



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1348-2008, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1348

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to amend the New York Public Officers Law to allow 16 and 17 year olds to be appointed and serve on New York City community boards as full participating members.

By Council Members Brewer, James, Palma, Sanders Jr., Stewart, Mark-Viverito and Gerson

Whereas, The involvement of youth in civic affairs is a vital part of engaging and enfranchising youth early in life; and

Whereas, Article 2 of the New York Public Officers Law states that no person should hold a civil office unless that person has attained the age of eighteen years; and

Whereas, 16 and 17 year olds are therefore disenfranchised from an essential part of American citizenship; and

Whereas, In the State of New York, a 16 year old is eligible to obtain a driver learner's permit; and

Whereas, Currently New York law allows 16 and 17 year olds to be charged and tried as adults; and

Whereas, Even though a 16 or 17 year old must have parental consent, under New York State law, he or she would be able to obtain a marriage license; and

Whereas, According to the National Youth Rights Association, at least 80% of high school students work before graduation; and

Whereas, In New York State, many 16 and 17 year olds are working and paying taxes and should have some say as to how their taxes are being spent; and

Whereas, Anya Kamenetz, author of the book, "Generation Debt" states that from a developmental and vocational point of view, the late teens are the right starting point for young people to think seriously about the

future; and

Whereas, Ms. Kamenetz also states that government can help in this process by bestowing adult rights along with responsibilities to our youth; and

Whereas, Denying 16 and 17 year olds the right to participate in the democratic process of their communities while simultaneously imposing adult charges and responsibilities upon them makes them second class citizens; and

Whereas, In 2002 a CIRCLE/PEW Civic research found that citizens are built during the high school years through active community participation, while living at home and attached to teachers; and

Whereas, 300 high school students at the Future Voters of America and Police Athletic League 2007 New York City Youth Congress resolved to campaign for youth enfranchisement through community board membership; and

Whereas, One way to ensure that 16 and 17 year olds are included in making important decisions and contributions to their community is to allow them to serve as full participating members in their local community boards; now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to amend the New York Public Officers Law to allow 16 and 17 year olds to be appointed and serve on New York City community boards as full participating members.

IR
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