



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1872-2009, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1872

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to amend Article 11 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law to add Quaker parrots to the list of “protected birds,” which will oblige the City to take all possible steps to humanely relocate Quaker parrots that have nested on city-owned properties that are slated for demolition or removal or where other projects require removal of the birds.

By Council Members Avella, Palma and Vacca

Whereas, Quaker parrots, which are also known as Monk Parakeets, although native to Argentina, have a long and colorful history in New York City; and

Whereas, It is believed that Quaker parrots were first imported to the United States in shipments arriving in New York City in the late 1960’s for sale at area pet stores, and

Whereas, One shipment that arrived at John F. Kennedy International Airport around 1969 was either intentionally or accidentally opened releasing an entire shipment of Quaker parrots into the wild; and

Whereas, Quaker parrots are dominant around Brooklyn in colonies of 50 - 60 birds, have established colonies in the Bronx and Queens, and are beloved by many members of these communities; and

Whereas, When the parrots first became prominent it was feared that they would disturb local birds and plants, and as a result they are sometimes described as being a "potentially dangerous species,” by provisions of New Jersey and Connecticut state law, even though they have not caused any problems for native plants or birds; and

Whereas, The habitats of some Quaker parrot colonies residing on City property are in danger as a result of upcoming projects that will cause their habitats to be destroyed; and

Whereas, In 2007, the New York City Department of Design and Construction, through the help of volunteers and employees, sponsored a project to relocate parrots whose nests were in danger as a result of

construction on the Throggs Neck Little League baseball complex; and

Whereas, The number of wild Quaker parrots has remained stable because the parrots “self-manage” the sizes of their flocks; and

Whereas, Under section 11-0103(5)(a) of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law (ECL), nests of protected birds cannot be disturbed; and

Whereas, Under ECL §11-0103(5)(a), undomesticated psittacine birds, which include parrots, are not protected, and as a result, ECL §11-0505(7), which prevents habitats of protected birds from being disturbed does not apply to them; and

Whereas, Under ECL §11-0505(7), it is required that nests of protected birds be left undisturbed, except if the nests need to be moved to be maintained; and

Whereas, Quaker parrots are not currently protected under the New York State Environmental Conservation Law and their lives and homes are in danger during any construction projects that might disturb their habitats; and

Whereas, Quaker parrots are deserving of the protections afforded under New York State law as a “protected bird,”; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to amend Article 11 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law to add Quaker parrots to the list of “protected birds,” which will oblige the City to take all possible steps to humanely relocate Quaker parrots that have nested on city-owned properties that are slated for demolition or removal or where other projects require removal of the birds.

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