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Res. No. 353

Resolution expressing concern about the downturn in African-American and Latino employment in New York State government.

By Council Members Barron, James, Mark-Viverito and Foster

Whereas, 2006 represents a transition year in the state government of New York with open seats for governor and attorney general; and

Whereas, 2006 represents an opportunity to assess the direction of the government of New York State; and

Whereas, It is recognized that, most importantly, the work of government can be no better than the quality of its workforce; and

Whereas, Accordingly, that workforce should reflect the diversity of the population of New York State; and

Whereas, Its is appalling to learn of the disproportionate loss of African-American and Hispanic

employees from the total workforce of New York State government while taking note of the minuscule participation of Asians, Native-Americans and other members of the diverse population groups in New York State; and

Whereas, The loss of nine thousand African-Americans and one thousand Hispanics is an unacceptable public policy result of the reduction in the New York State government workforce; and

Whereas, It is recognized that a new executive administration has a unique opportunity to take a fresh look and prioritize administrative governance that will result in a statistically significant diversification of the New York State governmental workforce; and

Whereas, We call upon all candidates for statewide public office in the 2006 election year to pledge their support for a state government workforce that reflects the diversity of the population of New York State; and

Whereas, It is recognized that respect for a robust affirmative action policy and staffing is central to the achievement of statistically significant diversity in large workforces, candidates for statewide office will pledge to support such; and

Whereas, It is recognized that the effective use of trained affirmative action officers and units are when they are able to give direct advice and counsel to the presiding officer without mediation of that advice and counsel by subordinate officials; and

Whereas, Candidates for statewide office in the governance and prosecution of the laws of the State of New York should make every effort to support a reporting structure for affirmative action units that reflects their ability to have unfettered access to presiding officers of New York state agencies, authorities, commissions and its public university systems and their individual campuses; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York expresses its concern about the downturn in African American and Latino employment in New York State government; and be it further,

Resolved, That in recognition of their efforts, we commend the work of Assemblyman Peter M. Rivera

and the New York State Assembly/Senate Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force in bringing the heretofore discussed issue to the attention of the general public with public hearings and the groundbreaking report, “Hispanics and African-Americans Need Not Apply: The Alarming Under-representation of Minorities in the New York State Government Workforce”; and, be it further,

Resolved, That we encourage the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus of the New York State Legislature to take a more active role in the improvement of diversity in the New York State government workplace in which the lack of diversity has had a negative impact on their constituencies in realizing opportunities in the New York State public sector workplace.