



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0557-2023, **Version:** *

Res. No. 557

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation to increase the current qualifying income limit for seniors and persons with disabilities who are eligible for the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption program and the Disability Rent Increase Exemption program on the basis of the regional consumer price index.

By Council Members Louis, Bottcher, Brewer, Powers, Menin, Hudson, Richardson Jordan, Yeger, Restler, Marte, Hanif, Ung, Schulman, Avilés, Lee and Rivera

Whereas, The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) program and the Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) program, also collectively known as the New York City Rent Freeze Program, provide rent exemptions from all or part of certain rent increases for eligible seniors and persons with disabilities, respectively; and

Whereas, The Rent Freeze Program specifically freezes the rent for residents of rent-regulated housing who have a combined household income of \$50,000 or less, are at least 62 years old or have a qualifying disability, and spend more than one-third of their household income on rent; and

Whereas, The current qualifying income limit of \$50,000 was first increased in 2014 from the previous \$29,000 for SCRIE and \$20,412 for single-person households or \$29,484 for two-person or more households for DRIE following New York State legislation authorizing the City Council to act accordingly; and

Whereas, Due to inflation and other factors, in the first half of 2022 the regional consumer price index rose 6.7 percent, with food prices rising 9.1 percent and energy prices climbing 39.2 percent in the New York City area according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics; and

Whereas, This rise in prices presents significant economic challenges for New Yorkers and has made the cost of living in New York City higher than it was in 2014 when the \$50,000 income cap was initially

established; and

Whereas, Many senior citizens and persons with disabilities are currently not eligible for SCRIE and DRIE because their incomes fall outside this \$50,000 income cap, despite their struggle to make ends meet; and

Whereas, In January 2021, New York State Senator Brian Kavanagh introduced S. 2897, which would amend the Real Property Tax Law by providing that the maximum income threshold for SCRIE and DRIE be increased by the Commissioner of the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal on January 1 of each year to reflect any increase in the regional consumer price index for the N.Y., N.Y.-Northeastern, N.J. area, based upon the index for all urban consumers (CPI-U) during the preceding 12-month period; and

Whereas, Since then, this bill has not passed the State Legislature nor been signed by the Governor; and

Whereas, Increasing the qualifying income limit for SCRIE and DRIE annually on the basis of the consumer price index would ensure that these critical housing assistance programs reflect the changing economic realities of increased prices and cost of living in New York City; and

Whereas, Seniors and persons with disabilities living in New York City should be stably housed and protected against displacement from their homes; 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 legislation to increase the current qualifying income limit for seniors and persons with disabilities who are eligible for the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption program and the Disability Rent Increase Exemption program on the basis of the regional consumer price index.

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