



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 198

Resolution calling upon the City Council to convene an emergency summit to address the concerns highlighted in the recent Community Service Society report, “A Crisis in Black Male Employment,” including the need for employment services, training, and educational and technological programs, which specifically target the employment disparities and disadvantages facing the African-American community.

By Council Members Barron, Clarke, Dilan, Jackson, James, Jennings, Martinez, Sanders, Stewart, Vann and Liu

Whereas, Led by a rebound on Wall Street, a revival of tourism, and a robust housing market, the general consensus is that the New York City economy is now emerging from a nearly three-year slump; and

Whereas, However, while the economy appears to be on the road to recovery, indicators show that, for many New Yorkers, it is far from the fast track to prosperity; and certain groups of New Yorkers in particular have yet to reap any benefits from the economic rebound; and

Whereas, While unemployment continues to remain relatively high throughout the City, New York’s African-American male populace appears to be suffering disproportionately; statistics show that only half of the City’s Black male population were employed in 2003, pointing to a near crisis of joblessness facing New York City’s Black men; and

Whereas, In the report, “A Crisis in Black Male Employment: Unemployment and Joblessness in New York City, 2003,” the Community Service Society (“CSS”) of New York reveals that unemployment rose among Black men during the nation’s recent recession with the latest statistics indicating that only 51.8 percent of Black men between the ages of 16 through 64 are employed; according to the non-profit organization, this is a dramatic decline of 12.2 percentage points from the year 2000; and

Whereas, “This report raises troubling, urgent questions that cannot be ignored,” said David R. Jones,

President of CSS; “Joblessness of this magnitude harms individuals, destroys families and is corrosive to communities, but ultimately diminishes opportunities and creates problems for all New Yorkers;” and

Whereas, While job-holding among African-American women in New York rose over the last three years, the employment rate for African-American men was 23.9% lower than the rate for white men; and

Whereas, Further, while the unemployment rate was 8.5% overall in New York City, the numbers were higher in communities of color; African-Americans constituted 12.9 percent of the unemployment rate, while Hispanics leveled out at 9.6 percent; educational background was also a factor, with 11.2 percent of the unemployed comprised of individuals with less than a high school diploma; and

Whereas, According to the CSS report, despite forecasts of modest economic growth over the next several years, those groups of City residents who have suffered a disproportionate share of the decline in employment during the downturn will likely continue to be burdened by diminished job opportunities for some time to come; based on these findings, CSS has called for major steps to remedy these disproportionately high rates of unemployment, including calling upon political leaders to convene a task force to address the troubling disparities; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the City Council should convene an emergency summit to address the concerns highlighted in the recent Community Service Society report, “A Crisis in Black Male Employment,” including the need for employment services, training, and educational and technological programs, which specifically target the employment disparities and disadvantages facing the African-American community.

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