



**For Immediate Release: May 12, 2017**

Contact: Juanita Scarlett: 917-280-4885 – RAANYC and PS: Recycle It  
Brian Grossman: 202-249-6509 - ACC

## **NYC Restaurant Owners, Business Leaders, Environmental Advocates and Community Activists Voice Strong Support for Intro 1480**

### ***The Progressive Legislation Creates a Curbside Program to Recycle Polystyrene Foam***

**NEW YORK (May 12, 2017)** – The Restaurant Action Alliance, New York State Business Council and small business owners today joined with concerned New Yorkers from across the city and state to urge the New York Council to pass Intro 1480 – progressive legislation that would expand curbside recycling to include polystyrene foam. The bill, which is sponsored by Fernando Cabrera and Donovan Richards, has twenty (20) co-sponsors who represent incredibly diverse communities across the City.

“I’m proud to sponsor this progressive legislation that responds to the needs of small business owners from communities across New York City,” said Councilman Fernando Cabrera, the primary sponsor of the bill. “A program to recycle 100% of polystyrene foam is good for the environment, good for consumers and good for the City because it would help reduce greenhouse gases, avoid landfill costs and generate much-needed revenue for the City.”

“Intro 1480 is excellent public policy. It is good for the environment and it heeds the cries of small businesses, especially restaurant entrepreneurs, who are struggling to survive,” said Akisha Freeman, Manager of Sugar Hill Restaurant and President of the Restaurant Action Alliance. “Foam is essential for small, specialty and ethnic restaurants everywhere. As we struggle to compete with increasing mandates, this bill would help cut our daily costs of doing business.”

“For decades, the restaurant industry has been a driving force in New York’s economy - generating tremendous revenue for the city and state and creating jobs that build futures for families. But the industry is hurting, and in need of programs that reduce the cost of doing business here,” said Darren Suarez, President of the New York State Business Council. “Passage of Intro 1480 would send a strong message that New York City is open for business.”

Moving to virtually 100% recycling of polystyrene is the right thing to do because it saves the City more than \$3 million annually in landfill costs and generates millions of dollars in revenue. In fact, the recycling markets for foam are actually more profitable than steel cans, glass and cardboard materials.

Conversely, a ban on foam would add \$51 million in annual costs to the City, its consumers and businesses. Plus, science shows that recycling foam is a positive step for the environment – foam replacements such as paper cups with corrugated sleeves can create five (5) times the amount of solid waste and are more expensive to use.

Foam has been recycled for more than 20 years in cities, towns and communities across the globe. Under the proposed bill, post-consumer foam would be collected in the existing residential recycling program along with metal cans and plastic bottles.

Passage of Intro 1480 would also help the City attain Mayor DeBlasio's laudable goals under OneNYC of achieving Zero Waste by 2030. It is virtually impossible to ban all foam; in fact the City's recent attempt to ban foam would cover a little more than 20% of polystyrene products, leaving 80% to be landfilled. By contrast, Intro 1480 allows for virtually 100% recycling of polystyrene foam.

"When looking at all the facts, the legislation is clearly the best option for the environment, small businesses, taxpayers and the City," said Michael Westerfield, Corporate Director of Recycling Programs at Dart Container Corporation. "We applaud the leaders in the Council who are sponsoring and supporting Intro 1480, and we urge the members of the Sanitation Committee to take up the banner as well."

"The American Chemistry Council (ACC) supports Intro 1480, which will add polystyrene foam to New York City's recycling program, as is a growing trend in communities around the country," said Mike Levy, senior director for the ACC's Plastics Foodservice Packaging Group. "ACC congratulates Council leaders in joining cities such as Madison County, New York and Yonkers, New York, which have expanded their programs to recycle plastics foodservice materials, such as polystyrene, and polystyrene foam foodservice."

Environmental activists, clergy members and community leaders also testified at the hearing in support of Intro 1480.

#####