



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1748

Resolution urging the New York City Housing Authority to withdraw from the Memorandum of Understanding with the New York City Police Department through which it funds law enforcement services for NYCHA residents and to invest the resulting savings into the capital needs of its developments.

By Council Members Mendez, Chin, Mark-Viverito, Arroyo, Barron, Brewer, Dromm, Gonzalez, James, Lander, Palma, Rose, Van Bramer, Williams, Wills and Lappin

Whereas, The New York City Housing Authority (“NYCHA”) is the largest provider of public housing in the nation; and

Whereas, There are 334 NYCHA developments consisting of 2,596 NYCHA buildings with 178,914 public housing units; and

Whereas, Most of NYCHA’s buildings were built in the 1940s or 1960s; and

Whereas, NYCHA residents make up approximately 5 percent of the City’s population; and

Whereas, In 1952, NYCHA created the New York City Housing Authority Police Department (“HAPD”) to serve its growing population; and

Whereas, By 1994, the HAPD had 2,700 uniformed police officers and was spending \$58 million a year on police services; and

Whereas, In the first 6 months of 1994, felonies were down almost 10 percent in the city at large, while they declined just 3.5 percent at NYCHA developments; and

Whereas, The Giuliani Administration sought to merge the HAPD into the New York City Police Department (“NYPD”) to enhance public safety at housing developments by allowing for more efficient decision-making processes, better tracking of criminal activity and to reduce duplicative police responses; and

Whereas, In October, 1994 NYCHA entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the NYPD to

merge the HAPD within the NYPD; and

Whereas, As a result of the merger, the NYPD Housing Bureau was created to provide law enforcement services solely to NYCHA developments; and

Whereas, Further, NYCHA agreed to provide a portion of its U.S. Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) Public Housing Operating Subsidy to the NYPD on an annual basis for ongoing law enforcement services for NYCHA’s properties and residents; and

Whereas, NYCHA provided approximately \$58 million of its Public Housing Operating Subsidy to the NYPD in 1994 and arranged to have ongoing payments adjusted for inflation; and

Whereas, NYCHA is currently providing approximately \$73 million of its Public Housing Operating Subsidy to the NYPD; and

Whereas, Since 1994, NYCHA has paid the NYPD at least \$1.2 billion for law enforcement services; and

Whereas, Besides local taxes which NYCHA residents also pay, 95 percent of the City’s population is not subject to any additional fees for law enforcement services provided by the NYPD; and

Whereas, NYCHA is no longer in the financial position to afford such payments to the NYPD; and

Whereas, Sixty-six percent of NYCHA’s current revenue comes from federal funding, thirty percent comes from rent, and four percent comes from grants and local government funding; and

Whereas, NYCHA’s federal capital grants, which comprise the bulk of its capital funding, have declined substantially since 2001, falling from \$420 million annually to \$270 million annually; and

Whereas, As a result of the loss of governmental funding, NYCHA has encountered difficulty maintaining its infrastructure, resulting in unmet or delayed repairs and upgrades to brickwork, roofs, elevators, building systems and apartment interiors; and

Whereas, In 2006, NYCHA conducted a physical needs assessment where it identified that \$25 billion will be necessary over the next 15 years to keep NYCHA’s housing stock in a good state of repair; and

Whereas, In order to generate revenue and address the funding gap, NYCHA has begun to explore alternative revenue sources, including a proposal to lease land on the grounds of its housing developments to developers to build residential towers; and

Whereas, Withdrawing from the MOU with the NYPD would result in significant amount of immediate savings in NYCHA's operating fund, estimated to be over \$70 million annually; and

Whereas, Although operating funds are intended for the operation and management of public housing, public housing agencies are able to transfer money from operating funds to capital funds to modernize or develop public housing with HUD approval; and

Whereas, NYCHA should withdraw from its MOU with the NYPD for law enforcement services which NYCHA residents are already entitled to as New Yorkers and subsequently transfer these savings in operating funds to capital funds to be used to address the capital needs of its developments;

Whereas, Further, under no circumstances should NYPD presence be reduced at public housing developments as a result of the withdrawal from the MOU; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the New York City Housing Authority to withdraw from the Memorandum of Understanding with the New York City Police Department through which it funds law enforcement services for NYCHA residents and to invest the resulting savings into the capital needs of its developments.

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