



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 0096-2006, **Version:** A

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### Proposed Res. No. 96-A

Resolution calling upon the Congress and President of the United States to provide a specific allocation of funding for video security systems at New York City Housing Authority developments.

By Council Members Vallone Jr., Fidler, Gentile, Mendez, Nelson, Weprin, Dilan, Mark-Viverito, James, Jackson and Oddo

Whereas, The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) is the nation's largest housing authority with approximately 345 developments and 2,700 buildings comprising 181,000 units and 420,000 authorized tenants; and

Whereas, Testimony from representatives of NYCHA before the New York City Council on November 22, 2004, indicated that NYCHA's capital needs totaled \$5 billion for Fiscal Year (FY) 2004, of which approximately \$350 million was actually received from the federal government; and

Whereas, NYCHA had a \$303 million operating deficit for FY 2004; and

Whereas, Fifteen high crime NYCHA developments have been targeted and are currently equipped with a technologically advanced video security system, known as the Video Interactive Patrol Response Enforcement system (VIPER); and

Whereas, All VIPER systems are constantly monitored from a central location by the New York City Police Department; and

Whereas, There has been a demonstrated decrease in crime in these 15 NYCHA VIPER-equipped developments, since 1997, when the City first began installing VIPER systems; and

Whereas, There are currently only eight additional NYCHA developments with security cameras installed, known as closed circuit televisions (CCTVs); and

Whereas, Such CCTVs are not monitored by the Police Department but the videotapes made are kept on file for a certain period of time by employees of NYCHA; and

Whereas, Funding for all eight CCTV systems were allocated through individual Council Member capital allocations; and

Whereas, New York City continues to face significant budget deficits; and

Whereas, Although overall crime has dropped significantly over the past decade in NYCHA developments, in 2003, 16% of shootings and 11% of murders in the City occurred in NYCHA developments while its residents account for approximately 5% of the City's entire population; and

Whereas, These statistics demonstrate a current and increasing need for video security systems at NYCHA developments while taking into account the first amendment and other civil liberties concerns; and

Whereas, According to a June 2004, Council report, "NYCHA Housing: Access Granted (Council Report)," there is a need for more video security systems at NYCHA developments; and

Whereas, According to the Council Report, investigators surveyed a random sample of twenty-five (25) NYCHA developments that consisted of four hundred and seventy-nine (479) buildings and were able to enter forty-seven percent (47%) of such buildings with ease, without a key or entry card, due mainly to broken front door locks, propped open doors and because people let them in the buildings; and

Whereas, The Council Report also found that eighty-four percent (84%) of the buildings surveyed did not have a single video security camera installed at an entrance; and

Whereas, New York City is constantly under a terrorist alert, and that in addition to the above areas of concern, additional security systems at NYCHA developments could help to prevent terrorist attacks at those developments located in close proximity to City bridges, which have been identified as intended targets of terrorist attacks; and

Whereas, According to a New York Post article published on December 1, 2004, one United States Senator from New York was recently able to secure \$400,000 in federal funding for security cameras at three

hundred (300) bodegas in New York City; and

Whereas, Considering that federal funding was available for security cameras at bodegas in the City, NYCHA certainly has a demonstrated need for security systems at their developments; and

Whereas, NYCHA has taken into account the First Amendment and other civil liberties issues and must continue to do so; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Congress and President of the United States to provide a specific allocation of funding for video security systems at New York City Housing Authority developments.

A-version, 10-19-06 1:00PM