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Res. No. 1934

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign S.7851, the Survivor’s Accessing Fair and Equitable Housing Act.

By Council Members Cabrera, Eugene, Jackson, James, Koo, Palma, Wills and Rodriguez

Whereas, The New York City Housing Authority (“NYCHA”) is a public housing authority with 334 developments, 2,596 buildings, and 178,914 public housing units, making it the largest public housing provider in North America; and

Whereas, As of January 2013, the vacancy rate of its apartments available for occupancy was less than 1 percent; and

Whereas, There are currently 167,353 families on the waiting list for public housing; and

Whereas, Some families wait months or, in some cases, years to enter public housing; and

Whereas, NYCHA has adopted a priority system which it uses to rank applicants and provide shorter wait periods for housing to several groups including victims of domestic violence; and

Whereas, According to the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, in 2012, police responded to 263,307 domestic violence incidents citywide; and

Whereas, Domestic violence is one of the most chronically underreported crimes; and

Whereas, According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence ("NCADV"), approximately one-quarter of all physical assaults and one-fifth of all rapes perpetrated against females by intimate partners are reported to the police; and

Whereas, Currently, victims of domestic violence seeking priority on NYCHA's waiting list must provide NYCHA with two pieces of official documentation, such as a police report, hospital admission letter or order of protection, arising out of two separate incidents of abuse; and

Whereas, NYCHA's requirements to apply for priority housing may force survivors of domestic violence to put themselves in additional and unnecessary danger in order to obtain necessary housing; and

Whereas, S.7851, the Survivor's Accessing Fair and Equitable Housing Act ("the Act"), would allow victims of domestic violence to provide alternative documentation to apply for priority public housing; and

Whereas, The Act would require that NYCHA establish an additional application for victims of domestic violence, the new application would be based on a modified version of the No Violence Again emergency housing form used for city temporary shelters, supplemented by sworn attestations from the priority applicant and a qualified domestic violence service provider; and

Whereas, The alternative application would not require survivors of domestic violence to subject themselves to further abuse in order to access safe and affordable housing in the City; now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign S.7851, the Survivor's Accessing Fair and Equitable Housing Act.

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GP
07/08/2013