



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1397

Resolution calling upon the state and federal government to reimburse New York City for ambulance transport fees incurred by individuals unable to pay for such services.

By Council Members James, Cabrera, Chin, Dickens, Dromm, Gonzalez, Koo, Koppell, Mendez, Rose, Williams and Wills

Whereas, In New York City, the Fire Department (FDNY) responds to fires, public safety and medical emergencies, natural disasters and terrorist acts; and

Whereas, The FDNY is tasked with protecting individuals and property throughout the City; and

Whereas, Each year, the FDNY responds to more than 276,000 fire and non-fire related emergencies and more than 1.2 million medical emergencies; and

Whereas, The FDNY's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is the largest provider of EMS services in New York City and across the nation; and

Whereas, According to testimony delivered by the FDNY, when an insured individual experiences a medical emergency and requires an EMS ambulance, the FDNY will be compensated for such ambulance services approximately 95 percent of time; and

Whereas, However, if the same individual does not have insurance, it is likely that the FDNY will not be compensated for such service; and

Whereas, The FDNY estimates that approximately 20 percent of individuals that utilize EMS are identified as self-paying; and

Whereas, Initially, the FDNY works to recoup outstanding ambulance fees by working with the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation or the voluntary hospitals to find insurance or recoupment

information for the affected individual; and

Whereas, However, despite their best efforts, it is estimated that the FDNY is unable to recoup approximately \$140 million in ambulance expenses every year; and

Whereas, Unfortunately, the FDNY is shouldered with the cost of providing critical and often lifesaving services without any government compensation; and

Whereas, While there are dedicated funds which pay hospitals for the provision of care for the uninsured and underinsured, this fund does not compensate for emergency medical services; and

Whereas, The federal and state government should ensure that the FDNY has adequate resources to protect the public safety and health of individuals in New York City; and

Whereas, Only with a significant investment from all levels of government can we guarantee that the FDNY continues to provide the highest quality of care to New Yorkers; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the state and federal governments to reimburse New York City for ambulance transport fees incurred by individuals unable to pay for such services.

JM
LS# 3505
4/25/12