

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 5, 2023

Mayor Eric Adams
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Adams,

We write to you today regarding our concerns over the New York City Department of Environmental Protection's drafted rules to force small businesses to hire a third-party engineer or architect to assess the installation of emissions control devices to achieve a potential 75% reduction.

While we are committed to protecting the environment and ensuring the well-being of residents, this proposed rule poses significant challenges and the potential for negative consequences.

Imposing these requirements on small businesses, particularly those that rely on traditional coal- and wood-burning ovens, will prove to be detrimental. Each business faces a significant outlay of their hard-earned dollars if they are determined to be not in compliance with these stringent air filtration guidelines. These potential costs, including the hiring of an engineer or architect to conduct assessments, will prove to be financially detrimental for many small businesses, especially for our beloved pizzerias. This backwards environmental rule will almost certainly lead to the closure of these treasured establishments, causing people to lose their jobs and negatively impacting the local economy.

Coal- and wood-burning ovens have been integral to the traditional pizza-making process for centuries, with some brick ovens dating back as far as the Roman Empire. These ovens impart a unique flavor profile and texture that many patrons seek and appreciate. The installation of emission control devices, while well-intentioned, may alter the heat distribution and airflow within the oven, potentially affecting the end product. Bill de Blasio was known for eating a slice of pizza with a fork and knife – you don't want to be known for eliminating the perfect New York slice that we all know and love. We must carefully balance environmental concerns with preserving cultural traditions and culinary experiences cherished by New York residents and visitors alike.

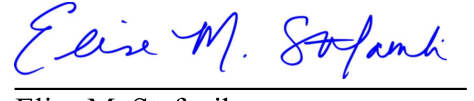
Furthermore, we encourage a broader examination of the environmental implications of this proposed rule. While reducing emissions is undoubtedly a goal for all, we must also consider the relatively minute impact of pizzerias on overall air quality compared to other industrial and transportation sectors. Singling out these small businesses, while larger polluters remain unaddressed, will not yield the same emissions reduction as other measures could.


We urge you to reconsider the proposed rule requiring pizzerias using coal- and wood-burning ovens to hire an engineer or architect to assess the feasibility of emission control devices. We must take a balanced approach that considers the financial implications on small businesses, and the potential impact on the taste and quality of pizza that all New Yorkers and tourists love and cherish, while keeping in mind the broader environmental context.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to exploring alternative approaches that address our shared concerns.


Sincerely,


Michael V. Lawler
Member of Congress


Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress


Marcus J. Molinaro
Member of Congress


Nick LaLota
Member of Congress


Andrew R. Garbarino
Member of Congress


Anthony D'Esposito
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