



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1086-2007, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1086

Resolution calling upon the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to install 24-hour suicide prevention hotline telephones on all New York City bridges within their jurisdictions.

By Council Members Seabrook, Gerson, James, Nelson, Palma, Sanders Jr., Weprin and White Jr.

Whereas, Two New York state agencies, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, are responsible for the maintenance and safety of eleven New York City bridges; and

Whereas, These bridges, such as the Triborough Bridge and George Washington Bridge, are some of the most heavily used bridges in New York City; and

Whereas, According to a 2007 report entitled, “A Comprehensive Plan to Prevent Suicides and Save Lives on NYSBA Bridges,” written by Gary Spielman, former Director of Suicide Prevention, New York State Office of Mental Health, there are nearly 1,200 deaths due to suicide in New York State almost every year; and

Whereas, The report also indicated that in 2004, there was a total of 121 deaths by suicides related to jumps or falls off bridges in New York State; and

Whereas, During that same year, the report noted that falling or jumping off bridges accounted for more than 10% of all the ways in which people committed suicide in New York State; and

Whereas, The report emphasized that despite the low frequency occurrences of suicides off bridges, it only takes one suicide to create a public spectacle, encouraging copycat suicides or “suicide contagion”; and

Whereas, After a few suicide attempts in early 2007 on the Tappan Zee and Bear Mountain Bridges, 24-hour suicide prevention hotline telephones were installed on these bridges to provide emotional support to those

individuals contemplating suicide by jumping off them; and

Whereas, Gary Spielman's report also noted that similar suicide prevention hotline telephones that were placed in 1984 on the Mid-Hudson Bridge in New York State were found to be effective prevention devices, as suicides in Dutchess County, where the bridge is located, decline by almost 45% from 1981 to 2005; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to install 24-hour suicide prevention hotline telephones on all New York City bridges within their jurisdictions.

LS #3620

RK 9/14/07