



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0696-2023, **Version:** *

Res. No. 696

Resolution calling on the State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.2770/A.1971, which would establish tiers of essential employees during a state of emergency.

By the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams) and Council Members Louis and Stevens

Whereas, On March 20, 2020, former New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed the ‘New York State On PAUSE’ Executive Order 202.6 mandating all non-essential businesses statewide to close due to the outbreak of the new coronavirus, and the resulting disease, COVID-19; and

Whereas, The issuance of Executive Order 202.6 caused confusion as to who qualified as an essential worker, prompting the New York Department of Economic Development to publish guidance on what businesses and services are deemed essential; and

Whereas, According to the New York Times Editorial Board, workers who are fundamental to serving communities such as transit employees, grocers and pharmacists, lack personal protective equipment and deserve more attention for their high risk of exposure to COVID-19 when working to keep our city operating; and

Whereas, The Brookings Institution observed that quarantine and social distancing practices revealed an increased dependency on workers not traditionally seen as first responders to keep essential services operating; and

Whereas, According to the New York City Department of Small Business Services, limited child care and lack of proper safety supplies have been obstacles for workers that New Yorkers rely on to continue working during a time of crisis; and

Whereas, Within the transit industry alone for example, 173 workers have died amid lack of personal

protections according to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority; and

Whereas, The lack of safety protections and hazardous working conditions have led to nationwide calls to demand that protective supplies be distributed across various industries; and

Whereas, S.2770, introduced by New York State Senator Jessica Ramos, and its companion bill, A.1971, introduced by Assembly Member Catalina Cruz, would establish tiers of essential employees during a state of emergency, to ensure that a wider range of workers have access to federal, state and local mandated medical assistance, benefits and protections that would help maintain such employee positions including, but not limited to, child care, medical supplies and/or personal protective equipment; and

Whereas, The necessity of educators, child care workers, transit employees, information technology personnel, correctional employees, substance disorder treatment workers, in-store food personnel, delivery workers, street vendors, janitorial, custodial and cleaning staff, in addition to first responders and many others in times of emergency is apparent to keep New York City functioning; and

Whereas, By codifying such workers as essential, the state formally recognizes workers' contributions to society, affirming their right to access services, benefits and protections to help maintain their positions, as such workers risk their lives to keep New York City running; now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.2770/A.1971, which would establish tiers of essential employees during a state of emergency.

Session 12

AH
LS 4545
2/24/22

Session 11

AH
LS #14850
Res. #1342-2020