



## Legislation Text

**File #:** Res 1464-2000, **Version:** \*

Res. No. 1464

Resolution urging the United States Congress to pass the Food Stamp Outreach and Research for Kids Act of 1999, a bill that would improve access to food stamps for millions of needy Americans.

By Council Members DiBrienza, Boyland, Carrion, Espada, Freed, Henry, Marshall and Perkins; also Council Members Eldridge, Foster, Harrison, Leffler, Linares, McCaffrey, Michels, Pinkett, Rivera and Rodriguez

Whereas, The nutrition of children, the elderly and anyone suffering from hunger in New York City is of utmost importance; and  
Whereas, Despite a strong economy, there are children in New York who go to bed hungry at night, a condition that is intolerable to the Council; and

Whereas, The United States Department of Agriculture has determined that nationally, 3.3 million children experienced hunger during 1998, and hunger rates are highest in households with children led by single women and minorities; and

Whereas, An Urban Institute study of former welfare recipients found that 33% must skip or cut meals due to lack of food; and

Whereas, The number of recipients of food stamps has declined nationally by seven million persons or 27% during the past three years; and

Whereas, According to the federal General Accounting Office (the "GAO"), children's participation in the Food Stamp Program has dropped more sharply than the number of children living in poverty, indicating a growing gap between need and assistance; and

Whereas, The lack of information to those potentially eligible for food stamps has been identified by the GAO as a factor contributing to the sharp drop in Food Stamp Program participation during the last three and a half years; and

Whereas, The New York City Human Resources Administration is currently being sued for illegally restricting and impeding access to food stamps for otherwise eligible applicants in violation of the federal Food Stamp Program; and

Whereas, According to the GAO, such restrictive state practices have contributed to the decline in food stamp access causing the gap between need and assistance, and such restrictive practices continue despite the fact that there are still many hungry children in New York and the nation; and

Whereas, There is now pending in both the United States Senate (S. 1800) and House of Representatives (H.R. 2738), the Food Stamp Outreach and Research for Kids Act of 1999 (the "FORK Act"); and

Whereas, The FORK Act would require annual on-site inspections of local food stamp offices in every state to insure that access to food stamps is not improperly restricted or impeded; and

Whereas, The FORK Act would authorize a demonstration project for developing caseworker training materials and guidebooks to help states provide clearer information about food stamps to potential recipients; and

Whereas, The FORK Act would authorize a competitive grant program to develop innovative local strategies for improving food stamp access and educating working families and families with children about eligibility; and

Whereas, The FORK Act would authorize feasibility studies for participation in the Food Stamp Program via the Internet and the telephone; and

Whereas, The FORK Act would mandate a study of state outreach efforts including extended hours for food stamp offices for working families; and

Whereas, The FORK Act would expand a toll-free food stamp information line to include information on all federal nutrition programs and would authorize funds for live operators and translation services; and

Whereas, The FORK Act would require state welfare programs to provide clear information about food stamp eligibility to individuals leaving welfare, and would mandate the development of a model application for continued food stamp assistance for such individuals; and

Whereas; The FORK Act would authorize studies of the overall impact and integrity of the Food Stamp Program; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the United States Congress to pass the Food Stamp Outreach and Research for Kids Act of 1999, a bill that would improve access to food stamps for millions of needy Americans.

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