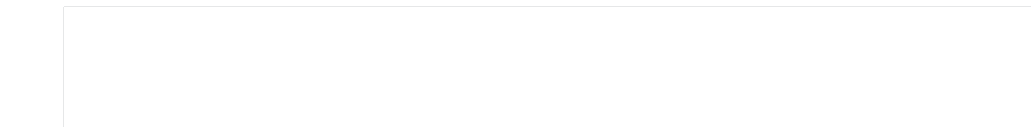


LOCAL NEWS >

# Exclusive: New York City urges Gov. Kathy Hochul to veto Buy American Salt Act



BY MARCIA KRAMER  
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**NEW YORK** -- You could call it the law of unintended consequences.

A "Buy American" bill passed by the Legislature could cost New York City millions of dollars more to de-ice the streets next winter, and Department of Sanitation Commissioner Jessica Tisch is urging Gov. Kathy Hochul to come to the rescue, CBS2's Marcia Kramer reported exclusively on Wednesday.

They say the road to hell is paved with good intentions, but Tisch is hoping Big Apple roads are not suddenly paved -- de-iced, actually -- with some very expensive chemicals. In fact, she's begging the governor not to -- pardon the term -- rub salt in the wound. She wants her to veto a bill that would require New York City to buy the salt it uses on roads during the winter domestically from either upstate or the Midwest.

"I am all for buying American salt, but not if it comes at the cost of paralyzing American cities during snowstorms," Tisch said.

A major impetus for the Buy American Salt Act is that New York State has two upstate salt mines, including American Rock Salt near Rochester, and they want the business. The bill claims that "... Competition with foreign salt operations has recently harmed each mine. For example, in 2019, a mine near Rochester laid off 260 employees when non-U.S. companies were awarded over \$18.8 million in state contracts."



New York City currently buys its road salt from Chile. Tisch says the bill, if signed, would cause a multitude of problems, not the least of which is cost. The commissioner told Kramer it would add \$5 million to \$10 million to New York City's annual \$16 million salt bill.

There is also a concern about the increase in truck traffic and what that would do to the environment.

"We get 700 million pounds of salt into New York City every year through five or six barge trips. If we were forced to buy domestically, instead of five or six barge trips, we would require 10,000 long-haul truck trips," Tisch said. "It seems to be contrary to the environmental

goals we have."

A spokesperson for the governor told CBS2 the bill is "under review." Hochul has until Dec. 31 to make a decision, and since she has 400 bills on her desk, it's not clear whether she'll make up her mind before city plows have to cope with a major snowfall.

The bill is also being supported by New York labor unions who, sources say, have been lobbying for it.

In: [New York State Legislature](#) [Kathy Hochul](#) [New York City](#)

**Marcia Kramer**



Marcia Kramer joined CBS2 in 1990 as an investigative and political reporter. Prior to CBS2, she was the City Hall bureau chief at the New York Daily News.



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