



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 769

Resolution calling upon the appropriate committee of the Council to hold a hearing to examine the impact of the recent closings of health care units in hospitals and clinics throughout Central Brooklyn, including Bedford Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, Prospect Heights, Brownsville, Fort Greene and Clinton Hill.

By Council Members James, Barron, Clarke, Fidler, Jackson, Martinez, Palma, Quinn, Sanders and Seabrook

Whereas, Central Brooklyn is facing a potential health crisis as a result of the closing of units in health clinics and hospitals because of financial hardship; and

Whereas, In 2003, Brooklyn Hospital closed its inpatient unit and now only provides outpatient services through its clinic, while St. Mary's Hospital closed its OB/GYN clinic; and

Whereas, An October 21, 2004 letter from the Interfaith Medical Center informed Neil Benjamin, Assistant Director of Health Facility Planning at the New York State Department of Health, of the closing of ambulatory care at six health centers in Brooklyn, including Fulton Family Health Center, East New York Family Health Center, Neighborhood Health Center, Bushwick Family Health Center, Parkway Family Health Center and Neighborhood Health Center, due to an "economic shortfall;" and

Whereas, In the December 15, 2004 issue of Pulse Extra, a publication of Crain's New York Business, it was reported that "the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists District II/NY is forecasting a crisis in access to maternity care following the news last week that Interfaith Hospital in Brooklyn and [an upstate hospital] were seeking permission to eliminate their obstetrical services;" and

Whereas, Brooklyn has been plagued by a shortage of health care providers for a number of years; and

Whereas, In April 2003, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene issued The Health of Brooklyn and New York City Community Health Survey ("the Survey"), which concluded that

Central Brooklyn was one of three city neighborhoods most in need of health care services; and

Whereas, The Survey reported that the while the New York City infant mortality rate was 6.1 per 1,000 live births, the rate was 10.0 in Bedford Stuyvesant, 8.0 in Brownsville, 7.4 in each Bushwick and Flatbush, and 6.5 in Fort Greene; and

Whereas, The Health of Central Brooklyn (including Bedford Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, Prospect Heights and Brownville), a Community Health Profile issued by the New York City Department of Health in 2003, compared this area to 41 other New York City neighborhoods and found that these Central Brooklyn neighborhoods were below average (bottom 10) in all categories: general health; maternal and child health; infectious diseases, including pneumonia, influenza and HIV/AIDS; chronic diseases, including heart disease, diabetes, and lung diseases; prevention services located in doctors' offices, including cancer screenings and immunizations; and access to medical care; and

Whereas, Multiple communities in Brooklyn, including Bedford Stuyvesant and Crown Heights, have long been designated medically underserved areas by the United States Health and Human Services, Bureau of Primary Health Care; and

Whereas, Despite such designations, adequate resources have not been deployed to encourage providers to come to or remain in Central Brooklyn; and

Whereas, If the current health trends continues, the long-term health of Central Brooklyn's population could be jeopardized; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the appropriate committee of the Council of the City of New York hold a hearing to examine the impact of the recent closings of health care units in hospitals and clinics throughout Central Brooklyn, including Bedford Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, Prospect Heights, Brownsville, Fort Greene and Clinton Hill.

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