



**Testimony of Carlos Castell Croke  
Associate for NYC Programs  
New York League of Conservation Voters**

**City Council Committee on Environmental Protection Hearing  
on Intro 1947  
September 22, 2020**

Good afternoon, my name is Carlos Castell Croke and I am the Associate for New York City Programs at the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV represents over 30,000 members in New York City and we are committed to advancing a sustainability agenda that will make our people, our neighborhoods, and our economy healthier and more resilient. I would like to thank Chair Constantinides for the opportunity to testify today.

When the New York City Council passed Local Law 97 (LL97) early last year it laid the cornerstone of the City's ambitious goal of reducing emissions 80% by the year 2050 (80X50). At that time NYLCV, and other stakeholders, understood that there was still a lot of work to be done in order to ensure that this law is properly implemented, provides a clear and achievable regulatory framework, and is adequately enforced and invested in. The law also did not include all the buildings that must ultimately be more energy efficient to achieve the City's climate goals.

NYLCV supports the passage of Intro 1947 because it applies Local Law 97 to buildings that cannot be overlooked if we are to reach our 80X50 goal. Intro 1947 will amend the city charter and administrative code as it relates to rent regulated accommodations in order to bring LL97 in accordance with state law. Applying a threshold of at least 35% rent regulated units to the LL97 exemption will ensure that critical buildings are not left behind and that we can start working to achieve 80X50.

While we believe Intro 1947 is a necessary amendment to LL97, we also understand that there are still an insufficient number of programs and funds available to help building owners adapt to these new standards. We are excited to see the LL97 working groups develop the groundbreaking regulatory standards that will bring New York City to the frontlines of climate change mitigation, but the city must also provide the tools necessary for these standards to be met. NYLCV will continue to advocate for programs, incentives and funds that will provide

building owners with the means to retrofit their properties with energy saving and emission reducing technology.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.



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RENT STABILIZATION ASSOCIATION 123 William Street, New York, NY 10038

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## **MEMORANDUM IN OPPOSITION INTRO. 1947**

The Rent Stabilization Association represents 25,000 owners and managers who collectively manage over 1 million units of housing. Intro. 1947 would modify Local Law 97-2019 by changing the definition of buildings subject to the law. Changing the definition of buildings subject to LL 97 before rules and guidance from the city's Department of Buildings (DOB) have even been proposed is premature and makes no sense since potential impacts have not been evaluated yet. Changing the universe of buildings that will be subject to the law will have a detrimental impact on the condition of the city's affordable housing stock.

LL 97 exempted buildings of 25,000 sq. ft. or more from LL 97 if the building contained rent regulated units. Over 2 years of research and discussion took place by all the stakeholders before a final bill was drafted in an effort to come as close as possible to a bill that would be successful in lowering carbon emissions in NYC. Prior to passage of the bill it was acknowledged that there were many unknowns that would impact the goals set out in the bill. Future technology, building finances, and achievement of carbon reduction goals by changes to the grid would evolve as more data and technology became available. An enormous amount of discussion centered on the impact that LL 97 would have on the affordable housing stock. The vast majority of these buildings are rent regulated. Some did not want to see tenants subjected to MCI rent increases. RSA and many others argued that the cash flow of many rent regulated buildings, especially outside of core Manhattan was tenuous at best given the enormous growth in real property taxes and water/sewer rates over the last 20 years. Since passage of the 2019 rent laws (HSTPA), the net operating income for buildings has decreased thereby putting more financial stress on rental buildings. The increases in operating costs have also pushed many coop and condo owners to the limit of their finances. A number of coops and condos still have rent regulated units in the building so the exemption also applied to these buildings. Recognition of these slim and in many cases non-existent operating margins was a major factor in exempting buildings with rent regulated units. That situation has only gotten worse with HSTPA & Covid-19.

In the most recent study prepared by the Mayor's Office of Sustainability (MOS) that is examining the feasibility of a carbon trading mechanism which is part of LL 97, it was pointed out that the city will meet the greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions called for in LL 97 by 2030 because of changes mandated in state law as it applies to the power grid. The Climate Leadership Community Protection Act (CLCPA) was passed by the state legislature after LL 97 was enacted. It mandates a number of different goals for reductions in the production of fossil fuels throughout the state that will result in a dramatic reduction in GHG. By achieving these goals through changes in grid it lessens the need to put so many buildings and tenants in financial peril.

Finally there is no data presented that would justify this change. DOB is at least 2 years away from guidance or mandates for owners to follow. It will then take several years to measure the effects of any changes that would warrant a change in definition. In the meantime advances in technology may prove that less costly means are available to achieve the same goal.

For the above reasons RSA urges the council to table this proposal until there is empirical justification to change the definition of buildings subject to the law.



**Statement of Samantha Wilt  
Senior Energy Policy Analyst, Climate and Clean Energy Program  
Natural Resources Defense Council**

**Before the New York City Council  
September 22, 2020**

**In support of Intro. No. 1947**

Good morning, my name is Samantha Wilt. I am a senior policy analyst at the Natural Resources Defense Council. Thank you Chairman Constantinides and committee members for the opportunity to testify today in support of Intro 1947. As stated in Resolution 864, we are facing a climate emergency, and we must all be part of the mobilization to restore a safe climate. NRDC has been working to that end for 50 years, here in this great city where we are headquartered, and around the world. Especially in this time where even the idea of a national climate policy has been completely destroyed and is further undermined every day, New York City continues to be a bright light leading a fierce response to the existential threat of climate change at the local level; now more important than ever.

Thanks again to the Chairman and the Committee members for their tireless efforts to pass the Climate Mobilization Act last year, including Local Law 97. As NRDC testified to during the hearing for LL97, the more buildings that are covered by LL97, the greater our carbon reductions will be, and the more buildings will be improved by their compliance through energy efficiency, distributed energy resources, and other building systems that will move us toward a city that is fully powered and heated by clean electricity instead of dirty fossil fuels.

While we have not seen specific analysis of how many buildings will be affected by the changes in Intro 1947, we know that the initial exemption of buildings with a single rent-regulated unit accounted for one third of the GHG emissions from buildings over 25,000 square feet, so we hope and expect that a large portion of the “missing reductions” will be recovered through this bill.

Most importantly, we support Intro 1947 so that these previously-exempted buildings and tenants get the benefits of energy efficiency. Affordable housing, including buildings with rent-regulated units, are often those that need energy efficiency upgrades the most, and house the tenants that would greatly benefit from the resulting indoor air quality and health benefits along with lower energy and operating costs. With the reforms to major capital improvements in the Housing Stability & Tenant Protection Act of 2019, disallowing MCIs for buildings with fewer than 35% rent-regulated units, we are confident that Intro 1947 will improve the climate and other pollution reduction outcomes of LL97 while also delivering the critical protection of these tenants against displacement and will maintain affordability while advancing emissions reductions and energy efficiency.

