



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose Peralta

## Senator Peralta Introduces Legislation Requiring Food Vendors at Stadiums and Entertainment Arenas to Post Health Inspection Letter Grades In Response to ESPN Report “It’s times for venues to clean up their act”

JOSE PERALTA July 30, 2010

| ISSUE: **CONSUMER PROTECTION**

In light of the recent ESPN story that revealed that health inspectors at stadiums and entertainment venues found a majority of food vendors had “major” or “critical” health violations State Senator Jose Peralta is introducing a bill that would require all food service establishments, food carts and pushcarts, schools, entertainment/sports venues, and hospitals to post a letter grade indicating the result of a health inspection of its food serving establishment.

Currently, stadiums, amusements parks, entertainments venues and food carts are not required to disclose health code violations to customers or display how they rate when it comes to food safety. Customers have no way of knowing whether the food they are eating is safe. Peralta’s bill would stipulate that vendors be notified of health violations and given a 30 days to review, correct the violations and apply for re-inspection.

The ESPN report revealed that New York Area arenas including Madison Square Garden, Yankee Stadium and Citi Field all had health violations, ranging from evidence of rats to

cooking at temperatures that weren't hot enough to kill bacteria.

Peralta said "Whether they are eating at a 5 star restaurant or at a sporting event or concert people still want food that is prepared and distributed in a clean environment.

Unfortunately, vendors have largely gone unmonitored and the ESPN report illustrated what happens when health and safety precautions are ignored." He continued "Consumers have a right to know whether the hotdog they're buying is coming from a vendor that practices proper food preparation or if they are potentially buying spoiled or contaminated food. The bottom line is stadium food isn't cheap, and people should not be paying for garbage or worse a potential health hazard. It's times for these venues to clean up their act"

A uniform statewide system of inspection and grading will provide consumers an easy way to decide if he or she wishes to eat from a particular food establishment and allow for a meaningful comparison among competing eateries. Such system will provide encouragement to keep food establishments sanitary.

New York City, starting July 2010, requires certain food service establishments to post letter grades that correspond with its sanitary inspection score. Most restaurants, coffee shops, bars, nightclubs, cafeterias, retail bakeries, and fixed-site food stands will be displaying its inspection score. Additionally, in 1998, the Los Angeles county Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance #97-0071 requiring retail food establishments to post its grade/score issued by the health inspector.