



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1424

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.7628A/A.9657, an act to amend the public housing law, in relation to establishing the housing access voucher program.

By Council Members Chin and Louis

Whereas, During the days prior to the shut down of New York City (the City or NYC) as a result of COVID-19, the City had approximately 80,000 people experiencing homelessness in the streets and in the shelter system, including over 20,000 children; and

Whereas, As of July 9, 2020, one in four tenants in NYC had not paid rent since March, according to Bloomberg Businessweek; and

Whereas, As of July 27, 2020 there were 719 eviction petitions filed in the City despite a statewide eviction moratorium; and

Whereas, On August 12, 2020, the New York State Chief Administrative Judge of the Courts issued a memorandum which extended New York's moratorium on evictions until October 1st for cases filed on or after March 17th, but the same order allowed eviction cases filed on or before March 16th to move forward; and

Whereas, On August 12, 2020, a spokesperson for the New York State Office of Court Administration indicated that there are 200,000 pending eviction cases in New York City filed before March 17; and

Whereas, Win NYC, a nonprofit provider of family shelter and supportive housing in the City, indicated that 70 percent of low-income renters had saved less than \$1,000, and determined that two-thirds of the jobs lost to the pandemic were paying less than \$40,000 annually, meaning that most low-income renters would not be able to pay their rent after losing their jobs due to COVID-19; and

Whereas, New York University's Furman Center estimated that around 735,000 households in the City

have lost employment income as a result of COVID-19, with 526,000 of these households filing claims for unemployment insurance and one in four households in New York City now facing eviction; and

Whereas, Experts are predicting a pending homelessness and eviction crisis in which thousands of New Yorkers will be forced out of homes once district courts start hearing housing dispute cases, as landlords are expected to proceed with eviction cases and filings once the moratorium is lifted; and

Whereas, Win NYC has estimated that 1 million New York City residents could be evicted during the ongoing pandemic if there is no government assistance to aid in stabilizing housing in New York City; and

Whereas, The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has determined that housing access voucher programs enable people to access better and safer neighborhoods, leading to better outcomes for families and better outcomes for kids, while avoiding homelessness and its negative short and long-term effects; and

Whereas, In December 2019, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities found that housing access vouchers reduced the number of families living in shelters or on the street from 13 percent to 3 percent, led to more positive effects due to the housing stability provided by the vouchers, and provided a more stable lifestyle during which vouchers reduced the average number of times that families moved over five years by almost 40 percent; and

Whereas, Win NYC shared an “Aftermath Plan” responding to homelessness in the City in the aftermath of COVID-19 in which their leadership recommended the creation of a rental assistance voucher to help homeless residents find new housing; and

Whereas, The “Aftermath Plan” was accompanied by a fiscal analysis showing that a voucher program would drastically reduce the fiscal costs of the City by helping more families avoid the shelter system; and

Whereas, S.7628A/A.9657, introduced by Senator Brian Kavanagh and Assembly Member Steven Cymbrowitz, respectively, would establish a housing access voucher program that would provide rental assistance in the form of vouchers to both homeless individuals and those at the immediate risk of homelessness; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.7628A/A.9657, an act to amend the public housing law, in relation to establishing the housing access voucher program.

CCK
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