

Intro Number 378
Testimony by The Sallan Foundation
The New York City Council
Committee on Environmental Protection
Thursday, October 23, 2014

My name is Nancy Anderson, Executive Director of the Sallan Foundation. Sallan is a New York City-based, independent, non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to advancing useful knowledge for greener cities. I am pleased to testify here and to offer strong support for Intro. Number 378, a bill that builds on and extends the goal of the City's Climate Protection Act, Local Law 22 of 2008.

It is clear that we must do more and we can do more, starting today, to be climate action leaders. It is also clear that much of this real hands-on innovation will arise at the urban scale. We are up to the task.

In order to act in the best interests of the City to provide for an increase in future reductions in citywide greenhouse gas emissions, I offer 5 recommendations for City Council action:

1. Companion legislation should be drafted to establish binding intermediary greenhouse gas reductions. Intermediary targets would foster and guide future City Council oversight hearings on the progress being made toward meeting the 80x50 goal and would also inform the Council's budget proposals and approvals.
2. Legislation should also require the Mayor's Office to produce an annual progress report on how the City is advancing in its efforts to meet the 80x50 goal.

3. The Council must ensure that the staffing needed for detailed 80x50 policymaking, implementation, relevant permit reviews and enforcement is made possible by adequate annual funding. This should start with the FY 16 City budget.
4. Everyone wants to be a winner. The Council should establish an Energy Reduction Race and use annual energy benchmarking data (required by Local Law 84) to award buildings that make the biggest cuts in their energy consumption. This Energy Reduction Race would be a great way to spotlight the importance of City's Benchmarking Law and elevate it above just "more paperwork". Philadelphia is doing this. New York should too.
5. The Council should facilitate creation of special 80x30 districts. These pioneers will need the commitment and capacity for nimbly taking advantage of City and State energy efficiency and clean energy programs to cut greenhouse gas emissions by improving the energy performance of their buildings and taking bold steps to decarbonize their heat and power supplies. Replicable energy efficiency projects and "test-bed", community-scale GHG-reducing heat and power systems like microgrids or renewable installations like solar power are the tools we must plug in now. By volunteering to lead the way, 80x30 districts will show all New Yorkers how to do it.