



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title: Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to pass and the President to sign H.R.1668, the Safely Sheltering Disaster Victims Act of 2013.

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Res. No. 1892

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to pass and the President to sign H.R.1668, the Safely Sheltering Disaster Victims Act of 2013.

By Council Members Chin, Mendez, Arroyo, Barron, Brewer, Comrie, Eugene, Gonzalez, Jackson, James, Koslowitz, Palma, Rose and Rodriguez

Whereas, Following Superstorm Sandy (“Sandy”) in October 2012, Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced that the City would likely have to find housing for 30,000 to 40,000 people who were displaced from their pre-Sandy homes; and

Whereas, As housing units were made habitable by the restoration of essential services such as heat and hot water and the completion of necessary repairs, many people were able to return to their homes; and

Whereas, Due to a lack of viable housing options, others, especially renters, remained displaced for months; and

Whereas, According to a study by the Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy at NYU entitled “Sandy’s Effects on Housing in New York City” (“the Study”), just 22 percent of rental units in New York City

are affordable to households whose annual income is below \$30,000; and

Whereas, The Study found that 55 percent of households that registered for Federal Emergency Management Agency assistance after Sandy were renters and 65 percent of those renters had household incomes of less than \$30,000 per year; and

Whereas, H.R.1668, the Safely Sheltering Disaster Victims Act of 2013 (“the Act”) attempts to help low-income victims of Sandy obtain safe, affordable housing; and

Whereas, The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) runs the Community Development Block Grant (“CDBG”) program which provides communities with resources to address a wide range of community development needs; and

Whereas, One type of assistance offered to cities, counties and States under the CDBG program is Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (“CDBG-DR”) funds; and

Whereas, To help communities recover from disasters, CDBG-DR funds may be used for recovery efforts involving housing, economic development, infrastructure and prevention of further damage to affected areas; and

Whereas, The U.S. Congress appropriated \$16 billion in CDBG-DR funds to assist communities in recovering from Hurricane Sandy; and

Whereas, The Act would transfer \$50 million from the \$16 billion CDBG-DR appropriation to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (“HUD”) Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (“Section 8”) program; and

Whereas, The Section 8 program is the federal government’s major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly and the disabled to afford housing in the private market; and

Whereas, Following Sandy, the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (“HPD”) which administers HUD’s Section 8 program in the City, prioritized extremely low-income victims of Sandy for approximately 150 to 200 Section 8 vouchers; and

Whereas, The demand for Section 8 housing assistance often exceeds the limited resources available to HUD and long waiting periods for such assistance are common; and

Whereas, The Act would provide rental assistance to a greater number of struggling families in Sandy-affected areas; and

Whereas, Further, the Act would allow eligible families to continue to receive rental assistance after the \$50 million is no longer available so long as appropriations are available; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Congress to pass and the President to sign H.R. 1668, the Safely Sheltering Disaster Victims Act of 2013.

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