



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

State Senator Liz Krueger Joins NYS Dec, Nyc Dep in Announcing Major Air Quality Enforcement Initiative

LIZ KRUEGER November 15, 2007

In Bold Move, Agencies Begin Random Street Inspections of Diesel Trucks; 1 in 4 Breaking Emissions Regulations

"Today I was pleased to stand with the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and community leaders and advocates in announcing a major environmental enforcement initiative to address outdoor air quality in New York.

Under the new program, DEC officers are randomly stopping diesel trucks along Manhattan's East Side, and inspecting them to ensure that they are in compliance with State emissions standards. An estimated 25,000 trucks travel up and down the East Side avenues daily, often entering and exiting Manhattan via the Third Avenue and Willis Avenue Bridges. In a stunning estimate, DEC believes that one-quarter of these trucks are ignoring regulations and spewing emissions in excess of our State's already weak emissions standards.

DEC officers have also been patrolling the neighborhood issuing tickets for trucks or buses found illegally idling, and have installed an air monitoring unit on the grounds of Metropolitan Hospital. Once data from this program is evaluated, the DEC expects to expand

it to other parts of the City and State.

For years, government has spent time focusing on problems, like sky-high childhood asthma rates in areas like East Harlem, without getting to the root of these problems and diagnosing how to fix them. The State of New York has vehicle emissions standards for a reason: pollutants cause heart and respiratory related illnesses, contribute to climate change, and affect our quality of life.

Holding illegal polluters accountable marks a new era at the DEC. Under former Governor Pataki, regulations were spectacularly ignored, fundamentally undermining our environmental laws. Under the new leadership of Governor Spitzer and Commissioner Pete Grannis, the DEC has moved in interesting and innovative ways from an agency playing defense, to playing offense in terms of environmental protections.

State laws are not worth the paper they are written on if they are not properly enforced."