



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1319

Resolution calling upon the State Legislature to establish a dedicated fund to create new affordable housing using the additional real estate taxes paid by developments that withdraw from the Mitchell-Lama program.

By Council Members Lopez, Espada, Freed, Linares, Nelson, Perkins, Quinn and White; also Council Members DiBrienza, Foster and Michels

Whereas, In 1955 the State Legislature created the Mitchell-Lama program to address the issue of affordable housing for families whose income was too high for public housing, but too low for market rate housing; and

Whereas, The State initially required properties developed through this program to stay in the program for at least thirty-five years, a period that was reduced to fifteen years in 1959 and then increased to twenty years in 1960; and

Whereas, During the 1960's and early 1970's this program was responsible for the construction of more than 166,000 units of new multi-family affordable housing, 140,000 units of which are located within New York City; and

Whereas, Currently all Mitchell-Lama developments are eligible to withdraw from the program once the owners satisfy their existing mortgages, with apartments being subject to the Rent Stabilization Law only for buildings first occupied prior to January 1, 1974; and

Whereas, According to the 1999 Housing and Vacancy Survey (HVS) that was issued this past February, New York City currently has a citywide Vacancy Rate of only 3.19 percent, and has lost significant numbers of units at all rent levels below \$700-\$799 per month; and

Whereas, The loss of these affordable units requires that we commit new money to their replacement; and

Whereas, According to the HVS, half the families living in Mitchell-Lama rentals in New York City have an annual income of \$21,600 or less while the median income for all tenants was approximately \$26,000; and

Whereas, The commonly acknowledged guideline for the appropriate percentage of family income to be used for housing is one-third of a family's annual income, which for the majority of Mitchell-Lama residents means they should be spending less than \$600 per month for rent; and

Whereas, Fewer than 65,000 apartments in New York City are classified by the 1999 HVS as "vacant for rent" and only 17,600 of those have rents of \$600 or less; and

Whereas, When Mitchell-Lama properties are withdrawn from the program the real estate taxes that must be paid on that property increase and substantial additional amounts of real estate tax revenue will be realized by the City; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the State Legislature to establish a dedicated fund to create new affordable housing using the additional real estate taxes paid by developments that withdraw from the Mitchell-Lama program.

BT/JH
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