We also support Intro 2072, because having reporting requirements on the City’s outreach and education efforts related to LL97 will be helpful for the City and stakeholders, and the cataloging and

reporting on the various methods buildings use to comply with LL97 will be integral to tracking progress, as well as being hugely instructive for other cities that follow New York's example.

Finally, it is critical that the City, State and utilities integrate their efforts to the greatest extent possible to provide technical and financial assistance for affordable housing and other buildings that will be needed to meet the City's goals envisioned through this legislation, as well as the State's ambitious energy efficiency and climate reduction targets.

Thank you, Chairman and committee members and Speaker Johnson for the opportunity to testify today, and your continued critical leadership on climate.



## **Council of New York Cooperatives & Condominiums**

### **TESTIMONY TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**September 22, 2020**

*In Opposition to Int. No. 1947*

The Council of New York Cooperatives & Condominiums (CNYC Inc.) is a membership organization providing information, education and advocacy for housing cooperatives and condominiums located throughout the five boroughs of New York City and beyond. More than 170,000 New York families make their homes in CNYC member buildings, which span the full economic spectrum from very modest, income-restricted housing to solid middle class apartment complexes to upscale dwellings. The New Yorkers who make their homes in cooperatives and condominiums are the collective owners of their buildings who are responsible for meeting all costs of operating the building and complying with the law. The boards that govern cooperatives and condominiums are elected by their neighbors; their job includes planning prudently for their homes, and budgeting to meet expected needs with regard for the ability of all their neighbors to meet the growing costs of compliance.

CNYC was represented on the task force that made recommendations for the structuring of Local Law 97, where people of good will from the energy community, government and the real estate industry tried to parse the many difficult aspects of a law focused on significantly reducing our City's carbon footprint. Careful consideration was paid to the restrictions that rent regulations impose on the rent that can be collected, which, in turn, limits the ability of owners of property where units are rent-regulated to make costly changes to their property – particularly when a stated peripheral goal was to ensure that MCI increases couldn't be imposed on renters. This led to the decision -- included in the law -- that buildings with ANY rent regulated units would be required to implement Prescriptive Measures rather than be subject to the full impact of Local Law 97.



## **Council of New York Cooperatives & Condominiums**

The Advisory Committee required by Local Law 97 came into formation just as the COVID-19 Pandemic was shutting down our City and forcing thousands of New Yorkers out of work. The Committee continued its work, established several Working Groups and these Working Groups have begun to exercise their mandates. CNYC participates in the Working Group on Residential Multiple Dwellings, which has thus far held two interesting meetings and enabled members also to participate in a meeting on Carbon Trading. We are all just getting started.

Cooperatives and condominiums are similarly getting started on their short and long term plans relating to carbon control and compliance with Local Law 97. Since the passage of Local Law 97 in April of 2019, those with rent regulated units have used the Prescriptive Measures as their guide in planning and budgeting for their energy and carbon-related projects.

Int. No. 1947 would literally pull the rug out from under their plans – forcing a massive rethinking and rebudgeting on this issue – and this at a time when virtually every building is facing serious financial challenges as resident owners and commercial tenants have been hurt by the COVID Pandemic.

This legislation is expected to impact hundreds of residential buildings throughout the five boroughs. We believe that at least half of the buildings that fall into the category of having less than 35% of their units rent regulated are former rental buildings that have been converted to housing cooperatives and condominiums. New York State law has always allowed seniors and persons with disabilities in such buildings to opt out of the conversion process and to remain in their units as rent regulated tenants. In 1982, State conversion laws were modified to allow for non-eviction conversions which enabled ANY resident to stay on as a rent regulated tenant after the conversion of the building to cooperative or condominium status. In some of these buildings, the original sponsor or successor investors own these units and make up any shortfall between the rent that they receive from the rent-regulated tenant and the actual cost of operating the unit as reflected in the maintenance payment due to the cooperative or condominiums. In other cases, the sponsor defaulted years ago and it is the cooperative or condominium that owns the units and



## **Council of New York Cooperatives & Condominiums**

makes up for the shortfall. For the latter category particularly, Int. No. 1047 would be excessively punitive and unfair.

In a presentation made in July, the Mayors' Office of Sustainability confirmed that the City is on track to meet the 2024 targets set by Local Law 97. With the Advisory Committee at work on the Report and Recommendations that it is scheduled to present in 2023, we see no reason to disrupt the implementation of Local Law 97 at this time.

CNYC respectfully requests that this legislation be tabled and that the procedures outlined by Local Law 97 be allowed to proceed.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our views.

Mary Ann Rothman  
Executive Director



**Testimony by Annie Garneva,  
Director of Communications and Member Services, NYC Employment and Training Coalition  
(NYCETC) at the Committee on Environmental Protection in Support of Intro 1947  
September 22, 2020**

My name is Annie Garneva and today I come to you wearing two hats that are central to this bill and issue - as an activist against fossil fuel infrastructure and for environmental justice and renewable energy through Sane Energy Project and the Stop the Williams Pipeline Coalition, and as the Director of Communications and Member Services at the NYC Employment and Training Coalition. Made up of over 170 community based organizations, higher ed institutions and labor unions, the Coalition supports the workforce & economic development community to ensure that every New Yorker has access to the skills, training & education needed to thrive in the local economy, and that every business is able to maintain a highly skilled workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on the issues that are nearest and dearest to my heart, and to provide a community and worker perspective to the issue of energy efficiency and sustainability programs.

COVID-19 and the economic crisis it has created have shown us the deep cracks and instabilities that have long existed in our local economy. Too many New Yorkers have been trying for too long to survive in low-wage jobs with few safety supports, long and unstable schedules, and few career opportunities. It is our City leaders' responsibility to empower communities that have been hardest hit by this pandemic and the systemic marginalization and disinvestment that existed prior to it with 21st century careers that will build economic, social and climate resilience across the five boroughs.

This is why we at NYCETC support Intro 1947, which would create thousands more quality jobs for low- and moderate-income communities of color in the energy efficiency sector. This would have the wonderful double pronged outcome of building economic and environmental power and stability in our communities, something that is long overdue.

While there are already many trained and in-training low- and moderate-income workers in NYC that would be able to take advantage of the jobs created by this bill, especially in construction, the creative and management roles in design and renovation are still lacking in terms of diversity and accessibility. The City must put its money where its mouth is and provide deep investments in education and training programs in design, renovation and construction so that our communities can turn their talents into the skills and credentials necessary to access energy efficiency careers. Without this step, the jobs created will go to those that already have a leg up on economic opportunity and will continue to drive the gentrification and displacement we've seen over the last two decades.

This is why we desperately need holistic solutions like the Green New Deal that tackle the root systemic fault lines in our society and recognize that racial justice is environmental justice and is economic justice.

