S T A T E O F N E W Y O R K

5960

2011-2012 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

March 3, 2011

Introduced by M. of A. KAVANAGH, BOYLAND, COLTON, JEFFRIES, ORTIZ, P. RIVERA -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. COOK -- read once and referred to the Committee on Housing

AN ACT to authorize the New York city housing authority to conduct a survey of housing developments under its control for the purpose of determining the percentage of non-English proficient residents in such developments and requiring institution of language assistance programs at public housing developments at which more than ten percent of the residents do not speak English

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Not later than January 1, 2012, and every three years thereafter, the New York city housing authority shall conduct a survey of each public housing development under its control to determine the percentage of residents in each development who are not proficient in English and ascertain the languages in which such residents are proficient. If more than ten percent of the residents of a given development are non-English proficient, the development shall establish a language assistance program where non-English proficient residents would have effective access to communicate with development supervisors and personnel in a language in which they are proficient. This program shall include, but not be limited to:

a. employing a minimum of one person proficient in one or more languages spoken by the non-English proficient residents of the development, so as to ensure that every resident of the development has access to at least one staff member who speaks at least one language spoken by such resident;

b. considering proficiency in one or more of the non-English language(s) spoken at the development as a major criterion in the hiring process;

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [ ] is old law to be omitted.

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c. ensuring that all staff members are trained on how to properly utilize New York city housing authority's Language Services Unit to properly communicate with residents; and

d. providing translation of all commonly used forms and informational materials into the primary language.

S 2. Within 30 days of the institution of a language assistance program at a development, the development management shall prepare a notice of the availability of the language assistance programs for non-English proficient residents and shall mail such notice to the homes of the development's non-English proficient residents. The notice shall be written in the residents' primary language and shall specify the name and contact information for the bilingual employees employed by the development.

S 3. Each development shall keep a record documenting its language assistance program and shall submit a summary report annually to the New York city housing authority. Such record and report shall include, but not be limited to:

a. The number of non-English proficient residents who receive such assistance;

b. The number of non-English proficient households where one resident is English language proficient;

c. The number of complaints filed by non-English proficient or limited English proficient residents; and

d. The number of bilingual personnel used to assist in the language assistance and translation services.

S 4. The New York city housing authority shall promulgate such rules, regulations and standards as may be necessary and proper to implement the provisions of this act, including the undertaking of the survey, the establishment of the language assistance programs and the monitoring of such programs to ensure on-going compliance by the developments at which the programs are instituted.

S 5. This act shall take effect immediately.