STATE OF NEW YORK

10485

IN SENATE

May 15, 2026

Introduced by Sen. GONZALEZ -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development

AN ACT to amend the public housing law, in relation to creating a pilot program for families in public housing whose eligibility is threatened due to youth employment, and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon the expiration thereof

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "youth employment empowerment act (YEEA)".

§ 2. The public housing law is amended by adding a new article 16 to read as follows:

ARTICLE XVI

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT EMPOWERMENT ACT

Section 650. Definitions.

651. Public housing and youth employment subsidy pilot program.

652. Eligibility.

653. Funding allocation and distribution.

654. Payment of housing vouchers.

655. Subsidy amount determination.

656. Verification of income.

657. Annual reports.

§ 650. Definitions. For the purposes of this article, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

1. "Imminent loss of housing" means having received a verified petition or notice of eviction; having received a court order resulting from an eviction action that notifies the individual or family that they must leave their housing; or facing loss of housing due to a court order to vacate the premises due to loss of eligible status.

2. "Imminent rent increase" means having received a verified notice of an increase of rents due to being outside the eligible income range.

3. "Public housing agency" means any county, municipality, or other governmental entity or public body that is authorized to administer any

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

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public housing program (or an agency or instrumentality of such an entity), and any other public or private non-profit entity that administers any other public housing program or assistance.

4. "Housing subsidy local administrator" means a public housing agency, as defined in subdivision three of this section, or Section 8 local administrator designated to administer the public housing subsidy and youth employment pilot program within a community, county or region, or statewide, on behalf of and under contract with the public housing agency. In the city of New York, the housing subsidy local administrator shall be the New York city department of housing preservation and development, or the New York city housing authority, or both.

5. "Family" means a group of persons residing together. Such group includes, but is not limited to, a family with or without children (a child who is temporarily away from the home because of placement in foster care is considered a member of the family) or any remaining members of a tenant family. The commissioner shall have the discretion to determine if any other group of persons qualifies as a family.

6. "Owner" means any private person or any entity, including a cooperative, an agency of the federal government, or a public housing agency, having the legal right to lease or sublease dwelling units.

7. "Dwelling unit" means a single-family dwelling, including attached structures such as porches and stoops; or a single-family dwelling unit in a structure that contains more than one separate residential dwelling unit, and in which each such unit is used or occupied, or intended to be used or occupied, in whole or in part, as the residence of one or more persons.

8. "Income" shall mean the same as it is defined by 24 CFR § 5.609 and any amendments thereto.

9. "Adjusted income" shall mean the same as it is defined by 24 CFR § 5.611 and any amendments thereto.

10. "Subsidy" means a payment made to an approved individual for the cost of securing new accommodation or rental assistance to remain in place.

11. "Lease" means a written agreement between an owner and a tenant for the leasing of a dwelling unit to the tenant. The lease establishes the conditions for occupancy of the dwelling unit by an individual or family with housing assistance payments under a contract between the owner and the housing access voucher local administrator.

12. "Youth" means an individual under the age of twenty-one.

§ 651. Public housing and youth employment subsidy pilot program. The commissioner, subject to the appropriation of funds for this purpose, shall implement a four-year pilot program to provide rental assistance in the form of housing subsidies for eligible families who face an imminent loss of housing or increase in rent in accordance with the provisions of this article. The housing subsidy local administrator shall issue subsidies pursuant to this article beginning March first, two thousand twenty-eight subject to appropriation of funds for this purpose, and may contract with the division of housing and community renewal to administer any aspect of this pilot program in accordance with the provisions of this article. The commissioner shall designate and contract with housing access subsidy local administrators in the state to make subsidies available to such families beginning March first, two thousand twenty-eight and to administer other aspects of the pilot program in accordance with the provisions of this article.

