



Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: Int 0085-2004 **Version:** * **Name:** Establishing a task force on section 8 housing.
Type: Introduction **Status:** Filed
In control: Committee on Housing and Buildings
On agenda: 2/4/2004
Enactment date: **Enactment #:**
Title: A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to establishing a task force on section 8 housing.
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Indexes:

Attachments:

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
2/4/2004	*	City Council	Introduced by Council	
2/4/2004	*	City Council	Referred to Comm by Council	
12/31/2005	*	City Council	Filed (End of Session)	

Int. No. 85

By Council Members Lopez, Avella, Baez, Barron, Clarke, Dilan, Fidler, Foster, Jackson, Recchia, Reed, Sanders, Seabrook, Vann, Boyland, Brewer, Gerson, James and Nelson

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to establishing a task force on section 8 housing.

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Declaration of legislative intent. The Council finds that the City is in severe need of “affordable housing” and that the City has not done enough to implement affirmative policies to maintain “affordable housing” in New York City, including the failure to encourage the funding of Section 8. Section 8 subsidies are provided by the federal government through programs authorized under Section 8 of the Housing Act of 1937. The Council finds that planning for and maintaining affordable housing will increase the quality of life in the City. The availability of Section 8 funds will help tenants remain in their homes and will help prevent additional households from becoming homeless. Failure to review the impact of Section 8 housing on

the City's housing stock is shortsighted and will result in missed opportunities to call upon the federal government to maintain Section 8 housing programs and to increase the funding of these vital programs.

The Council has determined that there is a need to increase and coordinate lobbying efforts directed toward both Congressional and State representatives and to work with housing policy groups and tenant associations to encourage the funding and dispersion of Section 8 housing funds to people and communities in New York City that are in need of such assistance.

Therefore, the Council declares that the time to address the City's housing shortage is now, and hereby establishes this task force on Section 8 housing to examine, plan and coordinate the efforts to encourage the maintenance of Section 8 funds to be used for affordable housing in the City.

§2. Title 26 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new chapter 9 to read as follows:

Chapter 9

Task force on Section 8 housing

§26-801 Task force on Section 8 housing.

§26-801 Task force on Section 8 housing. a. There is hereby established a task force on section 8 housing, to evaluate and develop methods for maintaining section 8 housing in New York city. The task force shall, at a minimum, review the types of dwellings in the city that receive the benefit of the section 8 program and the areas of the city where such dwellings are located to determine the impact of such funding on the housing stock in the city, to examine the distribution of the type of section 8 funds, and to discuss the planning and coordination of affordable housing which may be impacted by such funding or the lack thereof. The task force shall consist of eleven members and shall include as ex-officio members the chair of the New York city housing authority, the commissioner of housing preservation and development, and the speaker of the council, each of whom may select a designee, and eight members of the public.

The members of the public shall consist of two representatives of tenants, two representatives of the for-profit real estate industry, two representatives of the not-for-profit real estate industry and two representatives of community-based housing organizations. The mayor shall appoint one representative of tenants and one representative of a community-based housing organization. The speaker of the council shall appoint one representative of tenants, two representatives of the for-profit real estate industry, two representatives of the not-for-profit real estate industry and one representative of a community-based housing

organization. The members of the task force shall be appointed within thirty days of the effective date of this section. Each member shall serve without compensation and shall continue in service until their successors have been appointed. A member may be removed by the appointing authority for cause, but not without an opportunity to be heard in person or by counsel, in his or her defense, upon less than ten days notice.

b. The task force may appoint an executive director to serve at its pleasure and may employ or retain such other employees and consultants as are necessary to fulfill its functions within appropriations by the council for such purposes.

c. Within thirty days after the appointment of the last member of the task force, the task force shall establish separate study groups consisting of task force members to study mechanisms to fund section 8 housing and to produce recommendations in order to coordinate efforts for additional section 8 funds.

d. Within twelve months after the appointment of the last member of the task force, the task force shall issue an interim report to the mayor and the speaker containing its recommendations. The interim report shall include data concerning the estimated number of eligible families that could receive such funding based on current eligibility criteria and funding levels, and based on projected estimates of funding levels and data concerning the distribution of the types of section 8 funding currently available.

e. Within twelve months after the issuance of the interim report to the mayor and the speaker and every year thereafter, the task force shall assess the progress of the City with regards to the availability of section 8 benefits and shall issue an annual report with recommendations for further funding and action.

§3. This local law shall take effect thirty days after it shall have been enacted into law.