



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1705-2008, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1705

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to amend the state Public Authorities Law to allow the New York City Council to appoint at least three members of the New York City Water Board.

By Council Members Weprin, Brewer, Comrie, Fidler, Gentile, Gerson, James, Koppell, Liu, Nelson, Rivera, Vacca, Vallone Jr. and White Jr.

Whereas, The Department of Environmental Protection supplies water to over eight million people in all five boroughs and an additional one million people in four surrounding counties; and

Whereas, During FY 2008 to date, the water supply system has provided an average of 1,096 million gallons of water per day to the City from three upstate watersheds and reservoir systems, as well as 4 million gallons per day from a system of wells in Queens; and

Whereas, In 1984, because of New York City's decades long neglect of the water supply and wastewater treatment systems, the New York State legislature created the New York City Municipal Water Finance Authority (the "Water Finance Authority") and the New York City Water Board (the "Water Board") to assure that the operation and maintenance of those systems would be adequately funded and protected for the people of New York City; and

Whereas, The functions of the Water Board include establishing, collecting and enforcing the payment of rates and charges for the provision of water and wastewater treatment such that water and sewer systems are placed on a self-sustaining fiscal basis and entering into agreements with the Water Finance Authority and the City for financing the construction of water projects; and

Whereas, The Water Board consists of seven members who are appointed by the Mayor to serve two-year terms; and

Whereas, Although the Water Board makes significant decisions which affect the entire City, no appointments to the Water Board are subject to Council approval nor does the Council make any direct appointments; and

Whereas, Appointees to the Water Board have occasionally been current and former administration officials; and

Whereas, The Water Board is traditionally staffed by people who work for Mayoral agencies and it is they who perform the financial analyses used to develop annual water and sewer rate proposals and to prepare the rate proposals; and

Whereas, By allowing the Council to appoint three Water Board members, particularly when a Water Board member is also a member of the Mayoral administration, confidence in the Water Board, and confidence in the bonds issued by the Water Authority, will be enhanced; and

Whereas, Council appointments to the Water Board would ensure independent evaluation of the annual water and sewer rate proposals and the financial analyses that underlie those rate proposals; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to amend the state Public Authorities Law to allow the New York City Council to appoint at least three members of the New York City Water Board.

LS# 6003
PM
10/27/08