The days of one-off solutions that perpetuate our problems on the backs of low- and moderate-income communities, and especially on the backs of people of color, are over.

All of the crises that we are facing today demand public investment in a large-scale set of physical and social infrastructure projects that could achieve two key goals at once: employing tens of thousands of New Yorkers whose private sector jobs have been lost in the COVID-19 crisis, and helping New York become a model of environmental sustainability, resilience and equity.

True equity is putting the tools of power and growth into the hands of local communities.

To that end, I urge you to pass Intro 1947 today, pass a comprehensive and investment laden Green New Deal for New York tomorrow, and push for an inclusive and equitable recovery from COVID that actually tackles our systemic needs and challenges and builds up all of our skills and talents.

September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 at 11:00am

**Hearing for Committee on Environmental Protection**

**Written Testimony: Introduction 1947**

Submitted by Laura Simon-Pearson

Contact information: 781-640-3175

Email: [lsimonpearson@gmail.com](mailto:lsimonpearson@gmail.com)

Dear NYC Councilmembers,

Thank you for holding this hearing today and for the opportunity to testify regarding New York City's carbon emission laws.

My name is Laura Simon-Pearson and I am a 25-year-old clinical psychology graduate student living on the upper west side in Manhattan. I am also a general member of WeACT for Environmental Justice. I decided to testify for today's hearing because fighting climate change is a top priority for me.

I want you to vote **YES** on Introduction 1947 because it will help us combat climate change by reducing carbon emissions. I support this bill because it will add thousands of buildings to LL97, and adds a rent regulation accommodation. This will protect the low-income tenants from bearing the cost burden of these changes. Climate change is also a racial justice issue, because black and brown communities have, for example, experienced air pollution at much higher rates. As a clinical psychology trainee, I have learned that the negative impacts of climate change on air quality and environmental health has a significant impact on citizens' mental health. Introduction 1946 is a practical and just solution to this problem.

We cannot sufficiently address climate change without acknowledging and fighting to dismantle systemic racism and subsequent environmental injustice. Please vote **YES** on Introduction 1947 to protect vulnerable citizens in our movement to fight climate change.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Laura Simon-Pearson

**Robbie M Parks**

**September 21, 2020**

**Committee on Environmental Protection, Testimony for Intro 1947**

My name is Robbie M Parks. I am an environmental epidemiologist working as an Earth Institute post-doctoral research fellow at Columbia University. I live in New York City 7th District in Northern Manhattan. I am also a Member of WE ACT for Environmental Justice.

I am writing to you today in support of Intro 1947, which will help expand Local Law 97 of 2019, the beginnings of the Green New Deal in New York City. Intro 1947 will expand Local Law 97's pollution reduction requirements to many more large buildings, specifically rent-regulated buildings whose landlords can no longer impose "Major Capital Improvement" rent hikes under new state rent laws.

Intro 1947 is a positive step in the transition away from fossil fuels and poor physical and mental health resulting from the air pollution. Intro 1947 would enable Local Law 97 to be an even more effective tool for reducing pollution levels in New York City, which is essential for the health and wealth of our residents, now and into the future. Poor air quality, resulting directly from building emissions not yet covered by Intro 1947, is well-documented in the scientific literature as having deleterious impacts to our physical and mental health, reducing life expectancy and quality of life (Bennett et al., 2019; Dockery et al., 1993; Roberts et al., 2019). It is also clear that the air pollution resulting from these buildings' emissions impacts people of color disproportionately (Tessum et al., 2019).

Not only does Intro 1947 provide a more effective realization of Local Law 97, it is a great opportunity to create thousands of new good jobs due to the upgrades that landlords would be required to make to comply with efficiency regulations.

Intro 1947 is a win-win for the residents of New York City. It is also part of a moral obligation that we as citizens of the city and the world must support to make good on our commitment to preserve the planet and its life.

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Tuesday, September 22, 2020

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**Oral Testimony**  
Before New York City Council  
Committee on Environmental Protection

**Introduction 1947**

Sonal Jessel  
*Policy & Advocacy Coordinator*  
*WE ACT for Environmental Justice*

Good afternoon Chair Constantinides and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding Introduction 1947.

My name is Sonal Jessel, and I'm the Policy and Advocacy Coordinator at WE ACT for Environmental Justice. Over the past 31 years, WE ACT has been combating environmental racism in Northern Manhattan. I myself have received my Master in Public Health from Columbia University. I am here as an advocate excited by the potential to pass a bill that will expand NYC's climate mitigation initiatives significantly.

Local Law 97 put New York City on the map in leading the United States' response to the climate crisis. Reducing building emissions for large buildings 80% by 2050 is the kind of action we need to ensure we keep warming at 1.5°C. Meaning, to ensure we avoid catastrophic impacts for *all* of us. Since buildings are the number 1 polluter in New York City, it is a perfect target. Now that we have stronger tenant protections, thanks to the NY Rent Laws passed in 2019, New York City can further expand the buildings covered in Local Law 97 with Introduction 1947.

Building pollution contributes greatly to poor air quality in New York City. And it is the communities of color and low-income communities that have borne the brunt of that poor air quality. That is because of the historic systematic environmental racism that has placed all industrial sites, bus depots, waste transfer stations, sanitation truck depots, and more in communities of color. All bus stations in Manhattan are in Harlem, Washington Heights, and Inwood, for example. On top of that, it is communities of color that have higher rates of buildings using dirty fuel, and buildings that are simply inefficient. While Local Law 97 and its expansion is good for everyone, it has the potential to positively impact communities of color greatly.

Introduction 1947 is exciting because it expands the law. It will add *thousands* of buildings that have to greatly reduce their emissions. Furthermore, solutions that address the disparate unemployment due to COVID-19 can also be paired with our immediate need to address climate crisis in this City. Before Introduction 1947, Local Law 97 was projected to create between 40,000 and 100,000 jobs for New Yorkers. Adding thousands of buildings will almost certainly increase the number of jobs available for implementation. Especially in this time of high unemployment,





creating good jobs is the key to protecting New Yorkers who have been impacted greatly by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, I am expressing my strong support of Introduction 1947. We need to cut building emissions greatly, and this is a much needed expansion to ensure it is done.

We cannot achieve a healthy NYC and a healthy economy until we put people back to work and address the climate crisis. It is Climate Week in New York City – it is time we address the crisis. We are simply giving up way too much time. Already we are seeing the impacts of climate change with stronger and more frequent hurricanes here, to wildfires in California. As a trained public health worker who focuses on climate change and health, I know that we will be seeing a rise in infectious diseases in New York City and around the world due to the worsening climate crisis. We don't want another pandemic. We can prevent the worst from happening if we make drastic efforts to mitigate climate change, NOW.

