



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 886

Resolution urging the New York State Department of Correctional Services to adopt the New York City Department of Correction model of discharge planning.

By Council Members Clarke, Barron, Comrie, Gonzalez, James, Palma, Quinn, Sanders Jr. and Stewart

Whereas, According to the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 64,022 inmates were under custody of the New York State Department of Correction as of January 2, 2005; and

Whereas, According to the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 5,520 parole and conditional release violators were returned to prison during the period January to November of 2004; and

Whereas, According to The Correctional Association of New York, between 60 and 70% of inmates have a history of drug abuse and 75% of inmates have not graduated high school; and

Whereas, It costs approximately \$32,000 to maintain a prisoner in a New York State prison every year; it would be less costly to provide an inmate with social services and government benefits to reduce the risk of recidivism; and

Whereas, Recently, Roy Williams, an ex-convict, was released from prison and in less than two weeks was responsible for eight crimes in the Queens area including a carjacking, bank robbery and a rape; and

Whereas, This man claimed that he was a crack addict and his goal was to return to prison because his girlfriend left him and he did not want to live; and

Whereas, Discharge planning services may have helped Mr. Williams to cope with the new changes in his life; and

Whereas, On November 23, 2004, the New York City Council adopted a law codifying many of the

discharge planning services of the city's Department of Correction; and

Whereas, This law provides that the Department of Correction, with the Department of Homeless Services, identify inmates who are repeatedly admitted to city correctional institutions and are housed in shelters provided by the Department of Homeless Services; and

Whereas, In addition, the law provides information on the discharge planning needs of each inmate, subject to the consent of each inmate, to any social service organization that is providing discharge-planning services to the inmate under contract with the Department of Correction; and

Whereas, The law also calls for the provision of applications for government benefits to inmates, and making applications accessible in areas where inmates congregate; and

Whereas, Under the law, the Department of Correction must provide assistance with the preparation of applications for government benefits; and

Whereas, The New York State Department of Correctional Services should adopt the same provisions so that ex-convicts are provided with the assistance needed to reduce the rate of recidivism; and

Whereas, Assisting inmates in accessing social services and government benefits will improve their ability to re-integrate into the community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the city of New York urges the New York State Department of Correctional Services to adopt the New York City Department of Correction model of discharge planning.

DW
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