



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 164

Resolution calling upon the Human Resources Administration (HRA) to request the automatic federal food stamp Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependent Children (ABAWD) waiver, which would extend food stamp benefits for non-disabled adults without dependents.

By Council Members Perkins, Barron, Brewer, Foster, Gerson, Jackson, Lopez, Martinez, Sanders, Stewart, Vann, Yassky, Quinn, DeBlasio and Weprin

Whereas, New York City's weakened economy has led to increases in unemployment and has placed a strain on the City's emergency food providers; and

Whereas, In February 2003, the 8.8 percent unemployment rate in New York City was the highest the city has seen in five years; and

Whereas, The number of New York City residents who were unemployed in January 2003 was 334,400, an increase of 48,900 over the same month in the previous year; and

Whereas, The New York City Coalition Against Hunger estimates that more than one million New Yorkers depend on food pantries and soup kitchens for sustenance and reports indicate that the hunger problem in New York City is increasing; and

Whereas, A recent survey found that New York City soup kitchens and food pantries fed 45% more people in 2002 than in 2000; and

Whereas, The 1996 federal welfare reform law allowed states with high rates of unemployment to waive the work requirements that generally apply to food stamp recipients; and

Whereas, Without the waiver, non-disabled adults without dependents who do not meet federal work requirements are currently eligible to receive food stamps for only a 3-month period in any 36-month period; and

Whereas, New York State has received a waiver from the United States Department of Agriculture to extend the three-month limit for applicants in counties with high unemployment rates; and

Whereas, Last year, 33 counties in New York State accepted the ABAWD waiver; and

Whereas, Although New York City is eligible for the waiver and would receive the waiver at no cost, the Administration has refused to accept the waiver; and

Whereas, In a time where the City's depressed economy suffers from high rates of unemployment, food stamp assistance would greatly benefit certain New Yorkers in need of food; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon HRA to request the automatic federal food stamp ABAWD waiver which would extend food stamp benefits for non-disabled adults without dependents.