over time

as the grid becomes more renewable pursuant to the CLCPA and as projects to deliver renewable energy to the New York City region, such as Champlain Hudson Power Express and Clean Path New York, come online; and Whereas, Adoption of electric heating equipment would also improve air quality, as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has estimated that stationary sources of pollution, such as fossil fuel-powered heating systems, account for over 40% of annual NO_x emissions and over 80% of PM_{2.5} emissions in New York City; and

Whereas, A considerable barrier to the electrification of residential building heating systems is the cost to replace fossil fuel-powered equipment with electric alternatives; and

Whereas, A.9990, sponsored by State Assembly Member Al Stirpe, and companion bill S.9099, sponsored by State Senator Gustavo Rivera, would establish a fund to aid in the transition to electric heating systems and would prohibit the installation of new fossil fuel equipment in existing buildings; and

Whereas, A.9990/S.9099 would provide funding for the procurement and installation of electric heat and hot water systems, as well as other high-energy efficiency systems, such that buildings in disadvantaged communities and buildings housing formerly incarcerated individuals could receive full funding for the transition to electric heating systems and other privately-owned buildings could receive up to \$50,000 per unit for such systems; and

Whereas, The bill would also subsidize the electrification of heating systems in public housing units and establish an energy affordability program that would provide assistance related to any increase in utility costs incurred by the transition to electric heat and hot water systems with prioritization for homeowners making no more than 80% of area median income; and

Whereas, Rent-regulated tenants would be protected from rent increases related to the installation of new building heating systems as A.9990/S.9099 would prohibit building owners who receive funding from passing the cost of such systems onto tenants through temporary major capital improvement and individual apartment improvement rent increases; and

Whereas, In addition to reducing GHG emissions, A.9990/S.9099 would provide social benefits relating to the rehabilitation of formerly incarcerated individuals and the creation of well-paying green jobs, as building owners who receive more than \$50,000 from the bucks for boilers program would be required to train and hire formerly incarcerated individuals to the greatest extent possible, and certain projects funded by the bucks for boilers program would be subject to prevailing wage requirements; and

Whereas, Upon its enactment, A.9990/S.9099 would prohibit the installation of new fossil fuel-powered equipment in existing buildings 7 stories or shorter by December 31, 2029, except for certain existing commercial or industrial buildings, and after December 31, 2034, the bill would prohibit such installations in all existing buildings with certain exceptions; and

Whereas, This prohibition on the installation of fossil fuel-powered equipment in existing buildings complements local law number 154 for the year 2021, which required that any combustion of fuels in new buildings meet a certain emission standard such that all new heating and hot water systems installed in new construction in New York City would likely be powered by electricity by 2035; and

Whereas, A.9990/S.9099 also complements local law number 97 for the year 2019, a local law that requires most covered buildings to reduce emissions below an applicable threshold, by proposing to subsidize the cost to install low-emission building heating systems; and

Whereas, Enactment of A.9990/S.9099 would help New York State and New York City meet their climate goals, provide resources to disadvantaged communities, improve indoor air quality, and create well-paying green jobs; now, therefore, be it;

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.9990/S.9099, known as the bucks for boilers act.