

S.1180-A (Gianaris)

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BILL S.1180-A (Gianaris)
SUBJECT "Indirect Source Review" program for Warehouses
DATE April 02, 2025
OPPOSE

The Business Council opposes this legislation would impose significant new construction and operational standards on "heavy distribution warehouses" (defined as fulfillment centers, parcel hubs and parcel sorting facilities) that are 50,000 ft² or larger or are of any size if owned and operated by an entity that operates in aggregate 500,000 ft² or more of heavy distribution warehouse space in New York. It would also apply to all "fulfillment centers" and "parcel hubs", regardless of size, if they are owned or operated by an entity with a warehouse that exceeds the bill's "heavy duty warehouse" size thresholds.

In air pollution control parlance, "indirect source" refers to buildings, facilities or roads that attract, or may attract, mobile sources of air pollution. As these emissions are not directly released by the facilities, they are outside the scope of facility-based air permitting programs.

While we recognize the need to manage indirect air emissions, we believe this legislation as proposed will have adverse economic development and environmental consequences. It could effectively prevent further warehouse development in New York, shifting new development and jobs out of state and increase drive times and distances for serving New York customers, resulting in increased regional and local air emissions.

Among the bill's provisions:

- new or modified "heavy distribution warehouse" facilities must obtain permits from the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) demonstrating that additional traffic will not result in a violation of, or exacerbation of, any national ambient air quality standard. To qualify for a permit, the facility operator must demonstrate that it has not violated any similar indirect source emissions rule "or any other federal, state or local air quality standards related to its logistics operations" in the two years prior to applying for such permits.
- new warehouses must meet the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED silver, gold or platinum standards, or any functionally equivalent standards.
- DEC is directed to adopt additional regulations, within eighteen months of the bill's effective date, for further emission reductions, which could include measure such as use of zero-emission vehicles, use of "alternatives to truck or van trips" for incoming and outgoing deliveries, installing solar generation and energy storage equipment, or others. These rules will also require notifications to a facility's employees about pending job changes, related training opportunities, and other information, and

specifically requires prior agreement by any affected union. These rules will also require enhanced operational reporting, with public disclosure.

- DEC is also required to, within eighteen months of the bill's approval, report on the feasibility, costs and benefits of implementing "low and zero-emissions designated zones" for medium and heavy-duty vehicles, including delivery vehicles.

While the bill is intended to regulate air emissions from vehicles associated with heavy distribution warehouse facilities, it goes well beyond that focus by addressing building standards, and employment and operations mechanisms.

Because of this bill's broad scope, impacting new and existing facilities statewide, and its lack of specifics (leaving significant discretion to DEC to devise and impose operational mandates on warehouses), we believe the bill needs additional stakeholder input regarding impacts on local zoning laws and grid reliability, the availability of new technologies, and its impact on statewide economic development and on e-commerce customers.

Its impact on the cost and timetable for developing new facilities could significantly reduce construction of new warehouses and impede improvements to existing warehouses, pushing growth into neighboring states, resulting in increased drive times and distance to serve New York customers. These added delivery distances disrupt a complex delivery network and could result in increased emissions and congestion – the opposite of the bill's stated purpose.

The proposed combination of applicability thresholds for single-facility (50,000 square feet) and aggregate (500,000 total square feet in the state) means that a single warehouse could subject all of company's facilities within the State to these new mandates and stifle green innovation in last mile delivery. For example, there is growing popularity to deliver via e-bikes in urban centers, but if micromobility hubs which tend to be much smaller – approx. 5,000-10,000 square feet - are captured under this legislation – causing them to have to meeting rigorous building standards and reporting requirements, companies will likely halt these micromobility efforts and instead deliver goods from out of State via truck and van.

We also believe this bill encroaches on local land use decision-making. Local governments are better equipped to manage land use and zoning issues and evaluate proposed development projects. Since the impacts of warehouse-related emissions are not consistent across the state, mitigation solutions should be tailored locally to both effectively manage air quality and optimize economic development opportunities.

Finally, the requirements of this proposed bill would significantly impact development investment within New York. E-commerce and distribution businesses contribute substantially to local economies by creating high-quality jobs, by growing the tax base, and through other direct and indirect investments in the community. Reduced development will have an adverse impact on regional economies within the state.

For these reasons, The Business Council opposes adoption of this legislation.