



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1024-A

Resolution calling upon the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) to expand eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to public college students.

By Council Members Louis, Kallos, Chin, Ayala, Gibson, Reynoso, Lander, Brannan, Rosenthal, Adams, Cornegy, Lancman, Cohen, Vallone, Holden, Levin and Eugene

Whereas, Students at community colleges are more likely to come from low-income families (71 percent) than students at senior colleges (54 percent); and

Whereas, Recent studies have suggested that food insecurity may present an impediment to students reaching their academic goals; and

Whereas, Food insecurity is the lack of access, at times, to enough nutritionally adequate food for an active, healthy life for all members of a household; and

Whereas, One recent study of basic needs insecurity among college students found that 36 percent of all university students were food insecure, while finding significantly higher percentages of 56 percent and 42 percent among community college students in the last two years of the study, respectively; and

Whereas, Locally, in 2011, researchers at the City University of New York (CUNY) estimated that 39 percent of CUNY students were food insecure; and

Whereas, A small survey of low-income students at CUNY found that 74 percent experienced “very low food security” while the remaining 26 percent experienced “low food security”; and

Whereas, Another recent survey study cites that one in four CUNY students, or approximately 60,000 undergraduates, experience food insecurity; and

Whereas, The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp

Program) is the nation's largest domestic food and nutrition assistance program, providing assistance to millions of eligible low-income people; and

Whereas, SNAP provides assistance to recipients by offering monthly electronic benefits that can be used to purchase food at authorized stores and farmers' markets; and

Whereas, Benefit levels for SNAP are based on criteria including, but not limited to, household size and income levels; and

Whereas, To participate in SNAP, a student in college at least half time must meet the income eligibility for SNAP and be employed for an average of 20 hours per week; and

Whereas, If a college student-is enrolled in a SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) program, they are exempt from the 20 hour work requirement; and

Whereas, Federal regulations allow states to determine whether certain training programs not funded under the SNAP program are comparable to a SNAP E&T activity; and

Whereas, Students enrolled in a training program that has been deemed comparable to a SNAP E&T activity may receive SNAP if otherwise eligible; and

Whereas, Some states, such as Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, have made regulatory changes to their state SNAP programs to expand eligibility to community college students by determining their enrollment in community college is comparable to a SNAP E&T activity; and

Whereas, As the State agency that administers SNAP, the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) should certify academic programs within CUNY and State University of New York (SUNY) as comparable to a SNAP E&T program so that students will be eligible for SNAP; and

Whereas, In January 2020, Governor Cuomo included the expansion of college student enrollment in the State of the State presentation, which would allow for community college students working at least half-time in career and technical education courses to be exempt from the 20 hour work requirement for SNAP; and

Whereas, As low-income public college students are elevating their job prospects and earning potential,

they should not be denied access to benefits providing a basic necessity; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) to expand eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to public college students.

CP/NO

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2/3/2020