We do not need to be guided by our real estate industry in New York City, we need to be guided by the health, safety, and wellbeing of the generations coming behind us, and by the existence of New York City as we know it.

Therefore, I join other advocates, experts, and community members to urge the City to pass Introduction 1947. It would be a win for the people.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

*Sonal Jessel, MPH*

Policy & Advocacy Coordinator  
WE ACT for Environmental Justice  
1854 Amsterdam Avenue, 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10031  
212-961-1000

**Testimony of New York Communities for Change (NYCC) in Support of Intro 1947  
NYC Council Committee on Environmental Protection  
September 22, 2020**

Hello my name is Rachel Rivera and I'm Sandy survivor. I'm with New York Communities for Change.

When Sandy hit, it was night. I heard a cracking sound from the roof. I got worried and grabbed my little daughter from her bed. A few minutes later the ceiling collapsed on her bed. We ran out into the night with nothing.

We lost everything. We were in the shelter system. It was terrible. My daughter still has nightmares. Sometimes she has real problems when there is a storm.

As a result, we've become activists. We're very active on this issue.

We've got to stop the climate crisis. The west is burning. People are running for their lives from fires all over the world. Sea levels are rising worldwide. Flooding is everywhere. Just last week, people drowned in the South because of Hurricane Sally.

My community also needs jobs. Many of us have no work right now. This law makes the landlords create jobs fixing up their dirty buildings.

It will get thousands of people jobs.

At NYCC, we have a vision.

It's the Green New Deal.

We know many of you share that vision, too.

This bill helps us get there. We urge the Council to pass Intro 1947. Thank you.

My name is Pete Sikora and I'm with New York Communities for Change. I'm also a member of the City's Advisory Board created under Local Law 97.

As Rachel just said, you should pass Intro 1947, which expands Local Law 97 without the risk of raising rents in the covered buildings. That's because the state ended MCIs in rent regulated buildings with 35% and fewer regulated units. Intro 1947 simply equalizes the law's coverage so these buildings have the same requirements as

buildings that are not rent regulated. Housing groups like ours who fight for regulated tenants support Intro 1947's passage.

As you know, Local Law 97 is a massive engine for job creation. It will create tens of thousands of jobs slashing climate and air pollution in New York City. Intro 1947 will expand Local Law 97 and create thousands more jobs.

Now, under COVID the city's in an economic hole that will be hard to climb out of. It's especially important - just as in the Great Depression - for government to create good jobs. That's what this bill does.

It creates hands-on renovation and construction work that will employ people, especially from lower-income and communities of color. Along with Local Law 97 it creates good, union jobs. It will save building owners money. It will also improve air quality locally, cutting asthma and other illnesses by reducing fossil fuel use.

New York City will bake under heat waves while drowning under rising seas as extreme weather events pound and flood us. That's inevitable unless you and your equivalent decision makers all over the world take rapid, transformative action, such as is required by Local Law 97.

This bill alone covers thousands of large, polluting buildings. Over time it will cut millions of tons of climate pollution and create thousands of jobs.

Last year, led by Councilmember Constantinides and Speaker Johnson, and with the Mayor's support, you passed Intro 1253, enacting the world's first requirement on buildings to slash climate pollution, thereby beginning to create tens of thousands of jobs.

I'll make a prediction: Local Law 97 will go down as the beginning of a Green New Deal for New York. It'll be the law that a decade from now will be remembered. Intro 1947 significantly expands Local Law 97.

This is the house you're building, which we all need.

Thank you for holding this hearing and we urge you to pass the bill.

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This is the house you're building, which we all need.

Thank you for holding this hearing and we urge you to pass the bill.

September 22, 2020

**RE: Testimony in support of the City Council Bill Intro. 2072: Greenhouse gas emissions reduction methods and outreach and education**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of bill Intro. 2072 to expand Local Law 97 and require more large residential buildings to limit carbon emissions. My name is Stephanie Deeb, and I'm a medical student at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. I do not speak on behalf of Mount Sinai but represent a group of pediatric environmental and public health specialists as private citizens. We strongly support this legislation as part of ongoing efforts to address climate change in our city and would like to thank Council Members Constantinides, Menchaca, and Lander, for bringing this bill to a hearing and for their dedication to improving the environment of our city. We also want to recognize WE ACT for Environmental Justice for their partnership with us and their work in support of this bill.

Building operations, specifically the electricity they generate, contribute to over a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. When greenhouse gases accumulate in the environment, they raise temperatures and increase the amounts of other air pollutants, such as particulate matter—through increasing conditions that promote wildfires and impact air quality thousands of miles away—and ozone, through more hot summer days. Both the original offenders—the emissions from buildings—and the climate change they cause decrease air quality and are associated with many adverse health effects—especially in children.

Children are uniquely vulnerable to outdoor air pollutants. They spend more time outside and have a faster resting respiratory rate compared to adults. As a result, they inhale a greater amount of air relative to their body size and face greater exposure to environmental pollutants. Their smaller airways compared to adults make them more susceptible to airway obstruction, and their developing brains make them susceptible to impaired learning and neurodevelopment when exposed to pollution. Maternal exposure to environmental pollutants has been associated with premature birth and increased risk of neonatal respiratory distress. These early effects persist and are associated with decreased lung function and chronic conditions into adulthood, including COPD. Long-standing exposure throughout childhood can also increase the risk of developing other chronic illnesses later in life, including some cancers.

With approximately half a million children under age five and nearly two million children under age eighteen, our city is home to a huge population vulnerable to these health consequences. Additionally, children in NYC are almost twice as likely to be hospitalized for asthma as children in the US overall. As Black and brown children are more likely to bear this health burden, this issue is also one of equity and an opportunity to take a small step in rectifying historic and on-going injustices.

This bill represents a key health equity step in protecting New Yorkers. This bill will help reduce toxic exposures. The children in our city deserve to breathe clean air.

Thank you,

Stephanie Deeb, 2<sup>nd</sup> year Medical Student at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

Faculty mentor: Perry Sheffield, MD, MPH, Associate Professor, Environmental Medicine and Public Health and Pediatrics, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

We in 350NYC.org support the passage of the Intro 1947 legislation which changes the definition of a rent-regulated building in NYC and such that they can now be covered by Local Law 97. Local Law 97, the historic law passed in April 2019, will now cover buildings having less than 35% rent controlled units without the risk of capital costs being passed onto tenants. It is estimated that thousands of buildings will be now subject to LL97 in addition to the 50,000 already covered.

The passage of Local Law 97 in April last year was a momentous event in the history of climate legislation nationwide. The importance of this legislation and the change it will bring about cannot be underestimated. It was a victory for the city and New York state and heralded a new front in confronting the critical challenge of reducing carbon emissions from the burning of fossil fuels. The attention it received in the national and international press was impressive.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-climatechange-new-york-idUSKCN1RV149>

Compliance with LL97 by 2024 and then the tougher limits set for 2030 will require a disruption of the real estate business on a scale equivalent to the transition from horse-drawn vehicles to motorized vehicles. New York City is up to the challenge, but we will require the full support of the Council, the real estate industry, financial institutions, unions and tenants and homeowners.