§ 652. Eligibility. The commissioner may issue rules or guidance for determining eligibility under this program, as determined by the local housing agency, provided that:

1. A family shall be eligible for this pilot program if they are facing imminent loss of housing or are rent burdened and facing an increase in rent due to an increase in income earned by a member of the family who is a youth. Families who meet the standards in this section shall be eligible regardless of immigration status.

2. An individual or family in receipt of rental assistance pursuant to this pilot program shall no longer be financially eligible for such assistance under this pilot program at the conclusion of such youth's employment.

3. When an individual or family becomes financially ineligible for rental assistance under this pilot program pursuant to subdivision two of this section, the individual or family shall retain rental assistance for a period no less than one year, subject to appropriation of funds for this purpose.

4. Income eligibility shall be verified prior to a housing access subsidy local administrator's initial determination to provide rental assistance for this pilot program and upon determination of such eligibility, a family and the employed youth shall annually certify their income for the purpose of determining continued eligibility and any adjustments to such rental assistance.

§ 653. Funding allocation and distribution. Subject to appropriation, funding shall be allocated by the commissioner in each county, or their designee. Funding for counties located within the city of New York shall be allocated directly to the New York city department of housing preservation and development and/or the New York city housing authority.

§ 654. Payment of housing vouchers. 1. The housing voucher shall be paid directly to any owner under a contract between the owner of the dwelling unit to be occupied by the voucher recipient and the appropriate housing access voucher local administrator. The commissioner shall determine the form of the housing assistance payment contract and the method of payment.

2. A housing assistance payment contract entered into pursuant to subdivision one of this section may provide for an initial payment of up to five months of rent arrears that have accrued during prior occupancy of a dwelling unit by a voucher recipient if such payment of arrears is necessary to continue such voucher recipient's occupancy of such dwelling unit, and thereby prevent imminent loss of housing.

§ 655. Subsidy amount determination. The monthly subsidy amount under this article for a family whose eligibility for rental assistance has been denied or reduced due to a determination based on income earned by a member of the family who is a youth, as set forth in section six hundred fifty-two of this article, shall be either:

1. the monthly market value of rent for a family who has lost housing eligibility; or

2. the difference between the prior year's rent and any increase which resulted from such adverse determination.

§ 656. Verification of income. The commissioner shall establish procedures which are appropriate and necessary to assure that income data provided to the housing access voucher local administrator and owners by individuals and families applying for or receiving assistance under this article is complete and accurate. A youth shall verify employment to the commissioner through the submission of an approved method, to be determined by the commissioner, including but not limited to paystubs.

§ 657. Annual reports. 1. The commissioner shall, on or before November first, two thousand twenty-eight and annually thereafter until the conclusion of the pilot program created pursuant to this article, submit a report on the implementation of this article to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, the speaker of the assembly, the chair of the senate committee on housing, the chair of the senate finance committee, the chair of the assembly committee on housing, and the chair of the assembly ways and means committee.

2. The commissioner of the New York city department of housing preservation and development, or the chief executive officer of the New York city housing authority, or both, shall, on or before November first, two thousand twenty-eight and annually thereafter until the conclusion of the pilot program created pursuant to this article, submit a report on the implementation of this article in the city of New York to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, the speaker of the assembly, the chair of the senate committee on housing, the chair of the senate finance committee, the chair of the assembly committee on housing, and the chair of the assembly ways and means committee.

3. Such reports shall include, but need not be limited to, the following: (a) the amount of funding allocated for each county or the city of New York for subsidies pursuant to this article, (b) the number of individuals or families who applied for such subsidy pursuant to this article, (c) the number of individuals or families placed on waiting lists for subsidies pursuant to this article, if any such waiting lists exist, (d) the number of individuals or families issued subsidies pursuant to this article, (e) the median income of individuals or families issued subsidies pursuant to this article, (f) the median payment standard per dwelling unit, including the monthly assistance payment and monthly rent obligation, for subsidies pursuant to this article, and (g) the number of individuals or families who had been issued subsidies pursuant to this article but who became no longer financially eligible during the reporting period.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire and be deemed repealed March 1, 2032.