

LIVE ANIMAL MARKET BAN

An act to amend the agriculture and markets law, in relation to prohibiting the operation of establishments where animals and/or fowls are slaughtered and butchered for food.

A2421 Assembly Member Rosenthal L.	S5017 Senator Sepulveda L.
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REFERRED TO: AGRICULTURE, A/M Lupardo, Chair	REFERRED TO: AGRICULTURE, Senator Hinchey, Chair



Animals are kept in close, dirty, inhumane living quarters where they are then slaughtered in sometimes unsterile ways.

BACKGROUND:

- Live markets are cruel because the animals are kept in cramped, overcrowded and squalid living quarters. They are often sick and injured and are not fed or given water. The species sold in these markets typically include chickens, ducks, turkey and other fowl, as well as mammals such as rabbits, goats, sheep and cows.
- Despite being issued a litany of violations in New York City, these markets still operate in deplorable conditions and continue to present health risks to the surrounding residential and retail communities because of unsanitary conditions, disposal issues and the poor air quality they generate which contribute to asthma and respiratory diseases. They also pose a health hazard to the customers who buy their food there.
- In November 2022 avian influenza was found in a live market in Queens, resulting in the killing of 170 birds. In 2023 avian flu was found in two live markets in Brooklyn. In February 2025 seven cases of avian flu were found in markets in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens resulting in a temporary shutdown of all markets in New York City, Westchester, Nassau and Suffolk counties. These outbreaks have not stopped and were reported again in markets in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, as well as in Onondaga County. The most current finding was this February.
- Many zoonotic diseases, which originate in animals and are then transmitted to humans, such as SARS, H5N1 and Covid-19 have their origins in live animal markets.
- As reported in the NYT in January: "The commingling of people and various species at live animal markets – including in New York City - offers countless opportunities for viruses to swap mutations and gain new abilities".
- We are less prepared for an outbreak now as the Trump administration dismantled biosecurity work at the CDC, gutted the WHO of pandemic preparedness, and cut support for the surveillance of pandemic threats in the U.S. and abroad. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy has called the stockpiled shots of H5N1 "dangerous" and cancelled nearly \$600 million in contracts to develop a bird flu vaccine using mRNA.
- This bill would eliminate one major source of such deadly outbreaks and other diseases, improve the quality of life for those living and working near these markets, and put an end to the suffering the animals in these markets endure.
- Bill A2421/S5017 will prohibit the operation of establishments where animals and/or fowls are slaughtered or butchered for food; establishes a task force on public health risks and animal welfare concerns of slaughterhouses.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BILL:

- The purpose of this law is to eliminate one potential vector for the transmission of zoonotic diseases, live animal markets, and the suffering it causes there from at least until there is further examination by infectious disease experts of the nexus between zoonotic diseases and live animal markets.
- Prohibition of the operation of establishments where animals and/or fowls are slaughtered for food.
- A task force on public health risks and animal welfare concerns of slaughterhouses is hereby established. Such task force shall conduct and complete a thorough examination of facilities heretofore licensed by the department under this article and their effect on public health and safety and animal welfare.
- Such task force shall make a report of its findings to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, and the speaker of the assembly within one year of the date of the first meeting of the task force, which shall take place within thirty days of the appointment of the task force representatives.
- Such report shall include recommendations for further action and legislation.
- Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to any facilities other than live poultry or small animal slaughterhouses pursuant to this article which are open to the public.