



Legislation Text

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Res No. 1716

Resolution calling upon the United States Department of Agriculture to make undocumented immigrants eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

By Council Members James, Barron, Dromm, Eugene, Gonzalez, Koppell, Mark-Viverito, Mendez, Palma, Rose, Vann and Williams

Whereas, The United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”) administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (“SNAP”), formerly known as the food stamps program; and

Whereas, SNAP offers food assistance to eligible low-income individuals and families by issuing monthly electronic benefits that can be used like cash at authorized retailers to purchase food; and

Whereas, Eligibility for SNAP is based on several factors, including but not limited to, household size, income and immigration status; and

Whereas, In order to qualify for SNAP, a household or individual must have or apply for a Social Security number and be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national or have status as a qualified alien; and

Whereas, Undocumented immigrants are ineligible for SNAP; and

Whereas, According to a 2004 Urban Institute Report titled “The Health and Well-Being of Young Children of Immigrants” (“the Report”), children of immigrants are substantially more likely to be poor and to experience food hardship; and

Whereas, In fact, according to the Report, 56 percent of young children of immigrants are low-income compared to 40 percent of young children of citizens; and

Whereas, The United States Department of Agriculture defines food insecurity as, “the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire food in

socially acceptable ways”; and

Whereas, According to a 2009 Child Trends Research Brief (“the Brief”), children with noncitizen parents are twice as likely to experience food insecurity than those with naturalized citizen parents; and

Whereas, In fact, according to the Brief, “lack of parental citizenship is a risk factor for food insecurity in infants in immigrant households”; and

Whereas, According to the Brief, food security is important for positive child development and it is therefore critical to ensure that all families with children have access to food; and

Whereas, If New York State allowed illegal immigrants to be eligible for SNAP the State could provide immigrant families with food security; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Department of Agriculture to make undocumented immigrants eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

EH
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