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12 March 2009

Re: Memo of Support for A1248: Teleworking Expansion Act

Title of Bill: An act to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to teleworking programs

Purpose of Bill: To reduce vehicular congestion in Manhattan by encouraging teleworking for individuals employed by New York City agencies.

Summary of Specific Bill Provisions: The bill amends the New York City Administrative Code by adding section 12-140 to require New York City agencies to establish teleworking programs.

Statement in Support: Traffic congestion creates negative economic and health related externalities. In particularly dense urban environments, like New York City, the implications are compounded, as millions of people live and work in close proximity to streets or highways.

A 2006 report issued by the Partnership for New York City estimated that more than \$13 billion a year in losses to the New York Metropolitan Region can be directly attributed to traffic congestion. Furthermore, it is anticipated that congestion will continue to increase, as Manhattan-bound traffic moving through the region is projected to increase by more than 20 percent over the next two decades.

A 2007 report by the Environmental Defense Fund, *Heavy Traffic, Dirty Air, And The Risk To New Yorkers*, found that “over two million people live within 500 feet of a congested street or highway. Furthermore, large numbers of health facilities, schools, and playgrounds are located within this 500-foot zone. A city as densely constructed and populated as New York must take notice of the health risks from motor vehicle air pollution and act to reduce them.”

One effective response to traffic congestion is the facilitation of teleworking. As posited in a 2008 New York State Department of Transportation study for the New York State Congestion Mitigation Commission, teleworking “may contribute to congestion management as one of a larger set of transportation demand management strategies.”

On both the state and federal level, governments have established successful teleworking programs. For example, Arizona has secured a teleworking rate of 20% in certain counties, leading to increases in productivity, efficiency, and job attitude in addition to reductions in traffic congestion, air pollution and energy consumption. *Teleworkarizona* estimates that nearly 100,000

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Phoenix area residents who telework just one day a week save over 900,000 miles of travel and more than 16 tons of pollution per day. Within federal agencies, over 100,000 employees participate in its teleworking program. This program is further supported by *telework.gov*, a comprehensive resource aimed at facilitating teleworking by individual employees.

Transportation Alternatives supports A1248, the Teleworking Expansion Act, and its objective to increase teleworking by employees of New York City agencies.

Fiscal Impact: Minimal

Effective Date: Ninety Days after enactment