Although some members of the Council and Mayor's office may caution against pressing forward on LL97 due to the devastating Covid-19 economic slowdown, we must be forceful in saying that, here and now, the opposite is true. There will only be a rapid and just recovery in this city if we generate good paying jobs now. The building retrofitting required to bring large buildings into compliance with LL97 will require tens of thousands of jobs, 140,000 by 2030. These are good paying jobs, that in some cases will require training a new workforce.

Financing of this transition must be readily accessible, rapid and distributed equally in all neighborhoods. New York City has the money. Assessed value of real estate in NYC is well over 1 trillion dollars, similar to the GDP of some mid-sized industrialized economies. The city is awash in investment money. Financial institutions tell us that investing in green infrastructure is one of the most profitable sectors for the investor.

If all buildings choose efficiency to meet the carbon caps, by 2030, Urban Green Council estimates that the retrofit market will be a \$16.6B to \$24.3B opportunity in NYC. Costs may be less if emissions can be averted through an increase in the percentage of clean energy being integrated into the electric grid. To quote UGC; "In 2018, just \$235M was spent on building improvements to save energy. The new law could trigger a 13-fold increase over today's annual market depending on how soon owners begin investing in their properties". Local Law 97 can be the main stimulator of the city's economy during the next critical years of the recovery. Supporting agencies such as the Retrofit Accelerator must be funded rapidly. The Climate Clock installed in Union Square last Saturday tells us we have 7 years and 100 days to turn the emissions curve down dramatically to stay under 1.50C. Local Law 97 provides the pathway to contribute to that goal and we must supply the political will.

Margaret Perkins for 350NYC.org

[meperkins@nyc.rr.com](mailto:meperkins@nyc.rr.com)

Energy Source	2024 Carbon Intensity Factors (kg of CO <sub>2</sub> e per kbtu)	EPA Carbon Intensity Factors (kg of CO <sub>2</sub> e per kbtu)	Percent Difference from EPA
Electricity (NYC)	.08469	.0847	equivalent
No. 4 Fuel Oil	.07529	.07529	equivalent
No. 2 Fuel Oil	.07421	.07421	equivalent
Natural Gas	.05311	.05311	equivalent
District Steam	.04493	.0664	32.3% lower

Tuesday, September 22, 2020

**Written Testimony**  
Before New York City Council  
Committee on Environmental Protection

**Introduction 1947**

*Miriam Nielsen*  
*PhD Student*  
*Columbia University*  
*Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences*

Thank you for holding this hearing and for taking the time to read my written testimony about Introduction 1947.

I am Miriam Nielsen, a PhD student researching climate change and climate-strengthened extreme hazards, like those that have and will continue to impact New York City.

I am surely not alone in writing to you about the importance of Introduction 1947. While Local Law 97 was a major step in reducing emissions from our city's buildings, Introduction 1947 is a necessary expansion. By including more buildings within Local Law 97, Introduction 1947 will help New York City reach and hopefully exceed ambitious, but necessary, emissions reductions. Cleaning up this many dirty buildings will create much needed good, clean jobs as well as provide access to sustainable housing to individuals living in affordable housing. Living in a low-emission home should not be only for those with money.

In 2016, New York City's buildings produced 34.4 metric tons of climate-warming greenhouse gases - making up 66% of all emissions in the city.<sup>1</sup> We must reduce these emissions as quickly as possible to avoid catastrophic climate impacts. Under current emissions rates, by the end of the century, storm surges have projected heights of 9 to 16 feet, feeding off a meter of sea level rise.<sup>2</sup> To avoid these impacts, I join other experts, advocates, and community members in urging the passing of Introduction of 1947 to clean up dirty buildings and create a greener New York City.

Thank you for your time,  
Miriam Nielsen  
*PhD Student*  
*Columbia University*  
*Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences*

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<sup>1</sup> Inventory of New York City Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions  
<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/sustainability/downloads/pdf/publications/GHG%20Inventory%20Report%20Emission%20Year%202016.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Church, J.A., P.U. Clark, A. Cazenave, J.M. Gregory, S. Jevrejeva, A. Levermann, M.A. Merrifield, G.A. Milne, R.S. Nerem, P.D. Nunn, A.J. Payne, W.T. Pfeffer, D. Stammer and A.S. Unnikrishnan, 2013: Sea Level Change. In: Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Stocker, T.F., D. Qin, G.-K. Plattner, M. Tignor, S.K. Allen, J. Boschung, A. Nauels, Y. Xia, V. Bex and P.M. Midgley (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA. [https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/WG1AR5\\_Chapter13\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/WG1AR5_Chapter13_FINAL.pdf)

Tuesday, September 22, 2020, 11:00am

**Oral Testimony**  
Before New York City Council  
Committee on Land Use  
Public Hearing

**Introduction 1947: expanding the number of buildings in NYC  
that have to severely reduce their pollution.**

Elizabeth McMillan  
*Community Member*  
*WE ACT for Environmental Justice*  
(917) 653-4251

Thank you for holding the hearing today and for the opportunity to testify regarding the Introduction 1947: expanding the number of buildings in NYC that have to severely reduce their pollution.

I am Elizabeth McMillan, and I'm a community member of WE ACT for Environmental Justice. I am working with Sonal Jessel, who is the Policy and Advocacy Coordinator at WE ACT in support of Introduction 1947 which will help to severely reduce pollution here in Upper Manhattan.

As a resident in Central Harlem, I am very concerned about our air quality. It is my understanding that buildings are responsible for two-thirds of NYC's annual emissions. It's a "culprit", if I may say, in why I see a difference in easier breathing outside between the boroughs and the strain on my breathing here in Harlem.

I also have seen a great increase in construction throughout Northern Manhattan, which adds to the increase in poor air quality. In addition to the Urban Heat Island Affect that's especially central to our community due to some lack of trees, concrete, car emissions, and the intense temperatures during hot and humid days, other factors are smoking within apartments, which also increases the poor air quality that affects my breathing. Though smoking cessation is another issue that this bill does not solve, but it is a huge consideration when outside air pollution negatively affects me then I have to come home to the same poor air quality within my building.

Including Rent Regulated buildings to shrink their carbon footprint in low-income communities I believe will be a step in the right direction. Air is provided by Mother Nature for free and is a right to all. My lungs deserve every right to benefit from cleaner air already provided by Earth.

