



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0970-2005, **Version:** *

Res. No. 970

Resolution calling upon the New Jersey State Police Department and the United States Department of Justice to cease portraying Assata Shakur as a terrorist, and calling upon the appropriate authorities to rescind the reward for Shakur's capture and grant her clemency.

By Council Members Barron, Sanders Jr. and Seabrook

Whereas, Joanne Chesimard, also known as Assata Shakur, is a social justice activist, a poet, a mother and a grandmother; and

Whereas, Shakur, as a member of the East Coast chapter of the Black Panther Party, actively participated in facilitating educational programs for adults and young people and assisted in the organization's free breakfast programs for children; and

Whereas, According to the Hands Off Assata Campaign and the Talking Drum web site, during the 1960's and 1970's Shakur was a victim of racial profiling and a target of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Counterintelligence Program, also known as COINTELPRO; and

Whereas, According to an interview Shakur gave in Our Time Press, in 1971 she was forced underground by federal & state charges against her from which she was later acquitted or which were later dropped; and

Whereas, According to the New York Daily News, in 1973, a New Jersey State Trooper stopped a vehicle shortly after midnight at the New Jersey Turnpike for an apparent broken tail light, and the incident resulted in a gunfight with the resulting deaths of a New Jersey State Trooper and one of the car's passengers, as well as injuries to Shakur and another officer; and

Whereas, Shakur was convicted of first degree murder and was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1977;

and

Whereas, In an 1998 interview with WNBC-TV and through the Associated Press, Shakur has proclaimed her innocence and described how she was shot while she had her hands up in the air and shot once again in the back; and

Whereas, On November 1979, with the help of four of her visitors, Shakur escaped from the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women in Clinton, New Jersey; and

Whereas, Today, Shakur is living in Cuba, where she received political asylum, has attended college and obtained a masters degree, published an autobiography, written poetry and essays, had a documentary film made about her life and keeps contact with her daughter and grandchild; and

Whereas, On April 28, 2005, the reward for Shakur's capture was increased to one million dollars; and

Whereas, According to the Afrocuban web site, Shakur has the support of numerous National & International groups, including the Black Radical Congress, Global Exchange, Jericho, Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, National Conference of Black Lawyers, Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO)/Pastors for Peace, Venceremos Brigade and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New Jersey State Police Department and the United States Department of Justice to cease portraying Assata Shakur as a terrorist, and calls upon the appropriate authorities to rescind the reward for Shakur's capture and grant her clemency.

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MDP
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