



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0794-2015, **Version:** *

Res. No. 794

Resolution calling upon Congress to pass and the President to sign, as well as the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign, legislation to permit a single universal application for public benefits, as well as to use tax filings or information already in an agency's possession to automatically provide eligible individuals with the public benefits.

By Council Member Kallos

Whereas, Article I, Section 8, of Constitution of the United States of America empowers the Congress to provide for the "general Welfare of the United States;" and

Whereas, The Constitution of the State of New York, in Article XVII, states that the "aid, care and support of the needy are public concerns;" and

Whereas, The New York City Charter and Administrative Code provides for services in support of the welfare of its residents; and

Whereas, The Federal government, State of New York and City of New York, administer and provide direct public benefits to individual members of the public in order to promote their welfare; and

Whereas, According to the de Blasio Administration, although 1.76 million New Yorkers receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, the official SNAP participation rate is 77 percent in New York City, which suggests that there are about 550,000 residents who may be eligible but are not receiving benefits; and

Whereas, According to the Council of Senior Centers & Services of NYC, 56 percent of eligible seniors do not receive SNAP benefits; and

Whereas, According to the Food Research and Action Center, daunting paperwork and not knowing about potential eligibility, as well as how or where to apply, are major barriers to public benefits for seniors;

and

Whereas, Enrolling all eligible New Yorkers in public benefits for which they qualify would generate over a billion dollars for the New York City economy; and

Whereas, Simplifying and consolidating the numerous applications for government benefits into single universal form would improve government efficiency by reducing bureaucracy and waste; and

Whereas, The United States Code (USC), Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), New York State Law, and the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR), require applications for government benefits to include certain information that could be amended to simplify the applications to use similar information on a single form; and

Whereas, The Internal Revenue Code, Chapter 26, Section 6103 of the United States Code, provides for the sharing of personal tax information with other government entities in certain circumstances, and should be amended to include for the administration and granting of government benefits; and

Whereas, New York State Tax Law, Section 697, Subsections (e)(1) and (3), provide for the sharing of personal tax information with other government entities in certain circumstances, and should be amended to include for the administration and granting of government benefits; and

Whereas, The USC, CFR, New York State Law, and the NYCRR, outline the required public benefits applications and processes for eligibility determinations, and each should be amended to allow for automatically providing or renewing public benefits upon a determination of eligibility based on information already provided to the government through a tax filing or information already in an agency's possession; and

Whereas, Should the aforementioned amendments be made, the City of New York could provide public benefits for the general welfare through a single universal application or automatically using tax filings or information already in an agency's possession; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon Congress to pass and the President to sign, as well as the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign, legislation to permit a single

universal application for public benefits, as well as to use tax filings or information already in an agency's possession to automatically provide eligible individuals with the public benefits.

LS 5634
7/15/2015