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**Council Members Helen Rosenthal and Donovan Richards Call for
Citizen Enforcement of Idling Vehicles**

The City could issue summonses based on video evidence submitted by citizens

Citizens would collect up to 50% of the City fine

Council Members Helen Rosenthal and Donovan Richards (Chair, Committee on Environmental Protection) will rally with advocates on Tuesday in support of their bill to allow for citizen enforcement of idling vehicles, which will be introduced at the Council stated meeting on Wednesday.

New York City law prohibits vehicles from idling for more than 3 minutes on most streets and more than 1 minute in a school zone, but this law is rarely enforced. Council Member Rosenthal and Richards' bill would allow anyone to film an idling vehicle and submit the footage to a City website. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) would be able to issue a summons based on that evidence, and the person who submitted the footage could receive up to 50% of the fine collected by the City. The DEP would also be required to provide a public training session at least 5 days a year to train interested individuals to successfully submit a complaint through their website.

Idling vehicles unnecessarily pollute the air, and these emissions have been linked to serious public health issues including asthma, heart disease, chronic bronchitis, and cancer. Carbon dioxide from idling vehicles also contributes to global warming; according to the Environmental Defense Fund, idling cars and trucks in New York City produce 130,000 tons of carbon dioxide each year. Furthermore, idling wastes fuel and money.

"Emissions from idling vehicles have been linked to serious health issues like asthma and cancer, and the carbon emissions are contributing to global warming," said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**. "New Yorkers have been complaining about this issue and communities have been trying to work on this issue for so many years. We are fed up. The NYPD and DEP do not have the personnel to issue consistent violations in a way that will change behavior. This bill allows citizens to record the violations, upload them to the DEP website so that more violations can then be issued and we expect to see less idling."

"New York for a number of years has failed to reach EPA and other national standards for air pollution," said **Council Member Donovan Richards, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection**. "The idling bill will be instrumental in addressing this longstanding issue while promoting public health and reducing the impact of human activity on the environment. I am proud to stand with my colleague Council Member Rosenthal to introduce legislation that will tackle this pervasive problem and allow New Yorkers to breathe easier."

"I am very grateful to Councilmember Rosenthal and Committee Chair Richards for sponsoring the Citizens Complaint component to the NYC engine idling law. As outlined in my documentary film, *Idle Threat*, sadly NYC to date has paid only lip service to enforcement of the idling law. With this neglect, city officials and police have ignored the health and welfare of its citizens while forgoing billions of dollars in citation revenue. With the Citizens Complaint component to the engine idling law, New Yorkers who are concerned about air quality will now be able to enforce the law themselves, and earn a substantial income while doing so," said **George Pakenham, Producer and Director of the documentary film, IDLE THREAT**.

"After 40 years of virtually no enforcement of the NYC idling law, it's time to give citizens the right to enforce the law. Civilian enforcement would mean cleaner air for all New Yorkers and revenue for the City and the citizens submitting complaints," said **Isabelle Silverman, Attorney and Clean Air Advocate**.

"Although air quality has improved in New York City over the years, fumes from

idling trucks and buses continue as a persistent and unnecessary source of localized pollution. Bravo to Councilmember Rosenthal and Chairman Richards for introducing this sensible legislation, which if enacted would result in motor vehicle pollution reductions in neighborhoods across the city," said **Eric A. Goldstein, Senior Attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council.**

"The proposed law provides us with the legal basis necessary for enforcing NYC's existing prohibition on the idling of stationary vehicles. This City Council initiative highlights how we are all responsible for safeguarding the future of our city and reducing our global share of greenhouse gas emissions," said **Lisa DiCaprio, Member of 350.NYC.**

"\$10 million in gas this year can be saved this year, if we New Yorkers stop sitting idle in our cars," said **Jeremy Kranowitz, Executive Director of Sustainable America.** "Plus, the money saved can result in our having healthier lungs. Here's why: there are 2 million cars and trucks registered in New York City. If each of our vehicles reduced unnecessary idling by just 5 minutes per day, we would collectively save \$10 million in gas this year. That is why Sustainable America applauds that fact that the New York City Council is addressing an important issue that will make our air cleaner and healthier, and it is great for our pocketbooks, too - if we just don't sit idle."

"Idling wastes more than 6 billion gallons of fuel annually in the United States, adding up to more than \$20 billion in annual fuel costs. By supporting idle-reduction programs in their own fleets, Empire Clean Cities' stakeholders already save about half a million gallons of petroleum each year from idle-reduction alone. To build on this success, we support policies that identify and enforce idle reduction to minimize air pollution and improve overall air quality," said **Christina Ficicchia, Executive Director of Empire Clean Cities.**

"Bus and truck idling on West 72nd Street between CPW and Columbus Avenue continues day after day without any enforcement whatsoever. Our community has been under siege with toxic fumes, and our hope is that we can put an end to this madness by enforcing the law within the law," said **Raymond Alvin, Co-chairperson of West 72nd Street Community Alliance.**

"We are the guardians of a clean, sustainable future," said **Denise Katzman, environmental advocate.**

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