



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0034-2018, **Version:** *

Res. No. 34

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to introduce and pass and the Governor to sign such legislation which would amend the New York State Correction Law by enhancing training for staff in residential mental health treatment unit programs inside correctional facilities.

By Council Members Rosenthal, Koo and Ayala

Whereas, According to the United States Department of Justice, nationwide state prison suicides rose from 192 in 2013 to 249 in 2014, which represents a thirty percent increase; and

Whereas, *CBS News New York* reports that suicide is the leading cause of death in jails nationally after illnesses; and

Whereas, the *New York Daily News* reported in 2016 that the City's average jail suicide rate is approximately 17 per 100,000 inmates; and

Whereas, According to the *2017 Mayor's Management Report*, 42 percent of the 9,500 incarcerated individuals at Rikers Island were diagnosed with a mental illness during fiscal year 2017; and

Whereas, According to a 2013 article in *The New York Times*, mentally ill inmates stay in jail nearly twice as long as people without mental illness, an average of 112 days compared with 61 days; and

Whereas, It is critical to the well-being of inmates to ensure that those individuals who work in the correctional system are trained to recognize symptoms and indicators that may result in suicide, or other forms of self-harm or harm to others, and refer such inmates to appropriate treatment; and

Whereas, Amending the New York State Correction Law by increasing the training for staff in residential mental health treatment unit programs inside correctional facilities provides for a more robust approach to properly treat inmates with mental illness; and

Whereas, Enhancing mental health training for correctional staff would help reduce the number of suicides in New York correctional facilities; and

Whereas, New York should help ensure that inmates in correction facilities are provided the best possible mental health treatment while incarcerated; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to introduce and pass and the Governor to sign such legislation which would amend the New York State Correction Law by enhancing training for staff in residential mental health treatment unit programs inside correctional facilities.

WJH
LS 1749/ Res. 349-2014
12/18/17
LS 276