



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 2229

By Council Members Cornegy, Van Bramer, Gjonaj and Cumbo

A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to establishing a commission to develop and implement a living treasures program

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 67 of the New York city charter is amended by adding a new section 2508 to read as follows:

§ 2508. Living treasures program. a. There is hereby established a commission that shall develop and administer a program to recognize individuals and groups who preserve and promote underrepresented cultural traditions through their technical mastery of artistic, literary, musical or craft techniques of significant cultural value.

b. The commission shall consist of at least 10 members as follows:

1. The commissioner of cultural affairs, or the commissioner's designee;

2. The deputy commissioner of cultural affairs, or the deputy commissioner's designee;

3. At least five members, representing each of the five boroughs, appointed by the mayor, provided that all such members have a demonstrated involvement in the local arts and culture of their respective borough;
and

4. Three members appointed by the commissioner of cultural affairs as follows:

(a) One representative of a cultural institution that is a member of the cultural institutions group; and

(b) Two members that are each representatives of a minority-led, community-based, organization whose principal purpose is the promotion or support of cultural activities.

c. Each borough president may appoint one member, who shall serve in an advisory capacity.

d. All appointments to the commission shall be made within 90 days of the effective date of the local law that added this section. Each member of the commission shall serve for a term of three years to commence after the final member of the commission is appointed. Any vacancy in the membership of the commission shall be filled within 90 days, in the same manner as the original appointment. If at the end of 90 days the vacancy remains unfilled, the remaining commission members shall appoint a new member within 30 days. A person filling such vacancy shall serve the unexpired portion of the term of the succeeded member.

e. All commission members shall serve without compensation.

f. The commission shall develop a process to consider and evaluate artists, writers, musicians, performers and artisans, residing in the city, who have achieved technical mastery of culturally significant performing, literary, or visual arts, including but not limited to instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, industrial design, costume and fashion design, television, radio, film, video, tape and sound recording. The commission shall prioritize the recognition of performing, literary, or visual arts from historically underrepresented cultures.

g. Pursuant to the process established in subdivision f of this section, and subject to appropriation, the commission shall annually select up to 15 program participants to each serve for a term of three years. Program participants shall be designated “living treasures” and may include individuals or groups of two or more.

h. Program participants shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Showcasing their unique tradition through regular public performances, lectures, workshops or exhibitions;

2. Educating the public on the historic and cultural value of their recognized skill; and

3. Offering instruction and training to the public in their recognized skill.

i. The commission shall organize public performances and events, provide each living treasure an annual stipend and subsidize any costs incurred by the living treasure in furtherance of their program

responsibilities.

j. The commission shall submit an annual report to the mayor and to the speaker of the council, summarizing the program details. The first report shall be issued no later than 60 days after the first anniversary of the program and annually thereafter.

§ 3. This local law takes effect 90 days after it becomes law.

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