

COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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June 6, 2024

Start: 9:48 a.m.

Recess: 9:56 a.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Sandy Nurse, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shaun Abreu
Diana Ayala
Tiffany Cabán
Shahana Hanif
Christopher Marte
Mercedes Narcisse
Lincoln Restler
Althea V. Stevens

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Amanda Farías

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning, and
3 welcome to the New York City Council vote of the
4 Committee on Criminal Justice.

5 At this time, can everybody please
6 silence your cell phones.

7 Chair, we are ready to begin.

8 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you. [GAVEL]
9 Good morning, I am Council Member Sandy Nurse, Chair
10 of the Council's Committee on Criminal Justice. I'd
11 like to welcome you to today's hearing and vote on
12 Resolution Number 365 in relation to conditional
13 release for eligible offenders who complete post-
14 secondary degrees or programs.

15 I'm going to recognize Council Members
16 Chris Marte, Abreu, Narcisse, Cabán, Farías, Ayala.

17 It is well-established that participation
18 in prison-based educational programming makes
19 incarcerated individuals more likely to reintegrate
20 successfully into their families and communities
21 after release. An analysis of 37 years of research on
22 correctional education found that incarcerated people
23 who participate in higher education programs are 28
24 percent less likely to recidivate than those who do
25 not. In addition, the odds of recidivism decrease as

2 incarcerated people achieve higher levels of
3 education. Recognizing the positive impacts of
4 prison-based educational programming, in 2009, New
5 York State established the Limited Credit Time
6 Allowance Program, which offers individuals
7 incarcerated for certain nonviolent crimes a single
8 six-month time credit against their sentence if they
9 complete a post-secondary degree during their
10 sentence. However, individuals are not eligible for
11 an additional time credit if they complete successive
12 degrees. To incentivize greater college participation
13 and promote successful re-entry after incarceration,
14 S7843/A4888, sponsored by New York State Senator
15 Julia Salazar and New York State Assembly Member
16 Harvey Epstein, respectively, would amend the
17 correction law to provide incarcerated individuals
18 eligible for a limited time credit allowance, a 12-
19 month time credit for each associate's bachelor's,
20 master's, or doctoral degree earned. To speak more on
21 this bill, I'm going to turn it over to Council
22 Member Farías.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: Thank you, Chair
24 Nurse. I'm proud today that we're voting on my
25 legislation, Resolution 365, calling on the New York

2 State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign
3 into law State legislation to allow for the
4 conditional release of eligible incarcerated
5 individuals who complete post-secondary degrees or
6 programs. Data shows that participating in
7 correctional education programs reduces incarcerated
8 individuals' chances of returning to prison by 43
9 percent, which means a 13 percent decrease in the
10 risk of recidivism and an improvement of post-release
11 employment opportunities by 13 percent as well.

12 Increasing conditional release opportunities to
13 incarcerated individuals dedicated to their education
14 is not only a proven and cost-effective way to reduce
15 recidivism rates but would also serve as a greater
16 incentive to more incarcerated individuals to engage
17 in college education by introducing additional
18 rewards for consecutive achievements, achievements
19 that demand real investment and commitment. Education
20 equips incarcerated individuals with valuable skills
21 and knowledge, incentivizes personal development and
22 rehabilitation, enhancing their employability and
23 ability to reintegrate into society successfully.
24 This approach not only benefits the individual by
25 providing a constructive pathway towards a better

2 future, but also contributes to overall public safety
3 by addressing one of the root causes, lack of
4 education and opportunities and access. Thank you to
5 State Senator Julia Salazar and Assembly Member
6 Harvey Epstein for leading on this bill in the state
7 legislature. The City Council believes that
8 supporting initiatives that promote education and
9 facilitate successful re-entry into society are
10 essential to fostering safe communities, getting
11 people the services they need and reducing
12 recidivism. Thank you, Chair Nurse, for giving me the
13 time to speak on my Reso and for moving this through
14 your Committee, and I urge my Colleagues to vote aye.

15 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you, Council
16 Member Farías.

17 I want to recognize Council Member Althea
18 Stevens has joined us, Hanif has also rejoined us,
19 and we will wait for the Clerk to do the vote.

20 Okay, so recognizing Council Member
21 Restler, thanks for joining the Committee.

22 Clerk, will you please call the vote?

23 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank you
24 and pardon. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll

1 COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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2 call vote Committee on Criminal Justice, Resolution
3 365. Chair Nurse.

4 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: I vote aye.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Ayala.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I vote aye.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
8 you. Cabán.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Aye.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN'S CHILD: Aye.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Good job.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Abreu.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hanif.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Marte.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Narcisse.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: What is it
20 again? Give me a second to process it. I vote aye.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
22 you. Restler.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Stevens.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
3 you. By a vote of nine in the affirmative, zero on
4 the negative, and no abstentions, Resolution has been
5 adopted by the Committee and, Madam Chair, that is a
6 full Committee.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you, the
8 Committee is now closed. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date July 4, 2024