

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 28, 2025

CONTACTS:

Nydia Gutiérrez, ngutierrez@earthjustice.org, (202) 302-7531
Winnie Marion, wmarion@council.nyc.gov, (929) 474-0156

NYC Lawmakers Discuss Pollution Control for Under-regulated Mega Warehouse Operations

Increased diesel truck traffic pollution from Mega Warehouses fill the streets with toxic air pollution causing public and environmental health harms

You can access photos & videos [HERE](#).

New York, NY – Today, the NYC Committee on Environmental Protection, Resiliency, and Waterfronts holds an [oversight hearing](#) to discuss local laws and city codes for the inclusion of regulations for indirect sources of air pollution out of last-mile mega warehouse operations. Currently, the under-regulated and increasing mega-warehouse traffic and diesel pollution contribute to public and environmental health harms.

As e-commerce continues to expand rapidly, showcasing record-breaking profits, the number of diesel delivery trucks on the road increases, leading to a rise in toxic air pollution. The trucks operating out of the warehouses pollute particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and volatile organic compounds, [worsening local air quality](#), and increasing the risk of [asthma](#), heart attacks, and [premature deaths](#) in surrounding neighborhoods. These mega-warehouses operate 24/7 and produce greenhouse gas emissions equal in scale to those from power plants and factories. The mega warehouse operations work through a regulatory loophole. The definition of warehouses does not currently reflect the modern-day use of e-commerce football field-sized mega warehouses and their 24/7/365 diesel truck traffic.

The recent e-commerce boom exacerbated the pollution burden faced by many communities of color and low-income communities. At all levels, [warehouses tend to be disproportionately located in Black, Hispanic/Latino, and low-income communities](#).

In New York City, 3 million people live within half a mile of a warehouse of which: Black residents are 17% more likely to live within half a mile of a warehouse, Hispanic/Latino residents are 13%, and low-income residents are 19% more likely to live within half a mile of a warehouse than would be expected based on the region's demographics.

Indirect Source Review (ISR) policies offer an innovative way to tackle our warehouse pollution problem. Legislation introduced by Councilmember Alexa Avilés requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to designate heavy-use thoroughfares in every borough and install street-level air monitors at a minimum at two major intersections on every designated heavy-use thoroughfare and at every park or playground adjacent to a heavy use thoroughfare.

With e-commerce skyrocketing and more consumers purchasing goods online, the number of delivery trucks on the road will increase, leading to a rise in greenhouse gas emissions. Without policies that regulate this growing industry, communities will continue to experience deadly pollution, and New York might not achieve its climate goals.

“For a long time, neighborhoods like mine have suffered as the result of the poor air quality, inflicted on us by the massive influx of large trucks on our roads,” **said Council Member Alexa Avilés.** “I’m proud that today the City Council is taking an important step forward for our city and our climate future by hearing my bills Int. 0107 and 1130. This legislation, once passed, will establish both an indirect source rule in New York City and set up a system to better monitor our air quality. Environmental justice communities will finally get some relief from the intense air pollution and dense traffic that unregulated last mile distribution facilities and their trucking have caused.”

“For too long, demands for the convenience of e-commerce deliveries have drowned out Brooklynites’ demands for clean air, safe streets, and healthy environments,” **said Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso.** “Our city’s failure to regulate these mega warehouses disproportionately burdening Black, Latino, and low-income communities with toxic pollution cannot continue. I thank Council Member Avilés for pursuing the action our neighbors need to be safe and healthy in the communities they have long called home.”

“Communities of color and low-income neighborhoods across New York City have borne the brunt of toxic air pollution caused by the rise of mega warehouses and the relentless stream of diesel truck traffic they generate,” **said New York City Council Majority Whip Selvena N. Brooks-Powers.** “Areas like Southeast Queens are already burdened by health disparities and now face even greater risks from toxic air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. As a co-prime sponsor of this important legislation, I am committed to advancing targeted solutions, like air monitoring and emissions reductions, to address these inequities and protect our most vulnerable residents. By holding polluters accountable and closing regulatory loopholes, we can prioritize public health, environmental justice, and a sustainable future for all New Yorkers.”

