



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0361-2004, **Version:** *

Res. No. 361

Resolution urging Governor Pataki and the New York State Legislature to support adequate funding for homelessness-avoidance programs and other programs that serve the poor.

By Council Members James, Quinn, Barron, Gentile, Jackson, Jennings, Liu, Moskowitz, Brewer, Clarke, Fidler, Gerson, Gonzalez, Lopez, Martinez, McMahon, Nelson, Palma, Recchia, Seabrook, Sears and Weprin

Whereas, As of May 12, 2004, the Department of Homeless Services reported that there were 37,876 homeless persons in New York City, including 15,902 children; and

Whereas, During a time of record homelessness, Governor Pataki's proposed 2004-05 Executive Budget decreases public assistance grants, reduces Earned Income Disregard benefits and imposes full family sanctions on low-income families; and

Whereas, Proposed New York State social service budget cuts to public assistance programs threaten to have a severe impact on poor individuals and families, specifically on their ability to avoid homelessness; and

Whereas, Public and private organizations that have been charged with preventing homelessness already are overwhelmed and under-funded; and

Whereas, The monetary cost to New Yorkers of avoiding homelessness is high, but the societal cost of homelessness, particularly its effect upon children, is immeasurably higher; and

Whereas, The independent panel of experts on the McCain Family Homelessness Special Master Panel formed to evaluate and make recommendations regarding how to address family homelessness has recommended significant policy changes, such as increasing the availability of rental assistance, income support and legal assistance in order to stem the tide of families into homelessness; and

Whereas, These changes will require funding to implement; and

Whereas, The costs of homeless prevention programs and public assistance are significantly lower than temporary shelter for homeless families, which can average as much as approximately \$90 a day and more than \$25,000 for each family per year; and

Whereas, Despite its cost, the prevention of homelessness will be less of a burden to the City of New York than the cost of providing shelter and services to homeless families and individuals; and

Whereas, Budget cuts will impair the ability of New York City's social service agencies and legal service providers to help New York's neediest families; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges Governor Pataki and the New York State legislature to support adequate funding for homelessness-avoidance programs and other programs that serve the poor.

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