

DAILY NEWS

Peddler bill gets Bloomberg's rush

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THE CITY Council's controversial peddler's bill got panned yesterday by the Bloomberg administration as an unworkable regulatory scheme.

Representatives of three city agencies assailed key aspects of the voluminous bill during a hearing of the Consumer Affairs Committee.

The Police Department specifically criticized a provision that declares all city streets open to vending, except under temporary "exigent" circumstances. No street would be permanently banned to peddlers, as is now the case in parts of the city.

The "unrestricting" of all streets to vending would be coupled with a limitation of three vendors on each side of the street on any given block, which works out to six vendors per block.

Under the bill, individual vendors would get to operate on specific blocks under a priority system generally based on what they sell and how long they've held their licenses.

Peddlers would be able to bump those with lesser priority, setting off an "inevitable increase in disputes, possibly violent," testified Assistant Police Commissioner Susan Petito.

Petito said that enforcement of the bill would detract from the NYPD's missions of counterterrorism, driving down crime and addressing quality-of-life violations of every type.

Other concerns about the bill also were raised by officials of the Health Department and the Consumer Affairs Department. Their criticisms add to the chorus of complaints and objections to the bill, known as Intro 621, voiced last month by vendors, civic groups, merchants and business leaders.

Undaunted, several Council members defended their effort to dramatically revamp a morass of regulations covering thousands of vendors — considered a nuisance by many New Yorkers and a welcome convenience by many others.

Councilman John Liu (D-Queens) scolded Bloomberg administration representatives for blasting the bill without offering reforms of their own.

"All you do is point out what's wrong with what we've proposed," Liu said.

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