



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 283

Resolution calling on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to provide non-police staff working in the subway system with training and a protocol for handling issues with mentally ill customers.

By Council Members Louis, Brooks-Powers, Narcisse and Hudson

Whereas, In October 2022, New York City (NYC) Mayor Eric Adams asserted in a press conference that the recent rise in subway crime is driven by people with mental health issues; and

Whereas, People with mental health issues can be a danger to others on subway platforms, as demonstrated by the January 2022 case of 40-year-old Michelle Go, who was pushed in front of an oncoming subway train in the Times Square station by a 62-year-old chronically mentally ill man; and

Whereas, According to a 2015 assessment by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 564,708 people were homeless on a given night in the United States (U.S.), with a minimum of 25 percent being seriously mentally ill and 45 percent having any mental illness; and

Whereas, Mentally ill individuals experiencing homelessness can have difficulty keeping on track with taking their prescribed medications and can become disruptive in subway stations and on subway trains; and

Whereas, By the end of October 2022, a total of 25 people had been pushed onto subway tracks in 2022, with two resulting fatalities; and

Whereas, There has been an unprecedented increase in New York Police Department and Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Police Department presence in the subway system since October 2022, with officers posted in two out of three stations during peak times, to help combat the rise in violence against subway riders; and

Whereas, People with mental health issues can also be a danger to themselves in the subway system,

including from suicide attempts, as demonstrated in the August 2019 case of a woman who jumped onto the subway tracks and was saved by MTA signal worker Anthony Mannino, who heroically followed her onto the tracks and flagged down an approaching train to prevent it from hitting her; and

Whereas, In addition to MTA police officers, other MTA workers located in the subway system can find themselves as first responders to subway station and subway track incidents that could potentially seriously injure or kill MTA customers; and

Whereas, Those MTA workers could benefit from training in how to deal most effectively with MTA customers who appear to be experiencing mental health issues and might be a threat to themselves or others; and

Whereas, Those MTA workers could benefit from having a clear protocol to follow in cases where an MTA customer appears to be a threat due to mental illness; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to provide non-police staff working in the subway system with training and a protocol for handling issues with mentally ill customers.

Session 13
LS #3148
01/18/2024

Session 12
LS #3148
12/14/22
RHP