



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0721-2007, **Version:** *

Res. No. 721

Resolution calling upon the New York State legislature to amend section 131-a of the Social Service Law to create parity between rental amounts paid to public housing authorities and private landlords by phasing in the maximum shelter allowance for public assistance recipients residing in public housing over the next three years.

By Council Members Mendez, Dilan, Barron, Brewer, Dickens, Foster, Gerson, Gonzalez, Jackson, James, Mark-Viverito, Recchia Jr., Reyna, Arroyo and Avella

Whereas, In 2003, New York State raised the maximum shelter allowance for persons receiving public assistance; and

Whereas, While private landlords can receive up to the maximum shelter allowance for their social services district, local public housing authorities, such as the New York City Housing Authority (“NYCHA”) receive a significantly lower shelter allowance; and

Whereas, Under current State regulations, local public housing authorities can request the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (“OTDA”) to use the maximum shelter allowance for rent calculations, and OTDA can approve an increase of not more than 10 percent per year until the maximum shelter allowance is met; and

Whereas, In August of 2004, NYCHA received a directive from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to implement by January 1, 2005 the use of the maximum shelter and utility allowance to calculate rent payments for public assistance recipients who reside in public housing; and

Whereas, NYCHA has requested and received from OTDA two annual shelter allowance increases since 2004, which resulted in a 10 percent shelter allowance increase in October 2005 and another 10 percent increase in October 2006; and

Whereas, With the annual shelter allowance increase limited to 10 percent per year, it may take as long

as 8 to 10 years for NYCHA to reach the State-approved maximum shelter allowance; and

Whereas, With the current shelter allowance amount, a family of four on public assistance in public housing would receive a shelter allowance of approximately \$168 per month, while calculating the rental allowance using the New York State maximum shelter allowance more than doubles the rental allowance for a family of four, raising it as high as \$450 per month; and

Whereas, Public housing is as expensive to operate as private housing, and can even be more expensive to operate because of the supportive and social services that public housing provides to residents; and

Whereas, As of April 2006, NYCHA reported a budget gap of \$168 million; and

Whereas, Phasing in the maximum shelter allowance over three years would provide NYCHA with an estimated \$24.6 million in additional revenue in 2007, and an estimated \$57.4 million in 2008; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State legislature to amend section 131-a of the Social Service Law to create parity between rental amounts paid to public housing authorities and private landlords by phasing in the maximum shelter allowance for public assistance recipients residing in public housing over the next three years.

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