Again, thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth McMillan

Community Member  
WE ACT for Environmental Justice

September 22, 2020

**Oral Testimony**  
Before New York City Council  
Committee on Environmental Protection

**Introduction 1947**

Rachel Landsberg

Hi, my name is Rachel Landsberg. I have lived on the upper west side of New York City for over 20 years, I am an educator and a mother, and I am a proud member of WE ACT for Environmental Justice. I would like to thank the members of the City Council for holding this hearing and for listening to the voices and stories of New Yorkers like me who love our city and want only the best for it and its residents.

I decided to testify today, a first for me, because, as fires rage on the west coast and hurricane season has already begun to wreak havoc on the southern and eastern coasts, the harrowing effects of climate change are on my mind daily. That, coupled with the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus on black, brown, and working class people, has compelled me to take a stand wherever and whenever I can, in working towards a more equitable society. It has never been more important to work to create a sustainable and just city where all New Yorkers can thrive.

As we know, we must reduce our greenhouse gas emissions now, today, as soon as possible, in order to have a livable tomorrow. Buildings in New York City are responsible for two-thirds of our city's emissions. Local Law 97 took a significant step in the right direction towards requiring buildings to curb their emissions. Introduction 1947 would take the additional step of adding thousands of buildings that would need to comply with these regulations, thus further reducing our

city's emissions. In addition, tenants in rent-regulated apartments would be protected from bearing the cost.

Introduction 1947 would effect change in a just and equitable way that is important to me personally. By expanding the number of buildings that would need to reduce emissions, it would advance New York City's commitment to tackling climate change head on. In addition, Introduction 1947 would protect rather than penalize tenants who live in affordable housing. As we witness globally the disproportionate impact of climate change on front-line and vulnerable communities in the global south who bear the burden of climate change caused by nations in the global north, nations with power and money, we must recognize and take a stand on these issues within our own communities as well. We must be bold in curbing greenhouse gas emissions while at the same time protecting vulnerable working New Yorkers who depend on affordable housing.

Now is a time for leadership and forward-thinking. New York must step up to do its part to combat climate change and those who have benefited most from emitting greenhouse gases should do their part as well.

Sincerely,  
Rachel M Landsberg

## **Written Testimony**

Before New York City Council  
Committee on Environmental Protection

### Introduction 1947

Thank you for holding the hearing and for the opportunity to provide a written testimony regarding Introduction 1947.

My name is Kathy. I am writing in support of Introduction of 1947. I am a Designer working for a New York City based architecture firm and lifelong resident of NYC, born and raised in Queens. As a Designer working in NYC, I have worked on building projects of all scales and types within the greater NYC metropolitan area. Furthermore, prior to my career in architecture, I worked in a NYC laboratory studying mosquito borne diseases. My experiences have given me insights into the connections between health and the built environment.

According to NYC DOB, buildings generate 80% of NYC's greenhouse gas emissions. This significantly impacts global warming, contributing greatly to the urban heat island effect. Extreme heat due to climate change is already a reality and has detrimental effects on health. Beyond heat related illnesses like heat strokes, extreme heat events also exacerbate existing health conditions. According to a physician with the East Harlem Health Outreach Partnership, a free clinic providing primary care for residents, extreme heat aggravates respiratory illnesses like asthma and reduces the efficacy of medication being used to treat certain conditions like depression.

Local Law 97, while a good start, has too many exemptions. According to the National Law Review, 50,000 existing commercial and residential buildings would be affected. That is not enough. The majority of NYC's building stock was built prior to energy certification programs like LEED and therefore not designed with greenhouse gas emissions in mind. Introduction 1947 would encapsulate more buildings. The more buildings required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the more effective Local Law 97 will be.

As we are coming out of the hottest summer on record in the midst of a pandemic, we have been reminded that when we leave communities behind to suffer during a health crisis, the whole city suffers. We are all connected. Extreme heat from climate change is real and greenhouse gas emissions from buildings contribute to the heat. It's time that these building owners and developers, who have reaped the financial benefits of being landlords for so long, do their part.

Jessica Haller

September 21, 2020

Committee on Environmental Protection, Testimony for Intro 1947

My name is Jessica Haller, I am a Leader with the Climate Reality Project and VC of the Board of Hazon, and I'm a candidate for New York City Council in District 11 in the NW Bronx.

I am speaking to you today in support of Intro 1947, which will help us expand LL97 and contribute to our economic recovery from the coronavirus. Intro 1947 works with existing tenant-protection laws and LL97 by expanding the number of buildings that are required to meet reductions in emissions, in whatever ways they can.

This bill will mean new jobs for New Yorkers in hands-on work for designing, constructing, and renovating retro-fitting the affected buildings. It also represents a step toward fighting the climate crisis. In New York City, our buildings are responsible for more than two-thirds of total GHG emissions, adding to the heat-island effect and poor air quality. This air quality in turn contributes to so many of our health problems, asthma, respiratory distress, and heat deaths - especially in low income, high heat vulnerability neighborhoods. As many health authorities have noted, air pollution in many communities hardest hit by coronavirus contributed to complications and the high death toll. In fact, this science dates back to the 1918 flu pandemic, when communities living near coal plants had higher mortality rates from flu due to lower air quality. Intro 1947 will improve the efficiency of buildings and the quality of life of millions of low-income tenants. The inclusion of buildings with 35% or more affordable housing units ensures that tenants will not bear the brunt of the cost.

Last year the State Legislature passed the CLCPA, Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act mandating an 85% reduction in GHG emissions across the state by 2050 (among other mandates). Intro 1947 is just one more step we need to take to address this issue for us in the city and to achieve the State's goals.

Monday September 21, 2020

**Written Testimony  
Before New York City Council  
Committee on Environmental Protection**

**Dr. Jacqueline M Klopp  
Co-Director Center for Sustainable Urban Development  
Earth Institute, Columbia University**

Thank you for holding a hearing on *Introduction 1947* and for the opportunity to submit my testimony. I am a New Yorker and a social scientist who has worked for over a decade on urban land-use, built environment, transportation, and climate change at the Earth Institute at Columbia University, and I teach in the Sustainable Development program.

At the Earth Institute, I have access to the most up-to-date scientific analysis on our climate crisis. The implications of inaction or slow action on emissions reductions for our beloved city, region, country and planet are alarming. Clearly, citizens, businesses and governments at all levels must mobilize to reduce emissions, while preparing for the impacts for climate change which are already here and bound to get worse.

