



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1389-2008, **Version:** A

Res. No. 1389-A

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to pass the Summer Jobs Stimulus Act of 2008.

By Council Members Fidler, Jackson, Brewer, Comrie, Felder, Gennaro, James, Koppell, Liu, Mealy, Palma, Sanders Jr., Stewart, Weprin, Vacca, Gonzalez, White Jr., Vann, Sears, Eugene, Dickens and The Public Advocate (Ms. Gotbaum)

Whereas, The Summer Youth Employment Program (“SYEP”) provides New Yorkers between the ages of 14 and 21 with summer employment and educational opportunities; and

Whereas, According to the Department of Youth and Community Development (“DYCD”), SYEP “strives to emphasize real-world labor expectations, increase awareness of services offered by community-based organizations and provide opportunities for career instruction, financial literacy training, academic improvement and social growth;” and

Whereas, SYEP offers a variety of employment opportunities including clerical work, customer service, childcare, web design and community service through various organizations such as government agencies, hospitals, summer camps, non-profits, small businesses, law firms, museums, sports enterprises and retail organizations; and

Whereas, SYEP participants work twenty-five hours per week for seven weeks, and earn the New York State minimum wage of \$7.15 per hour; and

Whereas, SYEP participants also take part in educational workshops that cover topics such as work readiness, financial literacy, career exploration, post-secondary education options and health education; and

Whereas, In 2007, a record-high number of young people- 93,750- submitted applications to participate in SYEP, but the amount of funding available only allowed 41,804 participants to enroll; and

Whereas, A total of \$56.4 million was committed to SYEP in 2007, of which approximately 57% was City Tax Levy dollars, 36% was State dollars (Flexible Fund for Family Services) and 7% came from the Federal Workforce Investment Act (“WIA”); and

Whereas, According to an article in *City Limits*, prior to the summer of 2000, SYEP was funded almost entirely with a dedicated federal funding stream that was eliminated with the enactment of WIA, which favored year-round employment programs for young people attending school; and

Whereas, Despite the increased funding allocated by the State and City, the loss of a dedicated federal funding stream has had a significant impact on SYEP’s ability to expand to meet the demand of young New Yorkers who seek this opportunity; and

Whereas, In fact, the Center for an Urban Future found that SYEP currently serves 20 percent fewer young people than it did in 1999 when funding was provided by the federal government; and

Whereas, In the winter of 2008, legislation was introduced in the United States Congress, which would provide a one time investment in summer employment for youth; and

Whereas, The Summer Jobs Stimulus Act of 2008 (S.2755) and a similar companion bill (H.R. 5444) authorizes one billion dollars for youth activities under WIA for the period of April 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008; and

Whereas, Findings presented in the Summer Jobs Stimulus Act of 2008 describe the many benefits of summer youth employment, including helping to supplement the income of families living in poverty, providing work readiness skills and an introduction to the workforce and contributing to a reduction in criminal and high-risk behavior for youth; and

Whereas, Summer youth employment can also help stimulate the local economy, as evidenced by the fact that researchers from Northeastern University found that every dollar a young person earns generates an additional \$3 in economic activity for the local economy; and

Whereas, DYCD reports that 2007 SYEP participants withdrew cash from an automated teller machine

("ATM") 245,097 times with an average transaction of \$107 and used their ATM card to make 288,285 purchases, with an average transaction of \$27; and

Whereas, Recognizing the current U.S. and local economic conditions and the reduction of approximately \$8 million for SYEP in the City's fiscal year 2009 executive budget, as well as a reduction of \$500,000 in State funds, the additional funding allocated through the Summer Jobs Stimulus Act of 2008 would assist the City with maintaining and expanding SYEP; now, therefore be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Congress to pass the Summer Jobs Stimulus Act of 2008.

JC
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