



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Eric T. Schneiderman

## Senate Passes Environmental Justice Legislation

ERIC T. SCHNEIDERMAN February 22, 2010

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### *Schneiderman Bill Extends Equal Environmental Protection To Every New Yorker*

ALBANY – In a major victory for equality, the state Senate overwhelmingly passed an environmental justice bill today. The legislation (S4407), sponsored by **Senator Eric T. Schneiderman (D-Manhattan/Bronx)**, declares a policy of equal treatment of people of all races, cultures, religions, incomes, education levels and sexual orientation in the development and enforcement of environmental laws in New York State.

"Environmental justice means that every New Yorker has the right to clean air, safe drinking water and healthy communities to raise their children. This legislation ensures that people with lower incomes or from communities of color will be treated equally under the state's environmental protection laws. It sends a clear message that New York will not tolerate a 'separate, but equal' policy when it comes to safeguarding our communities from environmental hazards," said Senator Schneiderman.

Studies have shown that minority and low-income communities are disproportionately affected by exposure to pollution from environmental hazards. These communities are often saddled with an unfair share of incinerators, dumps, factories and other sources of pollution. The Schneiderman legislation provides environmental justice to minority and disadvantaged communities by affirming their legal right to equal protection under the law to a healthy and clean environment.

