**Rebuttals to Intro 1253 Opponent’s Arguments**

**“This bill will cost buildings too much money”**

Energy efficiency saves money. Building owners can choose which energy efficiency solutions they prefer to get the biggest cost savings. The large majority of buildings will only need to cut their energy use modestly. And the most high-efficiency buildings already are better than the standards the bill sets.

**“This bill is impossible for some buildings to comply with because they are very inefficient… they need to do too much and it’s not feasible for them to do so.”**

It’s true that the worst polluting buildings need to do the most to clean up. That’s a fair principle set by this legislation. These are buildings like Trump Tower, which is in the 5% most polluting buildings by square foot. It needs a lot of work. But since these types of buildings are wasting the most energy, they stand to save the most money by upgrading to higher energy efficiency. They have to do more work, but it also saves the most money. And cleaning them up cleans the air the most. It also creates a large number of skilled jobs to do that work, which will employ a lot of people, helping create the good jobs our communities need.

**“But there are also buildings that are unusual and can’t do this economically.”**

The bill includes a variance process that buildings which for some reason are unusually difficult to clean up. They will need to demonstrate that they have consulted with efficiency experts and attempted to qualify for state and city programs that would help pay for upgrades. If they can show they are in fact unusual and cannot comply with the law, they can get a variance. But the vast majority of buildings can and should comply with the law, and will save money doing so.”

**“If energy efficiency saves money, won’t the market just get this done?”**

That’s what the real estate industry argued to kill an attempt by then-Mayor Bloomberg to set standards. They said that building owners would do it voluntarily. Unfortunately, there’s now a decade of evidence across the country that legislation is needed. There are 2 main problems. First, many building owners want fast, high returns on equity and profits. They won’t do projects that save money if the payback period is longer than about 2 years because their time horizon is short. Second, many building owners don’t want to bother with the work, and just want to run the building the same way they always have run the building… even if that costs them money. For example, consider all those apartments where its so hot in the winter in the apartment that people have to open up their windows. That’s a huge waste of money and a lot of pollution from the waste. But the building doesn’t fix it because it’s just easier not to do anything. That’s no longer acceptable because we can’t simply ignore the problem anymore. The UN and the world’s scientists say we have 12 years to cut pollution by almost half. That means buildings can’t keep wasting energy like that. That’s why it’s so important to pass Intro 1253.

**“Hospitals can’t comply with this bill. It will put them out of business.”**

That’s just not true. The legislation has specific standards tailored to hospitals, which use a lot of energy and therefore cause a lot of air pollution. There is no reason for hospital to be exempted from cutting their pollution. Instead, the legislation sets a standard that is carefully set to be achievable *and* maximize the cuts in air pollution. Right now, only 4 New York City hospitals are over the pollution level set by this legislation. That’s an appropriate level to begin pollution cuts from these institutions. Hospitals, of any institution, ought to be conscious of the air pollution they are creating. They should become more energy efficient too, and just like with any buildings, energy efficiency improvements pay for themselves over time. That will save hospitals money.

**“Churches and other religious institutions can’t comply with this bill”**

That’s simply not true. The legislation has specific standards tailored to religious institutions, which also create air pollution just like any other buildings. Religious institutions accept that they have a moral mission not to cause harm, so reducing their air pollution is part of their missions to be socially responsible. They should become more energy efficient too, and just like with any buildings, energy efficiency improvements pay for themselves over time. That will save religious institutions money.

**“Non profit organizations and social service providers can’t comply with this bill”**

There’s nothing special about non-profits buildings. They are just like any other buildings, which need to be upgraded, and in the process they are very likely to save money. If for some reason, a non profit building is somehow very unusual, it can apply for a variance for the standards, and get an exemption. But that won’t be necessary for the vast majority of buildings, which can get the work done to cut their pollution and save money in the process.

**“The bill should require percentage reductions in air pollution, not set inflexible, fixed levels.”**

The bill sets a simple level for buildings by occupancy and type of use, so buildings are measured against other similar buildings by occupancy and use. That’s a much simpler, less complicated method of setting a standard. Building owners know exactly what level they need to achieve. It’s easy to explain and easy enforce. The levels are also reasonable and achievable, and will achieve about 40% reductions in pollution by 2030, which is in twelve years. That’s the level that the world needs to achieve to prevent the worst effects of climate change, which if they happen will put New York City underwater. We can’t let that happen. Fortunately, this crisis is an opportunity to create many, good, sustainable jobs for our communities in upgrading the city’s buildings.