



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1529

Resolution calling upon the members of the New York State Legislature to amend the Penal Law by creating a class E felony for stealing money from any house of worship.

By Council Members Fiala, Dear, Henry, Koslowitz, Nelson, Rodriguez, Abel, Golden and Oddo; also Council Members McCaffrey, Povman, Provenzano and Watkins

Whereas, The New York State Penal Law sets forth the various crimes classified as fourth degree grand larceny, a class E felony; and

Whereas, Thefts from our City's houses of worship have increased at an alarming rate, and news reports reveal that many of these thefts are from church poor boxes, with the most recent rash of such incidents occurring in Staten Island; and

Whereas, This criminal activity is particularly grievous because it deprives needy recipients, and constitutes a theft of contributions made largely by people of modest means; and

Whereas, New York State Penal Law currently classifies such a crime as petit larceny, a misdemeanor, if the amount stolen is less than one thousand dollars; and

Whereas, The New York State Legislature has created enhanced penalties for other types of larceny when the value of the item stolen is less than one thousand dollars, such as when a person steals a religious artifact worth at least one hundred dollars, such crime being classified as a class E felony; and

Whereas, A greater penalty should be imposed if a person steals from a house of worship, even if the amount stolen is less than one thousand dollars, and such a crime should be elevated from its current status as a misdemeanor to a Class E felony; and

Whereas, Re-classification of this type of crime sends a message that such acts are particularly egregious and will not be tolerated; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the members of the New York State Legislature to amend the Penal Law by creating a class E felony for stealing money from any house of worship.

LS # 3261