“For years, New Yorkers in manufacturing zones have been forced to bear unchecked pollution from delivery trucks serving e-commerce mega-warehouses like Amazon. As the assembly member representing the district with the highest concentration of these facilities in the state, I am committed to the fight for stronger regulations that prioritize public health, worker protections, safer streets, and the planet. Both Intro 1130, and its state equivalent, the Clean Deliveries Act, are important steps in protecting New Yorkers and our future,” **said Assembly Member Claire Valdez.**

“The growth of Amazon and last mile facilities in NYC is polluting our neighborhoods and harming workers. We can’t let corporations profit with abandon while our communities suffer. ALIGN strongly supports Intro 1130 to reduce emissions, prioritize health and safety, and make the last mile industry safe and sustainable for workers and our environment,” **said Theodore A. Moore, ALIGN Executive Director.**

“For years, Brooklyn Community Board 7 has been calling for a solution to the problems caused by last mile trucking facilities. These facilities unfairly burden our neighborhood with traffic congestion, dangerous streets, and poor air quality, increasing our already-elevated asthma rates. Legislation like the Indirect Source Rule is a step in the right direction to addressing this

inequitable burden placed on communities like Sunset Park and our neighbors in nearby Red Hook,” said **Katie Walsh, Brooklyn Community Board 7 Transportation Chair.**

“One-in-three New York City residents live within a half mile of a mega warehouse. The ease of online shopping may be a convenience for some, but a heavy burden for at least a third of New Yorkers,” said **Jaqi Cohen, Director of Climate and Equity Policy at Tri-State Transportation Campaign.** “All communities deserve safe streets and clean air, so it’s time for New York to hold e-commerce companies operating in our city accountable.”

“Toxic diesel truck pollution is choking our communities, disproportionately impacting those living near mega-warehouses and distribution hubs. These facilities contribute to a staggering level of harmful emissions, and the companies behind them must be held to a new standard that will grow clean zero-emission jobs and improve our air quality,” said **Jessica Enzmann, Senior Campaign Organizer Clean Transportation for All at the Sierra Club**

“Communities across the five boroughs have experienced the health impacts of last-mile e-commerce warehouses and the additional truck trips and air pollution they bring. Many of these facilities do not require any public or environmental review process to begin operating or spewing diesel fumes in neighborhoods,” said **Kevin Garcia, Senior Transportation Planner at the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance.** “This is an opportunity for the City to reduce the air pollution associated with these warehouses and provide relief for communities.”

“Hunts Point is feeling the overwhelming impact of the surge in traffic and air pollution due to the unregulated growth of last-mile warehouses. As a community that experiences over 15,000 daily truck trips, we need every tool to reduce the number of trucks coming into our neighborhood and air pollution,” said **Dariella Rodriguez, Director of Community Development for THE POINT CDC.** “This bill will protect the overall well-being and health of our community as we continue to live with these facilities.”

“Mega shipping facilities are taking over the industrial areas around Newtown Creek, bringing severe environmental impacts to air quality, urban heat island effect, and stormwater runoff. The indirect source rule is a critical step to mitigate harms, improve local air quality, and create better working conditions for local workers and residents alike,” said **Willis Elkins, Executive Director of the Newtown Creek Alliance.**

“**UPROSE** supports Intro-1130, a crucial bill to regulate air pollution from last-mile warehouses and mitigate their impact on Sunset Park. With six warehouses already in operation and the risk of more without proper oversight, this legislation is essential to reducing the community’s disproportionate air pollution burden. We thank Councilmember Alexa Avilés for her leadership and urge the City Council to pass this measure,” said **Elizabeth Yeampieree, Executive Director of UPROSE.**

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Learn more about mega warehouse pollution here:

<https://electrifyny.org/mega-warehouse-watchlist/>

ElectrifyNY is a statewide coalition of advocates for environmental justice, public transportation, social justice, and good jobs fighting for a clean, equitable electric transportation future for New York. Our work aims to improve the environment and public health outcomes for the communities most affected by the negative impacts of the transportation sector's dependency on fossil fuels.