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Title: Resolution calling upon the appropriate committee of the Council of the City of New York to hold hearings on the disparity in quality of textbooks utilized by English speaking students and non-English speaking students.

Sponsors: Lucy Cruz, Gifford Miller, Martin Malave-Dilan, Kathryn E. Freed, Lloyd Henry, Margarita Lopez, Helen M. Marshall, Christine C. Quinn, Philip Reed, Alphonse Stabile, Stephen DiBrienza, Pedro G. Espada, Julia Harrison, Guillermo Linares, Stanley E. Michels, Jerome X. O'Donovan, Bill Perkins, Lawrence A. Warden, Ronnie M. Eldridge

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Res. No. 1205

Resolution calling upon the appropriate committee of the Council of the City of New York to hold hearings on the disparity in quality of textbooks utilized by English speaking students and non-English speaking students.

By Council Members Cruz, Miller, Malave-Dilan, Freed, Henry, Lopez, Marshall, Quinn, Reed and Stabile; also Council Members DiBrienza, Espada, Harrison, Linares, Michels, O'Donovan, Perkins and Warden

Whereas, Last year, the State Education Commissioner, with the approval of the Board of Regents, instituted higher standards in order for students to be promoted from one grade to the next and stricter graduation requirements; and

Whereas, Students are required to pass a number of Regents examinations in many subject areas; and

Whereas, All students should be given equal opportunity and the tools to learn everything they need in the classroom in order to be able meet the new standards and to pass the required exams; and

Whereas, Updated textbooks, with the most current information, are essential for all students to learn the necessary information; and

Whereas, According to a November 30, 1999 Daily News article entitled "Bad textbooks cheat English-limited students" (the "article"), the quality of textbooks given to non-English speaking high school students falls significantly below the quality of textbooks given to English-speaking students; and

Whereas, The article claims that textbooks given to non-English speaking students often contain inaccurate translations, are one-third the length of other textbooks, and have outdated information; and

Whereas, According to the article, Burt Posner, director of high school bilingual and English as a Second Language programs for high schools, conceded that such textbooks are of inferior quality, but blamed the publishing companies, alleging that they are not investing the money to produce textbooks of higher quality; and

Whereas, According to the article, only 20% of the 6,330 non-English speaking students who started ninth grade in September 1996 have passed the Regents English language arts exam, compared with 55% of English-speaking students; and

Whereas, It should be a priority of the City to ensure that all students are receiving the same, high quality education, so that they all have the same opportunities to become successful and contributing members of society; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the appropriate committee of the Council of the City of New York to hold hearings on the disparity in quality of textbooks utilized by English speaking students and non-English speaking students.

HG
2/23/00
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