



Associated Musicians of Greater New York

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January 17, 2008

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to Intro 650 (Permits for Atmospheric, Biological, Chemical, and Radiological Detectors). NYCOSH, the United Federation of Teachers, Manhattan Borough President Stringer, and faculty members of the Hunter College School of Health Sciences were among the many who testified against this bill at City Council Public Safety Committee hearing on January 8, 2008. It is essential that you know that opposition to this bill is even broader than that seen at the January 8th hearing. The undersigned environmental, labor, public health, and academic organizations and individuals join in urging you to oppose this legislation.

Intro 650 will require police permits for the possession or use of environmental sampling instruments. It will give NYPD unrestricted authority to deny or delay environmental testing by any individual or group. It will criminalize environmental sampling activities that are now widely and routinely conducted without permits.

The stated purpose of the bill is to reduce "excessive false alarms and unwarranted anxiety." However, there is no evidence that false alarms and unwarranted anxiety are real-world problems. While intended as an anti-terrorism measure, the bill "goes far beyond anti-terror strategies," as Council Member John Liu noted at the hearing, and gives NYPD a "blank check" as to how it will implement the legislation.

NYPD testified that its interest is detection of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weaponry agents. However, Intro 650 is not a CBRN bill. As currently written, it covers emergency response, industrial, environmental, and academic activities unrelated to CBRN warfare or terrorism. It would significantly curtail public access to independent environmental data. It will restrict -- and could prevent altogether -- independent environmental monitoring by unions, community and environmental organizations, and others, including university programs. Local 802 has a direct interest in maintaining the ability to test for environmental hazards in theaters due to the increasing use of special effects in the theater. The ability to continue this kind of testing is imperative for our members.



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As NYCOSH and others have noted, if this bill had been in effect in the aftermath of 9/11, the EPA's deceptions about downtown air quality might never have been countered or exposed. Within days of the attacks, elected officials, including members of this City Council, employed nationally-recognized experts to conduct indoor sampling of residences adjacent to Ground Zero. Sampling results indicated dangerously high levels of WTC-derived asbestos in downtown residences. At the time, EPA was proclaiming that the air was safe to breathe and NYCDOH was stating that indoor dust could be cleaned up by residents. Had Intro 650 been in effect then, it would have been illegal for the City Council to bring in these technical experts to conduct this sampling.

Again, we believe there is great urgency in stopping further action on this bill and we thank you for your consideration of our concerns. We also are available to meet with you at your earliest convenience.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Landolfi". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

MARY LANDOLFI
President