This is why I am entering my testimony on Introduction 1947. I am extremely proud of New York's pathbreaking Climate Mobilization Act that included the important Local Law 97 mandating a 40 percent reduction in citywide emissions by 2030 and 80 percent by 2050. The law stipulates that most properties larger than 25,000 square feet must limit emissions based on the building type and size or pay substantial fines. This is an excellent law as it incentivizes building owners to retrofit their buildings to be more efficient and reduce emissions and, by doing so, reduce their future costs while *creating many new good jobs for our city which desperately needs them given the enormous blow we have faced with the pandemic.*

I am writing to urge you to support Introduction 1947 which will improve on Local Law 97 by reducing the number of buildings that can claim an exception to this smart law. It does this by defining more precisely what constitutes a building with affordable housing. Buildings that have 35% or fewer regulated units would be subject to the emissions caps expanding the ambition of our retrofits and emissions reductions. While I understand this is a difficult time, including for building owners, we must forge forward in addressing climate crisis and find ways to support change that will leave us all better off as a city. To realize this, we need to move forward on financing mechanisms as needed such as the Property-Assessed Clean Energy Loan program.

But we must move forward, reduce our emissions, create good jobs and better more efficient buildings in our great city and Introduction 1947 will help us do that. We have little time to waste. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Dr. Jacqueline M Klopp

Center for Sustainable Urban Development

475 Riverside Dr. Suite 520

NYC 10115

Tel 212-851-2979 or 917-817-4688

Bill 1947

Tuesday, Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> 11:00 EST

Michael Scott

[Mike-barb-nyc@juno.com](mailto:Mike-barb-nyc@juno.com)

Good Afternoon, my name is Michael Scott, I've been a resident of Inwood for over 36 years. I currently head the Energy Committee of the 60 Cooper St Co-op and I'm a member of We Act for Environmental Justice.

I would like to thank the City Council members for holding this hearing today and for the opportunity to testify regarding Introduction 1947

I'm here today to urge the Council to vote yes on Introduction 1947.

Over the past year our Co-op at 60 Cooper St has made several energy saving improvements to comply with Local Law 97 spending over \$100,000 . We too have a few grandfathered rent controlled tenants in our 1935 building but Co-ops are excluded from the current exemption. The current exemption is unfair to Co-ops who must be in full compliance with Local Law 97. Our shareholders are working middle class New Yorkers who struggle like many other New Yorkers to keep housing affordable. We are also committed to reducing our carbon footprint for a livable planet and future generations. The current exemption for Local Law 97 is a windfall for developers and landlords who have no vested interest in the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Those developers and landlords will take full advantage of the current exemption to Local Law 97 by making the minimum amount of housing units affordable as they increase their profits while our neighbors pay the price with their health.

I'm upset that when our health is on the line, there are any exemptions to Local Law 97. However I realize that not all buildings have the financial ability to comply with Local Law 97 and we do need more affordable housing. That's why I support Introduction 1947 which increases the exemption to 35% or more affordable housing units. Introduction 1947 is step in the right direction to bring equity to those buildings like Co-op's who must be in full compliance. Introduction 1947 will incentivize developers to increase the number of affordable units and improve our city's air quality and energy consumption.

Thank you for your attention and your commitment to keep our city affordable for working families and livable for future generations.

Tuesday September 22, 2020

**Oral Testimony before the New York City Council on INT. No. 1947**

My name is Nan Faessler and I live in Central Harlem (zip code 10037), home to one of the highest concentrations of asthma in the city of New York.

I want to thank the council members and staff for allowing me to testify and I ask that the NYC Council pass Int. No. 1947.

The Trump Administration is in total denial about climate change and science in general as we witness their non-leadership during this COVID-19 pandemic; we are grateful to the NYC Council's respect for science by passing progressive bills like Local Law 97.

Recognizing that buildings in NYC are responsible for two-thirds of NYC's annual emissions of greenhouse gasses, Local Law 97 addressed the need to reduce GHG emissions by 40% in 2030 and 80% by 2050. However Local Law 97 has a huge loophole in that buildings over 25,000 square feet that have one or more affordable housing units would have been exempt.

Int. No 1947 helps to erase that glaring exemption and since very progressive housing laws were passed in 2019 by the NY State Legislature whereby MCI's can only be recouped by landlords to the tune of 2%, Int. No. 1947 makes so much sense, as nearly 60% of buildings in NYC would now be covered.

"This will guarantee rent-regulated buildings shrink their carbon footprint, but not off the backs of tenants."

We are seeing right in front of our eyes the damages in the U.S. due to climate change - wildfires on the West Coast and the flooding in Alabama and Florida because of Hurricane Sally. I am nearly 73 years old and will not see the most horrific harmful effects of climate change but my friends who are younger, my family members who are younger, the children of friends and family and their grandkids will be impacted.

Moving as quickly as we can to try and forestall a tipping point on climate change by addressing by whatever means to reduce our carbon emissions is a MORAL NECESSITY.

Do not fail yourselves and your children and all of our children. Pass Int. No. 1947

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Nan Faessler

WE ACT for Environmental Justice member

25 West 132nd Street, 6P

NYC NY 10037

Committee on Environmental Protection, 22 Sept. 2020  
Testimonial: B. Eni Owoeye, 4436361552

My name is B. Eni Owoeye, an NYU student in the lower Manhattan area with WEACTION and New York Youth Climate Leaders.

I deeply appreciate the ability to add my opinion as to why Introduction 1947 is a crucial step in improving our chances of combating climate change while improving our public health.

While we all may have different reasons for supporting Local Law 97, my biggest concern for the future of my community is whether or not individuals with pre-existing and/or sensitive illnesses will be safe as we continue to recklessly pollute our air and waterways.

Many of the kids I mentor have asthma and live in rent controlled buildings, which may have poor infrastructure that already puts them at a disadvantage. I myself have respiratory issues, making it all the more appealing to hold all buildings accountable, rent controlled or not, to cap their emissions.

While I understand that the gradual process of cutting emissions is what the bill entails, Introduction 1947 will ensure all buildings are cooperating with our climate action goals. We cannot debate whether or not quality of life is being threatened by weakened air quality; we must act decisively.

Please consider the health of not just New Yorkers, but of Americans and individuals globally. The world looks to NYC because we are known to put our people first. Cutting some emissions isn't going to cut it. Pass Introduction 1947 and make it clear the lives of New Yorkers comes before the comfort of doing nothing.

**Testimony of David Cohen**  
**Deputy Political Director, 32BJ SEIU**  
**Committee on Environmental Protection, Int. 1947 of 2020**  
**September 22, 2020**

Submitted via email

**Att: Committee Chair Constantinides and Committee Members**

32BJ SEIU was pleased to work closely with the City and other stakeholders throughout the development of the City's groundbreaking building emissions reduction law – LL97. We recognize the immense importance of this law being implemented effectively and are committed to the ongoing process of bringing its goals into reality through our participation on the LL97 Advisory Board.

Arriving at the policy position enacted by LL97 was a complex, multi-year process. All along it was clear that buildings with rent-regulated units needed to be approached thoughtfully given the different economic factors involved in their operation and how sensitive we need to be to protecting our affordable housing stock.

