



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 54

Resolution calling upon the appropriate committee of the Council to hold an oversight hearing regarding what actions are being taken by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in order to address disparities in life expectancy between poor communities of color and wealthy communities in New York City.

By Council Members Foster, Dickens, James, Mark-Viverito, Mendez, Sanders Jr., Weprin, Yassky and Liu

Whereas, On July 15, 2004, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) released a report, entitled “Health Disparities in New York City” (the “Report”), which found that the life expectancy rate is eight years lower in poor and communities of color than in wealthy communities in New York City; and

Whereas, The Report found that residents of New York City’s poorest neighborhoods consistently have higher mortality rates from almost all diseases, compared with residents of its wealthiest neighborhoods, and are more than three times as likely to die of diabetes, high blood pressure and liver disease, and more than six times as likely to die of AIDS; and

Whereas, The Report also found that residents of lower income neighborhoods were over 20 percent more likely to die a premature death; and

Whereas, DOHMH decided in January of 2003, to combat health and death rates disparities by establishing new district public health offices that work through already existing public health offices in order to better address such issues; and

Whereas, DOHMH’s website notes that district public health offices are located in neighborhoods that have had persistent, across-the-board problems with community health, and work to reduce illness and death by bringing public health professionals closer to the community they serve; and

Whereas, A Daily News article from August 15, 2004, entitled “Doc steps up attack on health disparities,” reported that the new Brooklyn public health office is working to reduce health disparities in Bushwick by establishing free exercise programs, distributing nicotine patches to smokers who want to quit, making home assessments for lead poisoning and asthma triggers, visiting new members, giving away literature and making presentations on the most pressing community health issues, and partnering with hundreds of community organizations; and

Whereas, It is essential that DOHMH expand its current programs to promote greater health equity in the City; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the appropriate committee of the Council to hold an oversight hearing regarding what actions are being taken by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in order to address disparities in life expectancy between poor communities of color and wealthy communities in New York City.

JP
Res. 562/2004