



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0637-2018, **Version:** A

Res. No. 637-A

Resolution calling on the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the New York State Department of Health to create a special commission to address health emergencies and infectious diseases.

By Council Members Eugene, Ayala, Vallone, Louis, Barron and Rivera

Whereas, Diseases know no borders, and a health crisis in one country could easily spread to several countries in the blink of an eye; and

Whereas, In 2014, an Ebola Virus epidemic in Africa spread across the world over the course of the year, with 10 patients being treated in the United States; and

Whereas, New York State was monitoring the spread of Ebola and had months to make preparations, yet many isolation units were still not prepared when Ebola struck New York; and

Whereas, In recent years, the United States has seen potentially dangerous strains of avian flu and multidrug-resistant strains of tuberculosis take root in other countries; and

Whereas, Middle East respiratory syndrome, or MERS, is a contagious disease first reported in 2012 in Saudi Arabia that has killed many, though little is known about it; and

Whereas, In recent years, the U.S. experienced measles outbreaks, including large outbreaks in New York City; and

Whereas, A novel coronavirus, called SARS-CoV-2, first emerged in late 2019 and spread rapidly around the world; and

Whereas, The virus has greatly impacted New York City, which was the epicenter of the pandemic for months; and

Whereas, As of July 19, 2020, 218,159 residents of New York City had tested positive for the disease

caused by SARS-CoV-2, called COVID-19, with over 55,000 hospitalized for treatment; and

Whereas, Over 23,000 residents of New York City have died from COVID-19, with the virus disproportionately impacting New Yorkers who are Black, Latinx, and older; and

Whereas, New diseases are constantly emerging and old ones adapt to resist current treatments; and

Whereas, The next outbreak could develop unexpectedly and the United States and New York State need to be prepared to quickly identify, treat and contain infectious diseases and other health emergencies; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the New York State Department of Health to create a special commission to address health emergencies and infectious diseases.

CP/EB
LS# 1834
07/20/2020