Currently under the law all rent-regulated buildings are subject to requirements intended to improve their energy efficiency in the first compliance period of 2024-29. Instead of being mandated to meet per square foot emissions limits, buildings with rent regulated units can either voluntarily comply with those targets, or undertake prescribed energy conservation measures. Beyond the first compliance period, the plan for rent-regulated buildings will form a component of the plan the Advisory Board is required under the law to present to the City on January 1, 2023.

Int. 1947 proposes to move away from the considered approach to affordable housing taken thus far by superseding the work of the Advisory Board and its mechanisms for stakeholder engagement. It will place the same emissions limits that apply to market rate buildings to rent regulated buildings with a certain number of regulated units. In doing so, it will leave these buildings with a considerably shorter timeframe to come into compliance in 2024 than what was afforded to market rate buildings.

If passed, this abrupt change will cause a major disruption to the affordable housing sector in which many of our members live and work, and would come at an extremely precarious time for operators, tenants and workers. To comply with the expansion of the emissions cap, rent-regulated buildings above their mandated limit would need to begin work ahead of the first compliance period - for many that would mean immediately. This work simply may not be feasible for buildings that have lost revenue without unintended consequences occurring.

We are extremely concerned that passing this law now will cause harm to the affordable housing market, including to tenants and to our members. We urge you to trust the Advisory Board to continue its work and to allow a full and complete process of stakeholder engagement to be undertaken to determine the best way to reduce emissions in rent-regulated buildings.

**Oral Testimony**  
Before New York City Council  
**Committee on Environmental Protection**  
Tuesday September 22, 2020 – 11am

Liv Yoon  
Postdoctoral Research Scholar  
The Earth Institute, Columbia University  
Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University  
ly2512@columbia.edu

Good afternoon Chair Constantinides and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding Introduction 1947.

My name is Liv Yoon, and I'm a postdoctoral researcher at the Earth Institute and the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. I am also a resident of West Harlem, and a member of WE ACT for Environmental Justice. I am testifying today to express a dire need for Introduction 1947, to expand the number of buildings in NYC that have to severely reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Climate change is spinning out of control as we speak – cutting down emissions is no longer a choice but a must. An immediate must. Introduction 1947 would bolster Local Law 97 to guarantee rent-regulated buildings to shrink their carbon footprint, but not off the backs of tenants. This would add thousands of buildings to LL97, about 15-20% of regulated buildings, resulting in a significant reduction in green house gas emissions from the city.

We need to remember what this means in real life. Climate change is directly related to people's health. We're all in the same storm of the climate crisis, but we're not all in the same boats. Again and again, we see that people of color, of low-income are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis. This means hotter summers in areas with less green space, in homes with no A/C. This means more of our neighbors dying in communities like Harlem. We need to connect these dots between building emissions and people's health so greenhouse gas emissions don't feel like mere numbers.

New York City has to be a leader in this effort. Let's picture what this would signal – if a city as dense and as busy as NYC can cut down emissions, imagine what other cities around the country and the world will see as possible. We have an opportunity here to challenge a crisis of imagination. Sociologist Raymond Williams once said, "To be truly radical is to make hope possible, not despair convincing" – we have that opportunity here and now through this very concrete measure of Introduction 1947.

Thank you for your time and efforts towards this goal.

Sincerely,

Liv Yoon

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Liv Yoon, PhD. (she/her/hers)

Postdoctoral Research Scholar | The Earth Institute, Columbia University

ly2512@columbia.edu | 778-302-8567

MC 3277 Hogan Hall. 2910 Broadway. New York, NY 10025

Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health - Department of Sociomedical Sciences

Rm 904 - 722 West 168th St. New York, NY 10032

Tuesday, September 22, 2020, 11:00am

**Oral Testimony**

Before New York City Council  
Environmental Protection Committee

Emma Urofsky

My name is Emma Urofsky, I am an undergraduate Sustainable Development student at Columbia University, a recently certified LEED Green Associate, and a member of the community organization WE ACT for Environmental Justice. Through my studies and work with WE ACT, I learn time and time again how crucial an Environmental Justice framework is in fostering healthy and equitable environments. In the face of a web of interconnected crises, such environments are increasingly out of reach for more and more NYC residents.

Thank you for holding this hearing today and for allowing me the opportunity to testify before the New York City Council in support of Introduction 1947.

I am terrified of the Climate Crisis; the need to cut emissions, among many other mitigation and adaptation measures, has never been more urgent. It is not very common that an individual can have a say in how their city responds to Climate Change, so when this opportunity arose I could not pass it up. Community involvement is key, I am here to advocate on behalf of my community and urge you, City Council members, to vote yes on Introduction 1947.

Buildings are the single greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions in New York City, and as such this sector has the greatest potential for emission reduction. Already, tens of thousands of buildings are subject to Local Law 97, and are making the mandatory changes needed to reduce emissions. However, because any building with one or more affordable housing units is exempt, communities that rely on such housing are not benefiting as directly from pollution reduction. By expanding Local Law 97 to include buildings with less than 35% affordable units, low-income residents can benefit from emission reductions in their homes and communities without bearing the financial burden of making it happen. Making Introduction 1947 law will not only make New York City generally healthier, it will help facilitate a more equitable distribution of these health benefits.

I am in full support of expanding the reach of Local Law 97 by passing Introduction 1947. Having more buildings subject to this emission regulation, while also protecting low-income residents from bearing the costs of abiding by this regulation, is a step towards making sustainability more accessible in our city. I am dedicated to working toward a healthier, more accessible, more sustainable New York City. If you are too, vote yes on Introduction 1947.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Emma Urofsky



**City Council Committee on Environmental Protection  
September 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Phoebe Flaherty, I'm an Organizer at ALIGN: The Alliance for a Greater New York. ALIGN is a community-labor coalition dedicated to creating good jobs, vibrant communities, and an accountable democracy for all New Yorkers.

We co-coordinate the Climate Works for All coalition, a coalition of environmental justice groups, labor, and community organizations all working towards reducing emissions to fight climate change through the lens of a just transition. Through the work we led with Climate Works for All, we successfully won the passage of Local Law 97 in 2019.

Intro 1947 will amend LL 97 to move us more aggressively and more equitably towards our emissions reductions goals by including buildings that were left out Local Law 97 under the mandate moving forward. Buildings with rent regulated units were left out of the requirements of the law to protect tenants from rental increases that would have occurred at the time. However, because of comprehensive tenant protections passed in Albany later that year, tenants cannot be charged increases in rent from the cost of retrofits in buildings where 35% of units or fewer are rent regulated.

Intro 1947 will amend LL 97 to include buildings with fewer than 35% rent regulated units under the law. This will result in thousands more building retrofits in New York, and a more equitable distribution of retrofits throughout the city, meaning healthier and more comfortable homes for New Yorkers living in rent regulated units.

We urge the Committee on Environmental Protection to support this amendment to Local Law 97 so that we can move more aggressively and more equitably towards our climate goals.