



## Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1465

Resolution urging the United States Congress to pass the Hunger Relief Act of 1999, a bill that would restore food stamp eligibility for all legal immigrants, improve access to food stamps for millions of other needy Americans and provide increased funding for emergency food pantries.

By Council Members DiBrienza, Boyland, Carrion, Malave-Dilan, Espada, Freed, Henry, Marshall and Perkins; also Council Members Eldridge, Foster, Harrison, Leffler, Linares, McCaffrey, Michels, Pinkett, Quinn, Rivera and Rodríguez

Whereas, The nutrition of children, the elderly and anyone suffering from hunger in New York City is of utmost importance; and  
Whereas, Despite a strong economy, there are still children in New York who go to bed hungry at night, a condition that is intolerable to the Council; and

Whereas, The United States Department of Agriculture has determined that nationally, 3.3 million children experienced hunger during 1998, and hunger rates are highest in households with children led by single women and minorities; and

Whereas, An Urban Institute study of former welfare recipients found that 33% must skip or cut meals due to lack of food; and

Whereas, The number of recipients of food stamps has declined nationally by seven million persons or 27% during the past three years; and

Whereas, According to the federal General Accounting Office, children's participation in the Food Stamp Program has dropped more sharply than the number of children living in poverty indicating, a growing gap between need and assistance; and

Whereas, Currently, pursuant to federal welfare reform laws passed in 1996, many otherwise eligible legal immigrants are no longer eligible for food stamps; and

Whereas, Although, the Food Stamp Program rules allow for the deduction of housing costs from total household income to determine benefit levels, the rules currently limit the housing cost deduction to \$275, an amount far lower than the amount many New Yorkers pay for their housing; and

Whereas, this housing cost deduction limit thus results in artificially low benefit levels that do not reflect the actual need for food stamps for many New Yorkers, and in some cases results in food stamp ineligibility of many needy New Yorkers; and

Whereas, Many hungry New Yorkers rely on private food pantries for emergency food assistance, and such pantries have not been able to meet the emergency food needs of hungry New Yorkers; and

Whereas, There is now pending in both the United States Senate (S. 1805) and House of Representatives (H.R. 3192), the Hunger Relief Act of 1999 (the "Act"); and

Whereas, The Act would restore food stamp eligibility to all otherwise eligible legal immigrants; and

Whereas, The Act would also raise the housing cost deduction limit to \$340 and would index the limit to inflation; and

Whereas, The Act would also provide 100 million dollars for privately operated food pantries to improve the availability of emergency food assistance; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the United States Congress to pass the Hunger Relief Act of 1999, a bill that would restore food stamp eligibility for all legal immigrants, improve access to food stamps for millions of other needy Americans and provide increased funding for emergency food pantries.