

Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to say a few words.

This spring the Institute for Policy Integrity released an updated analysis, which found that up to 259 lives per year could be saved in New York City if buildings switched to cleaner heating fuels. By removing the toxins emitted by these buildings' boilers, we reduce the number of New Yorkers suffering fatal heart attacks, chronic bronchitis, and asthma, and we save billions of dollars in health benefits.

The bill the Mayor will sign today does not reach that full potential, but it takes a tremendous step forward. The bill cuts the amount of sulfur and soot emitted by one of the dirtiest types of heating oils, and begins to incorporate renewable fuels into the city's heating oil supply.

This bill places New York City well on the path toward cleaner air, but we must continue moving forward. The City should continue to pursue legal options and economic incentives that can phase out use of the dirtiest heating oils and encourage building owners to switch to cleaner fuels like natural gas—both cost-benefit justified policies. In particular, a full conversion from residual oil to natural gas would generate \$22 billion in health benefits, \$6 billion in climate change benefits, and several billion more in financial savings for the city and its residents.

As the first piece of that puzzle, this bill delivers major dividends to the citizens of New York. Heart disease rates will go down, asthma cases will recede...it will literally become easier for New Yorkers to breathe.

Kudos go to the City Council Committee on Environmental Protection, its Chair Jim Gennaro, and Speaker Christine Quinn for identifying and championing this underreported health issue, and to the Mayor for signing the bill here today. We are proud to have participated in this debate, and we hope to continue to work closely with the City on other common-sense, economically-justified ways to clean the air and improve the health of New Yorkers.