STATE OF NEW YORK

7410

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

April 15, 2025

Introduced by Sen. MAY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Environmental Conservation

AN ACT directing the department of environmental conservation to commission a comprehensive study on the retrofitting needs of schools located within 500 feet of major highways to mitigate exposure to harmful air pollution

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The department of environmental conservation, in consultation with the department of education, shall commission a study to determine the necessary measures and associated costs to retrofit or update air filtration and ventilation systems and to seal the building envelopes of public and charter schools identified as being located within 500 feet of major highways.

This study shall advance the state's obligation to protect children's constitutional rights to a "sound basic education" and a "healthful environment".

§ 2. The study shall examine public and charter schools located within 500 hundred feet of a major highway and include, but not be limited to, the following components:

(a) Air filtration and ventilation assessments, to include:

(i) inspecting and documenting the type, age, and condition of existing air filtration and ventilation systems, including HVAC systems and air purifiers in schools;

(ii) identifying any gaps, deficiencies, or absence of such systems; and

(iii) recommending appropriate upgrades or full system replacements where necessary, considering best practices for filtering fine particulate matter and other traffic-related pollutants.

(b) Building envelope evaluations, to include:

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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(i) inspecting the structural integrity of the building envelopes, including doors, windows, walls, and roofing, to assess whether pollutants are being introduced through leaks or insufficient sealing; and

(ii) recommending weatherization and sealing measures to improve indoor air quality by preventing outdoor air pollutants from infiltrating indoor spaces.

(c) Feasibility analysis, to include:

(i) assessing the technical feasibility of implementing filtration, ventilation, and sealing improvements in each school, taking into account the building age, design and infrastructure limitations; and

(ii) prioritizing schools based on factors such as the severity of pollution exposure, vulnerability of the student population, and existing facility conditions.

(d) Cost estimation, to include:

(i) providing a detailed, itemized estimate of the projected costs associated with recommended upgrades for each school, including materials, labor, and maintenance considerations; and

(ii) preparing an aggregate cost estimate for all schools, reflecting the total investment required to address this public health concern statewide.

§ 3. The department of environmental conservation shall submit a comprehensive report detailing the study's findings, recommendations, and cost estimates to the governor, the speaker of the assembly, and the temporary president of the senate within one year of the effective date of this act.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.