Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	Res 0363-2024	**Version:**	*	**Name:**	Prohibit the imposition of limits on the length of stay at homeless shelters and emergency congregate housing (S.8493/A.9129).
Type:	Resolution			**Status:**	Filed (End of Session)
				In control:	Committee on General Welfare
On agenda:	4/18/2024				
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Title:	Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.8493/A.9129, to prohibit the imposition of limits on the length of stay at homeless shelters and emergency congregate housing.				
Sponsors:					
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Attachments:	1. Res. No. 363, 2. April 18, 2024 - Stated Meeting Agenda, 3. Hearing Transcript - Stated Meeting 4-18-24, 4. Minutes of the Stated Meeting - April 18, 2024				

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
4/18/2024	*	City Council	Introduced by Council	
4/18/2024	*	City Council	Referred to Comm by Council	
5/7/2024	*	City Council	Re-referred to Committee by Council	
12/31/2025	*	City Council	Filed (End of Session)	

Res. No. 363

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.8493/A.9129, to prohibit the imposition of limits on the length of stay at homeless shelters and emergency congregate housing.

By Council Members Brewer, Louis and Avilés

Whereas, New York is facing an ongoing influx of newly arrived asylum seekers which has put pressure on the New York State and City shelter systems; and

Whereas, As of March 17, 2024, according to data from the Office of the Mayor, over 184,000 asylum seekers have gone through the City shelter system since spring 2022, with 64,000 currently in 218 emergency shelters throughout New York City; and

Whereas, Per the International Organization for Migration, migrants and asylum seekers provide significant economic, civic-political, and cultural benefits to the communities in which they settle, provided that the policies of their host communities give them opportunities to integrate and participate; and

Whereas, Current policy of limiting the length of shelter stay for newly arrived asylum seekers creates additional hardships and barriers to stability, integration, and participation; and

Whereas, Under the 1981 consent decree in *Callahan v. Carey*, there is a legal right to shelter for homeless individuals in New York City; and

Whereas, Since July 2023, Mayor Eric Adams and his administration have imposed increased restrictions on how long these asylum seekers are able to stay in shelters in New York City; and

Whereas, A 60-day limit was placed on single adult asylum seekers in July 2023, which was reduced to 30 days in September 2023; and

Whereas, On October 16, 2023, the Mayor's administration announced that newly arrived families with children would be limited to only 60 days in shelter; and

Whereas, Following the expiration of a shelter stay, single adults and families are forced to either find alternative accommodations or reapply for a place in a City shelter at a "waiting room" or drop-in center; and

Whereas, These drop-in centers do not provide access to sleeping or hygiene facilities nor regular meals; and

Whereas, Waiting times for a new shelter placement can be over five days, as reported by CBS News, during which time asylum seekers are often without a bed or regular meals, and may end up sleeping on the street or in subways; and

Whereas, In March 2024, the Adams administration and the Legal Aid Society reached a settlement which would allow single adult asylum seekers beholden to the so called "30-day rule" to apply for an extension if they can prove extenuating circumstances, including showing significant efforts to move out of the shelter system; and

Whereas, The settlement also provides that asylum seekers be given a shelter placement the same day they apply at a drop-in center, or the next day if they arrive late, if they are eligible; and

Whereas, While this settlement may help prevent asylum seekers from being unsheltered, it does not

guarantee an extension in their shelter stay or ensure that they will be found eligible for a new shelter placement if they reapply after their time runs out; and

Whereas, Negative effects of the shelter stay limits are already apparent; and

Whereas, In February 2024, dozens of asylum seekers were found living illegally in hazardous conditions in a mattress store in Queens due to a lack of housing options after their shelter stays expired; and

Whereas, Reporting from City and State noted that many asylum seekers are required to submit asylum applications by mail but lack a reliable address to receive updates and court notices, which can delay or even jeopardize their asylum claims; and

Whereas, City Limits has also reported that, as of February 1, 2024, over 1,600 families with children have been forced to leave their shelter placements, with another 7,200 due to see their stay expire by May 2024; and

Whereas, Many of these families have school-aged children whose new shelter placement may not even be in the same borough as the school in which they were previously enrolled, leading to long commutes or transfers to new schools mid-year; and

Whereas, The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act federally mandates that homeless children are given the opportunity to stay in their "school of origin" to avoid disruption to academic progress or emotional distress due to being separated from friends and trusted adults; and

Whereas, Asylum seeking children, many of whom already suffer from post-traumatic stress and associated ill physical and mental health, according to research supported by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, may particularly benefit from the stability and support school provides; and

Whereas, The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees advises that refugee integration is most successful when refugees and asylum seekers are given opportunities to build social ties through participation in the local community and links with social, business, cultural, and religious networks; and

Whereas, Displacing children from their schools, and families and single adults from the communities

they have formed could have significant detrimental effects on integration; and

Whereas, S.8493, introduced by New York State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal and pending in the State Senate, and companion bill A.9129, introduced by New York State Assembly Member Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas and pending in the State Assembly, would prohibit the imposition of limits on the length of stay at homeless shelters and emergency congregate housing; and

Whereas, While this bill was introduced in response to the shelter stay limits imposed on migrant communities, it would be applicable to all individuals in the New York State shelter system; and

Whereas, Eliminating limits on shelter stays throughout New York State would remove some of the burden on the City's already struggling shelter system by creating viable housing and community building options throughout the rest of the State;

Whereas, Movement between shelters can disconnect any population from services and supports they rely on; and

Whereas, Keeping adults and families sheltered in the same location provides stability and allows them to receive consistent support services, build resilience without worrying about the urgent needs of food and shelter, and create community ties to better facilitate integration and self-sufficiency; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.8493/A.9129, to prohibit the imposition of limits on the length of stay at homeless shelters and emergency congregate housing.

PR
LS #16026
4/4/2024