



NEW YORK CITY LAW DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION COUNSEL

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Press Release

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NEW YORK CITY AND OTHERS URGE THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY TO CURB GREENHOUSE GASES FROM AIRCRAFT

FIVE STATES, TWO CITIES AND FIVE ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS JOIN A PETITION TO THE EPA

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New York, December 5, 2007 – New York City joined five states and others in petitioning the Environmental Protection Agency to adopt greenhouse gas regulations for aircraft. The petition urges the EPA to acknowledge that aircraft emissions significantly contribute to global warming and to take regulatory action.

The Clean Air Act authorizes the EPA to issue standards to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Earlier this year, the U.S. Supreme Court recognized in *Massachusetts v. EPA* that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases constitute air pollutants under the Clean Air Act. The petitioners requested the EPA to respond within six months.

According to a January 2005 report from the Federal Aviation Administration's Office, aircraft engine emissions are approximately 70 percent carbon dioxide. An April 2007 EPA report finds that, in 2005, aircraft contributed three percent of the United States' total carbon dioxide emissions and 12 percent of the U.S. transportation sector emissions. At the local level, the City's April 2007 inventory reports that New York City airports were responsible for at least 10.4 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions in 2005, representing 14 percent of citywide emissions.

"As home to two of the nation's largest airports, New York City is directly impacted by emissions from aircraft. We are committed to addressing climate change and improving our air quality, and are pleased to be a part of this action," said Corporation Counsel Michael A. Cardozo.

Rising temperatures resulting from global warming has several potential adverse impacts on New York City including:

- Compromised water supply from increased periods of drought
- More heat waves that contribute to deaths and hospitalizations of City residents, in particular, the frail and elderly
- Increase in asthma rates among children – New York City's asthma rates are twice the national average rate

"Petitioning the EPA to recognize and respond to the contributions that aircraft emissions make to global warming brings us closer to achieving PlaNYC's sustainability goals," said Susan Kath, Chief of the Environmental Law Division, who is handling this matter for the City.

The City is joining this petition as part of New York City's PlaNYC 2030 sustainability effort. PlaNYC seeks, in part, to improve the City's air quality and confront global warming. Other petitioners include California, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, New Mexico, Oregon, the District of Columbia, Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection, Oceana, Earth Justice, Friends of the Earth, Center for Biological Diversity, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

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