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Res. No. 1069

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to specify trauma centers and emergency departments as recipients of federal funds for emergency preparedness in order to ensure the maximum receipt of funding available to these entities.

By Council Members Vallone, Quinn, Avella, Brewer, Clarke, Comrie, Fidler, Gennaro, Gerson, Jackson, Jennings, Sears, Weprin, Yassky and Liu

Whereas, Hospital emergency departments and trauma centers are essential components of New York City's first responder system; and Whereas, In their capacity to expeditiously stabilize, diagnose and treat critically ill patients, hospital emergency departments and trauma centers will be at the front-line of any response to a nuclear, biological or chemical attack on New York; and Whereas, Hospital emergency departments and trauma centers routinely work with other first-responder agencies, such as the New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM), the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) and the Police, Fire and Health departments; and Whereas, The cost of training emergency medical technicians and other medical staff and developing, rehabilitating and maintaining emergency departments and trauma centers to accommodate the needs that would be presented by a nuclear, biological or chemical attack are overwhelming, and pose a great financial burden to the City's hospitals; and Whereas, Although federal appropriations bills provide a small amount of funding for public health and/or medical establishments, none specifically cite emergency rooms and trauma centers as recipients of funding made available to first-responders; and Whereas, Notwithstanding the fact that hospital emergency departments and trauma centers would play an integral role in the first-response to a nuclear, biological or chemical attack, federal funded first responder emergency preparedness grants do not specifically earmark funds to these entities; and Whereas, Hospital emergency departments and trauma centers have received limited federal emergency preparedness funding which is needed to cover vital emergency preparedness costs, such as facility improvements, response training, improved communication systems, and other equipment and supplies; and Whereas, In the absence of sufficient federal funding, New York City hospitals have funded first-responder emergency preparedness projects from minimal day-to-day operating budgets and have, in many cases, not been able to make all changes which they believe are necessary; and Whereas, New York City hospitals should have access to the maximum amount of available federal funding for emergency responders in the case of a nuclear, biological or chemical attack to ensure the health and safety of all who require their services; now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the federal government to establish a standardized definition of 'first responder,' and to include trauma centers and emergency departments within this definition in order to ensure that hospitals receive their maximum share of federal funds dedicated to financing emergency preparedness in first-responders.

MFK
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