



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 41

Resolution to observe every May 25<sup>th</sup> as Kalief Browder Day in the City of New York.

By Council Member Cornegy

Whereas, Kalief Browder was born on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1993 in the Bronx, New York; and

Whereas, Kalief was the youngest of seven siblings, five of whom were adopted by his mother, Venida Browder; and

Whereas, According to various reports, in 2010, at the age of sixteen, Kalief was arrested for the alleged robbery of a backpack that he insisted he had not stolen; and

Whereas, Kalief was incarcerated at Riker's Island, awaiting trial for more than one thousand days for a trial that never came, because the charges were ultimately dropped; and

Whereas, According to various reports, over the span of his incarceration, Kalief was offered several plea deals which he declined as he reiterated his innocence; and

Whereas, According to the *New York Times*, at one point during his incarceration, a judge offered Mr. Browder a chance to leave jail immediately in exchange for a plea of guilty to two misdemeanors, instead of a felony, which he declined; and

Whereas, According to various sources, of the three years Kalief Browder was incarcerated, he endured more than two years in solitary confinement where he attempted to end his life several times; and

Whereas, Kalief also encountered violence inflicted by both corrections officers and inmates; and

Whereas, According to the *New Yorker*, on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013, after appearing in front of eight judges, refusing 13 plea deals, and spending 3 years on Riker's Island, Kalief's case was dismissed as prosecutors

reported their sole witness and accuser was no longer in the United States; and

Whereas, By the time Kalief was released from jail, he had missed his junior and senior year of high school, his graduation and prom, and was no longer a teenager; and

Whereas, After being released from Rikers, Kalief returned home, and passed the G.E.D on his first try and enrolled in college at the Bronx Community College; and

Whereas, Despite continuing to struggle with his mental health, Kalief was driven to tell his story so that no one else would endure the same ordeals; and

Whereas, During interviews with the *New Yorker*, *Huffington Post*, and other newspapers and television shows, Kalief detailed the horrific conditions at Rikers Island and his personal experiences of abuse by officers and other inmates; and

Whereas, Kalief's story and advocacy ignited discussions about criminal justice and led to the development of several reforms locally and nationally; and

Whereas, On June 6, 2015 Kalief Browder tragically died by suicide at his home in the Bronx; and

Whereas, May 25<sup>th</sup> will be a day of remembrance of Kalief Browder, his advocacy, and the legacy he leaves behind; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York will observe every May 25<sup>th</sup> as Kalief Browder Day in the City of New York.

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CMA