Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	Res 0817-2011	**Version:**	A	**Name:**	NYS Office of Children and Family Services to extend the maximum length of stay at emergency shelter residential programs for victims of domestic violence to not less than 180 days.
Type:	Resolution			**Status:**	Adopted
				In control:	Committee on Women's Issues
On agenda:	5/11/2011				
Enactment date:				**Enactment #:**	

Title: Resolution calling upon the New York State Office of Children and Family Services to extend the maximum length of stay at emergency shelter residential programs for victims of domestic violence to not less than 180 days.

Sponsors: Annabel Palma, Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, Maria Del Carmen Arroyo, Gale A. Brewer, Fernando Cabrera, Margaret S. Chin, Inez E. Dickens, Daniel Dromm, Lewis A. Fidler, Sara M. Gonzalez, G. Oliver Koppell, Karen Koslowitz, Rosie Mendez, Domenic M. Recchia, Jr., Deborah L. Rose, James Sanders, Jr., James G. Van Bramer, Albert Vann, Jumaane D. Williams, Ydanis A. Rodriguez, Brad S. Lander, Melissa Mark-Viverito, Larry B. Seabrook

Indexes:

Attachments: 1. Res. No. 817 - 5/11/11, 2. Committee Assignment Change, 3. Committee Report 6/13/11, 4. Hearing Testimony 6/13/11, 5. Hearing Transcript 6/13/11, 6. Committee Report 6/14/11, 7. Hearing Transcript 6/14/11, 8. Hearing Transcript - Stated Meeting 6-14-11

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
5/11/2011	*	City Council	Introduced by Council	
5/11/2011	*	City Council	Referred to Comm by Council	
6/2/2011	*	City Council	Re-referred to Committee by Council	
6/13/2011	*	Committee on Women's Issues	Hearing Held by Committee	
6/13/2011	*	Committee on Women's Issues	Laid Over by Committee	
6/13/2011	*	Committee on Public Safety	Hearing Held by Committee	
6/13/2011	*	Committee on Public Safety	Laid Over by Committee	
6/14/2011	*	Committee on Women's Issues	Hearing Held by Committee	
6/14/2011	*	Committee on Women's Issues	Amendment Proposed by Comm	
6/14/2011	*	Committee on Women's Issues	Amended by Committee	
6/14/2011	A	Committee on Women's Issues	Approved by Committee	Pass
6/14/2011	A	City Council	Approved, by Council	Pass

Res. No 817-A

Resolution calling upon the New York State Office of Children and Family Services to extend the maximum length of stay at emergency shelter residential programs for victims of domestic violence to not less than 180 days.

By Council Members Palma, Ferreras, Arroyo, Brewer, Cabrera, Chin, Dickens, Dromm, Fidler,

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Gonzalez, Koppell, Koslowitz, Mendez, Recchia, Rose, Sanders Jr., Van Bramer, Vann, Williams, Rodriguez, Lander, Mark-Viverito and Seabrook

Whereas, The Office of Children and Family Services ("OCFS") is responsible for licensing emergency shelter residential programs for victims of domestic violence in New York State; and

Whereas, The Human Resources Administration ("HRA") funds and administers the New York City domestic violence shelter system, which is comprised of residential programs, as well as transitional housing for victims of domestic violence; and

Whereas, OCFS mandates that HRA provide emergency shelter and services to domestic violence victims for up to ninety days at a residential program and permits up two extensions of up to forty-five days for a total maximum of stay of 135 days or 4.5 months; and

Whereas, The New York City Department of Homeless Services provides shelter services to homeless individuals and families with no limit to the maximum stay and people typically reside in DHS transitional homeless shelters for six months to one year; and

Whereas, HRA residential programs are designed to provide shelter and services to assist victims of abuse and their children in seeking safety and self-sufficiency; and

Whereas, This population faces more significant barriers than the traditional homeless population in achieving independence because abusers often destroy their victim's credit, report child abuse, steal documents needed for employment and subject their victims to physical and sexual violence for every step towards independence they try to take; domestic violence victims therefore require sufficient time for healing, evaluating options, obtaining medical care and other services; and

Whereas, According to Sanctuary for Families, domestic violence is the leading cause of serious injury to women, resulting in nearly 2 million injuries and 1,300 deaths nationwide every year; the New Destiny

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Housing Corporation reports that 31% of New York City's homeless have been afflicted by domestic violence; and

Whereas, According to HRA, 11,276 individuals and 4,496 families were served by domestic violence shelters during Fiscal Year 2010, and only 21% of those in emergency domestic violence shelter were discharged to permanent housing within the mandatory 4.5 months; and

Whereas, Low-income victims of domestic violence have few resources they can rely on when trying to escape their abusers and the resources available to them are difficult to obtain given the unique issues they face; and

Whereas, Domestic violence survivors who attempt to leave shelter and access public housing face issues that often prevent them from doing so because, among other things, the criteria for establishing priority for public housing are reliant on criminal justice documentation of violence that are difficult or unsafe for many survivors to access, and the processing time for voucher applications is long and often exceeds the short maximum length of stay in domestic violence shelters (section 8 voucher recipients have 180 days to locate an apartment, forty-five days longer than a victim of domestic violence can stay in an HRA residential program); and

Whereas, Due to these issues, according to the Coalition of Domestic Violence Residential Providers (the Coalition), 87% of domestic violence shelter residents submitted an application for public housing while in shelter and only 2% of households exiting shelter qualified for and received public housing; and

Whereas, To be eligible for the city's Advantage program (when it existed), a rental subsidy program that aided the homeless in maintaining permanent housing, an individual was required to be employed yet domestic violence shelter residents often had a difficult time obtaining employment because many lack a high school diploma or prior work experience; this lack of education, coupled with the task of recovering from years

of isolation and trauma, usually made it difficult for survivors to locate employment within the 135 days that they are permitted to stay in domestic violence shelters; and

Whereas, If survivors do not obtain housing within the 135 day time frame, which is far less time than the allotted homeless shelter stay, they are left with few options and many will return to their abusers; and

Whereas, According to the 2009 data provided by the Coalition, 70% of residents who left domestic violence emergency shelters were still homeless when they were forced to leave and often at risk of continued domestic violence

Whereas, A.2651/S.0973 (Jacobs/Hassel-Thompson), would extend the maximum length of stay at emergency shelter residential programs for victims of domestic violence by 45 days, giving domestic violence victims more time for healing, evaluating options, and obtaining medical care and housing; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Office of Children and Family Services to extend the maximum length of stay at emergency shelter residential programs for victims of domestic violence to not less than 180 days.

EH
LS 2050
6/14/11