

****PRESS RELEASE****

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Council Member Eva Moskowitz To Introduce Bill Curbing Noisy Car Alarms

New York, NY – New York City Council Member Eva S. Moskowitz (D-Manhattan) will introduce a bill on Wednesday that will eliminate most audible burglar alarms in motor vehicles in New York City. The bill would allow police officers to issue tickets to owners of motor vehicles whose alarms were found going off, and would provide a phone number for citizens to call to report incidents of car alarm noise to the police.

Eva Moskowitz took up the car alarm issue after receiving numerous calls for action from her constituents. “Noise from car alarms substantially diminishes our quality of life in New York City,” Eva Moskowitz said. “These alarms, in almost all cases, are activated not by potential car thieves, but by accidental contact, technical malfunctions, or a large truck going by.”

Since Mayor Michael Bloomberg introduced the 311 telephone information system, almost half of the calls the city has been receiving are noise complaints. In fact, the New York Times reported that from March 9 to April 21 received 20,260 noise complaints, compared with 3,526 pothole complaints, 1,305 broken street light complaints, and 2,856 income tax questions. Audible car alarms account for many of these noise complaints.

According to U.S. Census Bureau 2001, more people surveyed were bothered by traffic noise (11.4%) than by any other cause, including crime. The advocacy group Transportation Alternatives conducted a survey in which they found that 91% of respondents in New York City said that car alarm noise diminishes their quality of life, and that 76% had trouble sleeping because of audible car alarms. The Progressive Insurance Company did a survey that found that less than 1% of respondents would call the police upon hearing a car alarm go off.

“I have had my share of auto thefts,” Mrs. Moskowitz said. “Growing up, our family car was stolen several times. So no one can say that I am unsympathetic to auto theft. It’s just that car alarms did not deter the theft of my old family car, and they don’t deter theft today. These alarms are a substantial nuisance to the quality of life of all New Yorkers, and they have minimal value in protecting cars.”