



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0703-2004, **Version:** *

Res. No. 703

Resolution calling upon the U.S. Congress and President Bush to immediately adopt all the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission that affect the allocation of homeland security funding to New York City and address problems with the city's emergency command and communication protocol.

By the Speaker (Council Member Miller) and Council Members Avella, Boyland, Brewer, Clarke, Comrie, Fidler, Foster, Gerson, Jackson, James, Liu, Martinez, Nelson, Quinn, Recchia, Rivera, Sanders, Seabrook, Sears, Vann, Weprin and Gonzalez

Whereas, On November 27, 2002, President Bush signed the Intelligence Authorization Act, which included a provision to create the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission), an independent, bipartisan commission, which was charged with investigating the attacks of September 11, 2001; and

Whereas, After 18 months of thorough investigation, a final 9/11 Commission Report was issued on July 22, 2004, providing a full and complete account of the circumstances surrounding the attacks, including preparedness for and the immediate response to the attacks as well as recommendations designed to guard against future attacks; and

Whereas, The Commission's recommendations included an overhaul of the nation's intelligence infrastructure and a restructuring of defense and immigration policy; and

Whereas, Equally important, however, were Commission recommendations regarding the allocation of homeland security funding and the capability of local first responders to act in case of an emergency; and

Whereas, With regard to homeland security funding, the Commission made it clear that such assistance must be based strictly on an assessment of risks and vulnerabilities, and that New York City is at the top of such a list; the Commission also stated that federal homeland security assistance "should not remain a program for

general revenue sharing” and that “Congress should not use this money as a pork barrel,” which is currently the case; and

Whereas, The Commission also recommended that a panel of security experts be convened to develop written benchmarks for evaluating community needs for homeland security dollars, and that states abide by these requirements when federal funds are disbursed; as the Commission indicated, “those who would allocate money on a different basis should then defend their view of the national interest”; and

Whereas, With regard to emergency command and coordination, the Commission urged that all emergency response agencies nationwide adopt the Incident Command System (ICS) and that the Department of Homeland Security should make homeland security funding contingent on aggressive and realistic training in accordance with ICS and unified command procedures; and

Whereas, Although the Department of Homeland Security has made certain funding contingent on adoption of ICS, no criteria are in place for making the funds contingent on aggressive and realistic training; and

Whereas, Making such funding contingent on a command and coordination protocol is vitally important as demonstrated here in New York City where, three years after 9/11, a written ICS protocol is not yet final, and such protocol is still being developed in order to comply with these new federal standards; and

Whereas, The Commission also urged Congress to enact legislation that provides for the expedited and increased assignment of radio spectrum for public safety purposes; and

Whereas, Such an increase in radio spectrum for public safety purposes will assist the city as it enhances its communication abilities among first responding agencies; and

Whereas, Both Commission chairmen, Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton, as well as prominent members of the House and Senate, security experts, and many of the families of the 9/11 victims, have urged swift adoption of the important reforms embodied in the Commission’s report; and

Whereas, The work and recommendations of the 9/11 Commission have been hailed as comprehensive

and vital to ensuring this nation's security, and partisan politics should not derail the implementation of its important objectives; and

Whereas, Particularly here in New York, which suffered terribly on that fateful day, the recommendations set forth by the Commission will ensure that this nation has in place a viable mechanism to prevent future attacks and to react swiftly if one does occur; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the U.S. Congress and President Bush to immediately adopt all the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission that affect the allocation of homeland security funding to New York City and address problems with the city's emergency command and communication protocol.

12/2/04