



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Senator Krueger Joins Rally Against Toxic Mold Announces Bill to Help Remediate Toxic Mold Epidemic in New York

LIZ KRUEGER September 22, 2008

New York— State Senator Liz Krueger joined advocates and New York residents suffering from mold related illnesses today at a rally in front of City Hall. The rally was meant to highlight the seriousness of mold problems in New York and to propose ways for the New York State Toxic Mold Task Force to strengthen State mold regulations. The Task Force was created in 2005 to address the health impacts of mold.

"Mold is a persistent problem for the residents of New York," said Senator Krueger. "The Toxic Mold Task Force needs to seriously consider the recommendations we have laid forth today so that future generations of New York's children don't grow up suffering from asthma and other serious health problems."

Approximately one million New York City Residents have asthma, including 300,000 children according to statistics from the American Lung association of New York City. Poor indoor air quality has been cited as a leading cause of respiratory and overall health ailments. A major contributing factor to poor air quality is the presence of mold which, even at a very low exposure, may result in adverse health reactions in some individuals

"Toxic mold is preventable and cleanable," stated Senator Krueger. "All we need to do is implement laws that protects lives rather than landlords, who would rather save money

than hire someone to properly clean the mold."

In order to ensure that toxic mold ceases to be a major health hazard in New York, Senator Krueger outlined several different remedies. A bill she carries, S.8760, would immediately help by requiring any person engaged in commercial mold remediation to be certified by the commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation. This certification would demonstrate the professional's knowledge and proper experience in mold remediation.

"I constantly here from constituents who have paid to have mold removed, and then find out the mold has returned," explained Senator Krueger. "Residents of an entire building had to move out and sue their landlord due to mold that was never properly remediated. By requiring certification of mold remediators, the incidence of costly as well as hazardous and unsuccessful elimination of mold by untrained and uncertified individuals will decrease."

"The Toxic Mold Task Force also needs to recommend that the New York City's Department of Health and Mental Health (DOHMH) guidelines be the mandated standard in mold remediation work," continued Senator Krueger. The New York City DOHMH has a set of guidelines that are universally recognized among the strongest set of best practices in the country. However, the problem with these guidelines is that owners and mold remediators are not required to follow them. Since owners are not obligated to remove mold properly, many do not. This often results in a frustrating situation for tenants and residents who are constantly dealing with the recurring mold.

Finally Senator Krueger pointed out that "The New York State Division of Housing does not consider mold exposure a reason for a rent reduction, even though it is clearly a reduction in service. We need to change this part of the law in order to create a financial disincentive for landlords who do not properly remove mold."

"My top priority is the health of my constituents and of all New Yorkers," concluded Senator Krueger. "We need to have laws in place that will require landlords to address problems like mold that threaten the well-being of their tenants."