



Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 0032-2014, **Version:** \*

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Res. No. 32

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign S.1419/A.3473, allowing baccalaureate, advanced degree programs, and certain educational and training activities to count towards the satisfaction of work activity requirements for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program participants.

By Council Members Barron, Levin, Levine, Johnson, Mendez and Van Bramer

Whereas, The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (“TANF”) program provides public assistance to needy families through federal funds given to states allowing them to develop and implement their own public assistance programs; and

Whereas, TANF mandates that recipients who are determined to be work-eligible must engage in approved work activities in order to receive public assistance; and

Whereas, TANF includes twelve categories of work activities that can count towards work participation, including but not limited to, vocational and educational training; and

Whereas, TANF regulations state that any recipient can participate in vocational and educational training for up to 12 months, which can include postsecondary education; and

Whereas, TANF allows, but does not require, states to count bachelor’s degree programs as work activities to satisfy work participation; and

Whereas, Obtaining a bachelor’s degree can increase earnings and lessen dependence on public assistance; and

Whereas, According to a Community Service Society and Resilience Advocacy Project report titled “Missed Opportunity: How New York City Can Do a Better Job of Reconnecting Youth On Public Assistance to Education and Jobs,” education is the best way to prepare young people to succeed in the labor market and

lifetime earnings increase as individuals attain higher levels of education; and

Whereas, For example, according to the Department of Labor in 2013, individuals without a high school diploma had median weekly earnings of \$468, compared to median weekly earnings of \$1,219 for those with a bachelor's degree; and

Whereas, Studies show that 87 percent of welfare recipients who receive a two-year degree never return to public assistance and those who earn a bachelor's degree remain off of public assistance nearly 100 percent of the time; and

Whereas, In New York State, public assistance is administered by the Office for Temporary and Disability Assistance ("OTDA"), and the Human Resources Administration ("HRA") is the agency that provides assistance to eligible applicants; and

Whereas, OTDA and HRA do not include participation in bachelor's degree programs in the definition of vocational educational and training; and

Whereas, S.1419, sponsored by State Senator Velmanette Montgomery, and A.3473, sponsored by Assembly Member Keith Wright, would allow public assistance recipients in New York to be able to attend bachelor's degree programs in order to satisfy their work participation requirement for public assistance; 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.1419/A.3473, allowing baccalaureate, advanced degree programs, and certain educational and training activities to count towards the satisfaction of work activity requirements for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program participants.

TC  
Res 1871/2013  
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