

Pritzker offers to call special session on Sterigenics after claiming Durkin indicated “deficiencies” in his own bill

Thursday, Jul 18, 2019

Gov. Pritzker and AG Raoul Issue Statements on Sterigenics

Stress Risks to Health and Safety of Willowbrook Residents of Continuing Litigation

Statement from Governor JB Pritzker:

“Leader Durkin and other local leaders in the General Assembly were the drafters of Senate Bill 1852, the legislation that imposes the strongest controls on ethylene oxide in the nation. My office made it clear to the legislators that I was – and remain – willing to sign the strongest possible legislation that they can pass. I share the community’s concerns and their health and safety is my top priority. This morning, I spoke with Leader Durkin and I emphasized, based on conversations with the Attorney General, the potential danger to the health and safety of the residents of Willowbrook involved in further litigation, which would not have achieved the same level of protection as the consent order. Leader Durkin seemed to indicate that there were deficiencies in the legislation written by himself and other local leaders in the General Assembly that helped inform the consent order. At this time, the only option remaining is for Leader Durkin to propose new legislation that will fix the perceived shortcomings of the legislation that he sponsored and worked to pass. I made it clear to Leader Durkin this morning that, if he requests it, I will call a special session of the legislature to allow for an immediate vote on a bill that is constitutional and will fix the perceived shortcomings of the legislation he previously sponsored.”

Statement from Attorney General Kwame Raoul:

“As Attorney General, it is my responsibility to enforce laws passed by the Illinois General Assembly, and I applaud Leader Durkin, Rep. Mazzochi, Sen. Curran, and all the lawmakers who worked diligently to craft and pass the strict standards in Senate Bill 1852. The consent order my office filed jointly with the DuPage County State’s Attorney Bob Berlin imposes every emissions reduction requirement of the new law and goes further. Under the new law, emissions reduction requirements are not effective until Dec. 18 – under the consent order, Sterigenics will not be able to reopen until it is able to meet those requirements. The suggestion that continuing the litigation over the seal order would provide greater protection to residents is inaccurate and uninformed. The very real risk that continued litigation could result in Sterigenics being able to reopen before installing any new emissions controls – while still operating under its existing permit that authorized it to emit 36,400 pounds of EtO per year – was unacceptable. The new law imposes new certification requirements, but, through litigation, Sterigenics attempted to exploit a loophole in the law to avoid those requirements. Through the consent order, we eliminated that loophole. Sterigenics will now always be subject to the certification requirements that area legislators insisted be included in the law. The final result is that, combined with the Matt Haller Act, the consent order ensures that Sterigenics will not reopen unless and until it installs new emissions controls that will reduce its emissions to no more than 85 pounds of EtO per year. Our office has met with legislators, local officials, and representatives from the community to explain how the consent order implements current law and provides additional enforcement tools, and we will continue to address questions.”

Source: <https://capitolfax.com/2019/07/18/pritzker-offers-to-call-special-session-on-sterigenics-after-claiming-durkin-indicated-deficiencies-in-his-own-bill/?ut>