



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1297

Resolution supporting the federal government's initiative to end homelessness among veterans by 2014.

By Council Members Palma, Arroyo, Brewer, Cabrera, Chin, Dromm, Fidler, Gonzalez, James, Koppell, Lander, Levin, Recchia, Rose, Vann, Wills, Rodriguez and Ulrich

Whereas, The term "homeless" generally refers to people who lack permanent housing, including those who live on the streets, outdoors, in cars or abandoned buildings, or in transitional or emergency housing; and

Whereas, Veterans become homeless and are at risk for homelessness for the same reasons as non-veterans, including rising foreclosure and unemployment rates; and

Whereas, According to a 2009 report from New York State Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, New York City had an estimated 17,300 veterans who were unemployed, nearly 2,300 of whom were recent veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan; and

Whereas, According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), a large number of homeless and at-risk of becoming homeless veterans also suffer from the lingering effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance abuse, which are compounded by a lack of family and support networks; and

Whereas, The majority of military personnel serving in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom who have experienced high-intensity guerilla warfare and chronic threats of explosive devices suffer from PTSD; and

Whereas, According to the VA, veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq are falling into homelessness at a faster pace than those of the Vietnam War; and

Whereas, According to the most recent joint report from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) and the VA on veterans homelessness, there were 144,842 veterans who experienced at least one night of homelessness over the course of calendar year 2010; and

Whereas, While veterans represent 9% of the total U.S. population, in 2010 they accounted for 13% of adults in shelters and 16% of homeless adults according to the 2010 annual homeless assessment report published by HUD and the VA; and

Whereas, According to the same 2010 annual homeless assessment, New York State has the third highest homeless veterans population in the country with 7.7% of the nation's homeless veterans residing in the State; and

Whereas, In January 2010, a point in time survey conducted jointly by HUD and the VA estimated that there are 5,857 homeless veterans in New York City; and

Whereas, The New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) and the VA partnered in 2006 to develop a plan to end homelessness among veterans in New York City, which, according to a 2009 joint NYC-VA task force report, resulted in a 62% reduction in the number of homeless veterans in the DHS shelter system from September 2006 to September 2009; and

Whereas, DHS has employed several strategies that have been successful in reducing veterans homelessness, including establishing short term transitional housing specifically for veterans, a veterans multi-service center, and the development of a veterans-specific Safe Haven facility; and

Whereas, All states should be working to end homelessness among veterans across the nation; and

Whereas, In June 2010, the Obama Administration and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) introduced Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, a joint action by

the 19 USICH member agencies along with local and state partners in the public and private sectors to end veterans homelessness by 2014; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York strongly supports the Federal government's initiative to end homelessness among veterans by 2014.

LS#3039

RC

2/22/2012