



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1316-2012, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1316

Resolution calling on the State Senate and State Assembly to pass and the Governor to sign S.4098/A.6275, which would provide that persons living with clinical/symptomatic HIV or AIDS who are receiving shelter assistance or an emergency shelter allowance shall not be required to pay more than 30% of household income towards shelter costs, including rent and utilities.

By Council Members Palma, Chin, Comrie, Dromm, Eugene, Ferreras, Gonzalez, James, Koppell, Koslowitz, Lander, Levin, Mendez, Rose, Van Bramer, Vann, Williams, Wills, Rodriguez and Mark-Viverito

Whereas, The HIV/AIDS Services Administration (“HASA”) is an agency within the New York City Human Resources Administration that provides assistance to low-income people living with HIV/AIDS; and

Whereas, Such services may include rental assistance, which allows HASA clients to live in private housing, or referrals to public housing and supportive housing; and

Whereas, According to testimony provided by Shubert Botein Policy Associates at a February 8, 2012 hearing of the New York City Council Committee on General Welfare, “rental assistance is historically the most significant type of housing assistance provided for poor New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS. Over 80% of the HASA clients who currently rely on public assistance for permanent housing support live independently with the help of rental assistance”; and

Whereas, HASA clients receiving rental assistance are required by The New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance to contribute between 50% and 75% of their income from disability benefits towards their rent, often leaving less than \$12 per day to meet other expenses; and

Whereas, According to advocates, over 40% of New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS report not having had enough money for food, utilities, or non-reimbursable medical and health care at least sometime in the past six months; and

Whereas, All other state and federal disability housing programs, including most HIV/AIDS supportive housing, Section 8, and public housing cap a tenant's rent contribution at 30% of income; and

Whereas, The National Association to End Homelessness states that, “people living with HIV/AIDS are at a higher risk of homelessness than the general population and studies indicate as many as half of individuals with HIV/AIDS are at risk of homelessness due to unaffordable housing costs and the high cost of medical care”; and

Whereas, The Community Health Advisory & Information Network (“CHAIN”) Project, found that homelessness or unstable housing in New York City is associated with barriers to medical care for people living with HIV/AIDS; and

Whereas, The high percentage of disability payments required by HASA for rental assistance acts as an incentive for HASA clients to stay in supportive housing; and

Whereas, Moreover, requiring HASA clients to pay such a high percentage of their income from disability benefits toward rental assistance leads to high rates of rental arrears, evictions and homelessness for disabled New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS; and

Whereas, S.4098/A.6275 would provide that persons living with HIV/AIDS and receiving rental assistance shall not be required to pay more than 30% of their income towards rent; and

Whereas, According to the New York City Bar Association, preventing such rent arrears and evictions would produce a savings that offsets the cost of implementing a 30% rent cap because it would shift spending from crisis services, such as emergency housing costs, to providing stable housing; and

Whereas, A fiscal analysis conducted by Shubert Botein Policy Associates found that if 10% of HASA clients are unable to pay their rent and are evicted each year, emergency housing would cost the city \$21 million whereas the annual cost of maintaining their permanent housing would be \$9 million, which would leave the City with a savings of \$12 million a year; and

Whereas, Therefore, capping the required payments at 30% will help create stable housing, reduce homelessness and provide annual savings to the City; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Senate and State Assembly to pass and the Governor to sign S.4098/A.6275, which would provide that persons living with clinical/symptomatic HIV or AIDS who are receiving shelter assistance or an emergency shelter allowance shall not be required to pay more than 30% of household income towards shelter costs, including rent and utilities.

EH
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