



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1000

Resolution calling upon the Governor and State Legislature to adjust the current level of the non-shelter portion of the public assistance grant to match cost of living increases, and to establish a commission to investigate regularly the adequacy of public assistance grant levels.

By Council Members Foster, Brewer, Comrie, Gerson, James and Gonzalez

Whereas, The national consumer price index annual average for all urban consumers, indicative of both cost of living and inflationary change, has increased approximately 148 percent from 1991 to 2006; and

Whereas, The increase in the consumer price index for New York City in particular has exceeded the national average, increasing by approximately 152 percent from 1991 to 2006; and

Whereas, According to the Hunger Action Network of New York State, the prices of many basic necessities have increased substantially over the past 16 years: a half-gallon of milk cost \$.68 in 1990 and \$1.32 in 2006, a 94 percent increase; one dozen eggs cost \$.48 in 1990 and \$.89 in 2006, an 85 percent increase; Dimetapp cough syrup cost \$2.66 in 1990 and \$5.99 in 2006, a 125 percent increase; and Brawny paper towels cost \$.48 in 1990 and \$1.99 in 2006, a 315 percent increase; and

Whereas, The approximately 360,000 low income New Yorkers who receive public assistance are particularly affected by these substantial increases in the cost of living; and

Whereas, The non-shelter portion of the public assistance grant for New York State is currently \$291 per month for a family of three, an amount that has not increased since 1990; and

Whereas, If a public assistance grant of \$291 were adjusted for the cost of living increases incurred between 1990 to the present, the grant amount would grow from \$291 to \$450; and

Whereas, Without implementing (i) an immediate cost of living adjustment for the public assistance non

-shelter grant and (ii) a regular mechanism for reviewing the necessity of such adjustments, hundreds of thousands of low income New Yorkers will experience increasing difficulty in affording the basic items they require to provide for the health and safety of their families; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Governor and State Legislature to adjust the current level of the non-shelter portion of the public assistance grant to match cost of living increases, and to establish a commission to investigate regularly the adequacy of public assistance grant levels.

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