



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1102

Resolution calling on the State to require all New York State Correctional facilities to inform previously-incarcerated people of their right to vote at the time they exit the prison system

By Council Members Crowley, Koslowitz, Mealy, Richards, Chin, Rosenthal and Constantinides

Whereas, Felony disfranchisement is a policy that prohibits citizens from voting upon conviction of a felony; and

Whereas, Felony disenfranchisement is an obstacle to participation in democratic life; and

Whereas, According to an editorial in the New York Times, the origins of felony disenfranchisement stem from Jim Crow laws that were designed to “neutralize the black electorate”; and

Whereas, According to the Sentencing Project, the impact of felony disenfranchisement is racially disparate, resulting in 1 of every 13 African Americans unable to vote nationwide; and

Whereas, According to State law, individuals who have been convicted of a felony cannot vote while incarcerated or on parole; and

Whereas, According to a report by the New York Civil Liberties Union, an estimated 122,018 people with felony convictions are barred from voting in New York State; and

Whereas, According to a study by the Sentencing Project, over 40 percent of prisoners believe that incarceration causes someone to permanently lose his or her right to vote, even though State law allows individuals convicted of a felony to register to vote once they are on probation or once they have completed parole; and

Whereas, While voting rights are automatically restored, a previously-incarcerated individual must know to register; and

Whereas, No information about their voting rights is currently provided to previously-incarcerated individuals once they are on probation or have completed parole; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the State to require all New York State Correctional facilities to inform previously-incarcerated people of their right to vote at the time they exit the prison system.

LS #7914
6/2/2016
JR