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Proposed Res. No. 55-A

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.2220/A.5232, which would allow municipalities and localities that have a senior citizen rent increase exemption program to establish an automatic enrollment program for eligible seniors to be automatically enrolled or automatically re-enrolled in the program

By Council Members Cabán, Hudson, Hanif, Louis, Aldebol and Farías

Whereas, According to the Center for Research on Housing Opportunity, Mobility, and Equity, there are 1.55 million New York City (NYC) residents who are aged 62 and older, representing about 19 percent of the total population; and

Whereas, Over the last two decades, the population of older adults aged 65 and older grew by nearly half a million, or about 53 percent, according to the Office of the New York State Comptroller (OSC); and

Whereas, Additionally, there is increasing longevity in the projection period, meaning more people are expected to survive into older age; and

Whereas, In 2023, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit, NYC was ranked as the third most expensive city in the world to live in, behind only Zurich, Switzerland and Singapore; and

Whereas, Rental prices are a significant driver of the high cost of living in NYC, where renters make up two-thirds of all households; and

Whereas, According to the real estate website StreetEasy, the median asking rent in NYC rose 7.3 percent year-over-year to $4,199 in May, 2026, the highest rate of growth on record since 2010, all while the NYC metro area faces a housing deficit of at least 400,000 homes, which is setting the course for the market; and

Whereas, According to the OSC, among 65 and older households in NYC the median household income

in 2023 was $46,359, with that number dropping to $31,230 in the Bronx; and

Whereas, Older adult New Yorkers are among the least likely in the country to move into a nursing home, which costs almost $6,000 a month, or an assisted living facility, which costs almost $13,000 a month, preferring to age in place, per the Kaiser Family Foundation; and

Whereas, Accordingly, older adult New Yorkers, especially those with limited incomes, confront an array of hurdles when it comes to housing, including a lack of affordable housing, a shortage of safe and accessible apartments, a low supply of home health care aides, and long waiting lists at many programs; and

Whereas, Without major policy changes, older adult New Yorkers will face greater difficulties aging in their homes and getting the support they need; and

Whereas, The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption ("SCRIE") program provides a subsidy to cover most rent/maintenance increases for seniors who reside in a rent-regulated or Mitchell-Lama apartment, a Redevelopment Company development, a Housing Development Fund Corporation cooperative ("co-op"), or a federally-assisted 213 co-op; and

Whereas, In order to be eligible for SCRIE, the head of household must be 62 years or older at the time of the increase and the tenant/shareholder of record; said tenant must be living in the apartment at the time of increase; the total household income cannot exceed the income maximum of $50,000 annually; the monthly basic rent/carrying charge must be more than or equal to one-third of the tenant/shareholders total annual household income; and tenants must not be enrolled in any other rent/carrying charge subsidy program; and

Whereas, According to data provided by the Department of Finance, there were 67,677 households receiving either SCRIE or Disability Rent Increase Exemption benefits in 2024, all while there were around 158,214 households that were potentially eligible in 2023, the last year for which complete data is available, a utilization rate of less than half; and

Whereas, Many eligible seniors do not know about SCRIE, or may not remember to re-enroll in the program; and

Whereas, S.2220/A.5232, sponsored by State Senator John Liu and State Assembly Member Karines Reyes, respectively, would implement automatic enrollment in the SCRIE program for eligible older adults; and

Whereas, S.2220/A.5232 would also provide for a check box for a taxpayer to opt-out of data sharing and automatic enrollment on their tax return; and

Whereas, Older adult New Yorkers have a right to live and age with dignity, and ensuring that they receive the benefits that they are entitled to is one important piece of addressing the current housing crisis in NYC; now, therefore be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.2220/A.5232, which would allow municipalities and localities that have a senior citizen rent increase exemption program to establish an automatic enrollment program for eligible seniors to be automatically enrolled or automatically re-enrolled in the program.

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