Legislature Passes NYC Housing Authority Reform

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Mayor Michael Bloomberg had a victory in the state Legislature today after a measure to reform the New York City Housing Authority was sent to the governor for his signature.

The legislation does away with the $186,00 annual salaries they receive and adds three new members to the board. Three members will now be required to be residents of public housing. Board members will also no longer enjoy having a driver on call at all times as they do now.

“Across the country, cities have abandoned public housing, but we refused to do that," Bloomberg said in a statement. "We continued to invest and support our public housing system, and these reforms will help us continue to improve it — in spite of a decade cutbacks by Congress."

Bloomberg thanked Assemblyman Keith Wright and Sen. Marty Golden for their help moving the bill.

NYCHA is expected to go forward with layoffs , a hiring freeze and the closure of community centers as well as youth and senior programs because of the federal sequester. Almost 100,000 residents who receive reduced rent through a federal program will see their rent increase by up to $72 a month.

Democratic mayoral candidate Bill Thompson attacked NYCHA in a statement today:

To punish low-income New Yorkers, most of whom are people of color, for NYCHA’s gross mismanagement, is unjust and unacceptable. Our communities deserve better. I demand that Mayor Bloomberg fire NYCHA Commissioner Rhea. Commissioner Rhea completely failed to

prepare for federal funding cuts that have been expected for a long time and continues to oversee NYCHA's perpetual deficits. The Mayor must implement a real plan that avoids painful rent increases that fixed-income families can't afford and our communities should not tolerate. When I'm Mayor, I will overhaul the incompetent governing structure of NYCHA and replace it with professionals, NYCHA residents, and real mayoral accountability for the performance of NYCHA.

Tags: Tagged in: housing Keith Wright Marty Golden Mayor Michael Bloomberg