



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0699-2011, **Version:** *

Res. No.699

Resolution calling on the United States Congress to introduce and pass legislation that would establish a federal funding stream to assist school districts with cleaning up and ridding schools of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

By Council Members Brewer, Vann, Cabrera, Chin, Comrie, Dickens, Fidler, James, Koslowitz, Lander, Mark-Viverito, Mealy, Mendez, Palma, Recchia, Williams, Gentile, Levin, Nelson, Jackson and Koo

Whereas, According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) belong to a broad family of man-made organic chemicals known as chlorinated hydrocarbons and were domestically manufactured from 1929 until their manufacture and use was banned in the late 1970s; and

Whereas, In 1978 the federal government barred PCB production because evidence showed that PCBs accumulate in the environment and could cause harmful health effects; and

Whereas, PCBs were widely used in construction materials and electrical equipment in many buildings from the 1950s until they were phased out due to the ban; and

Whereas, Even though production of PCBs was halted in the U.S., they persist in the environment of many structures, including school buildings, built prior to that federal ban; and

Whereas, PCBs are known carcinogens and can have significant toxic effects on the immune system, reproductive system, nervous system and endocrine system; and

Whereas, In addition, children whose developing systems are exposed to certain levels of PCBs could be at increased risks of attention-deficit/ hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), increased aggression and many other symptoms that constitute a serious impediment to cognitive development and learning; and

Whereas, In December 2010, The Safe Schools, Healthy Kids Act was introduced by Congress

Members Crowley, Nadler and Serrano; and

Whereas, The Safe Schools, Healthy Kids Act would authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to states and local educational agencies for abatement, removal and interim controls of PCBs in public school facilities; and

Whereas, The legislation would also require that notification be given to students and families, staff and school employees and other relevant parties in the community of the work to be undertaken; and

Whereas, In addition, The Safe Schools, Healthy Kids Act directs the EPA to provide the Secretary of Education with the necessary guidance to ensure safe school conditions and effective abatement, removal or interim controls; and

Whereas, As more and more schools are found to contain well above acceptable levels of PCBs, it is essential that the federal government provide assistance to local districts in addressing this serious health issue; and

Whereas, Recent information has shown that many New York City school children are exposed to elevated levels of PCBs ; and

Whereas, While the New York City Department of Education has taken some preliminary steps in addressing this issue, it has not been aggressive enough in its actions; and

Whereas, The Safe Schools, Healthy Kids Act was not passed and should be re-introduced in this current congressional session; and

Whereas, All schools should be equipped to provide children with a safe environment where their development is nurtured and protected; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States to pass legislation that would establish a federal funding stream to assist school districts with cleaning up and ridding schools of up polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

JP

LS 1895
3/15/11