



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 651

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to amend Section 156 of the Public Housing Law to grant priority status to all veterans of the United States military and their immediate families for admittance to public housing developments.

By Council Members Mendez, Fidler, Arroyo, Brewer, Cabrera, Chin, Dickens, Dromm, Eugene, Gentile, Gonzalez, James, Koslowitz, Lander, Mealy, Rose, Vann, Williams, Rodriguez, Nelson and Halloran

Whereas, According to statistics from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), New York City is home to approximately 348,722 veterans; and

Whereas, Many veterans in New York City are unable to secure affordable housing for themselves and their families; and

Whereas, The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) is a public housing agency (PHA) organized and funded primarily through federal and state programs; and

Whereas, The requirements for income eligibility and admission preferences for PHAs are based on federal and state law; and

Whereas, NYCHA does have priority admission preferences for certain groups, such as working families, victims of domestic violence, intimidated witnesses and those with health emergencies; and

Whereas, In the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, some veterans have faced extended tours of duty which may have created or exacerbated financial hardships for many of them and their immediate families, since military pay is more often than not substantially less than the amount such individuals earned in civilian employment; and

Whereas, Veterans are disproportionately represented in the homeless population with the VA estimating that one-third of the nation's homeless population has served in the military; and

Whereas, An already difficult transition to civilian life can be exacerbated by New York City's scarcity of affordable rental apartments, which may add to the risk of veteran homelessness; and

Whereas, The financial welfare of New York State residents serving in the military and their immediate families would be advanced by the enactment of laws designed to ease the transition from military to civilian life; and

Whereas, Public housing can serve as a stable transition to civilian life by providing affordable housing and social services;

Whereas, Currently veterans of the United States military and their immediate families receive no priority admission or preference to public housing development under any existing statutes; and

Whereas, At this time of a general economic downturn, it is more crucial than ever that assistance be provided to grant veterans and their immediate families priority access to affordable housing, in such NYCHA developments, so that returning veterans, as well as veterans who served in recent prior conflicts, may avoid financial hardship; and

Whereas, The men and women who sacrifice so much for this nation should be afforded every opportunity to receive access to affordable housing; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to amend Section 156 of the Public Housing Law to grant priority status to all veterans of the United States military and their immediate families for admittance to public housing developments.

BJG
LS #1788
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