



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0007-2010, **Version:** *

Res. No. 7

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to authorize a minimum \$250 economic stimulus payment for Social Security and Supplemental Security Income beneficiaries to aid seniors and persons with disabilities during these difficult economic times given that there will be no automatic Social Security cost of living adjustment in 2010.

By Council Members Lappin, Vacca, Brewer, Dickens, Ferreras, Fidler, Foster, Gentile, James, Levin, Mealy, Palma, Sanders, Jr., Seabrook, Williams, Nelson, Arroyo, Rose, Van Bramer, White, Eugene and Vann

Whereas, Social Security was established in 1935 to provide American workers with protection from the total loss of wages when they retired and is the most successful and largest program to help prevent poverty in the United States; and

Whereas, Social Security provides benefits to retirees, survivors of workers that have died, and persons with disabilities; and

Whereas, The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is designed to help aged, blind, and disabled persons, who have little or no income; and

Whereas, Currently there are over 57 million Americans that receive Social Security benefits, 90% of whom are age 65 and over, with persons with disabilities accounting for 18% of total benefits paid; and

Whereas, The Social Security Act provides that Social Security and SSI benefits receive an automatic Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) each year if there is an increase in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) from the third quarter of the last year to the third quarter of the current year; and

Whereas, Since there was no increase in the CPI-W from the third quarter of 2008 to the third quarter of 2009 there will not be an automatic COLA in 2010 for the first time since the automatic COLA went into effect

in 1975; and

Whereas, Despite the decrease in the CPI-W, seniors and people with disabilities in New York City are facing rising costs for healthcare, housing, food, and transportation; and

Whereas, Social Security is the largest single source of income among persons age 65 and over, comprising 40% of their total income; and

Whereas, In New York City 85% of seniors received Social Security in 2008 and 403,299 New Yorkers received SSI in the same year; and

Whereas, Social Security is often inadequate to cover the high cost of living in New York City and seniors as well as persons with disabilities who depend primarily on this benefit for income are vulnerable to poverty; and

Whereas, President Obama has urged Congress to authorize a \$250 stimulus payment to help offset the rising costs that Social Security beneficiaries are experiencing due to the current economic climate; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon United States Congress to authorize a minimum \$250 economic stimulus payment for Social Security and Supplemental Security Income beneficiaries to aid seniors and persons with disabilities during these difficult economic times given that there will be no automatic Social Security cost of living adjustment in 2010.

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