



Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 0863-2007, **Version:** \*

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Res. No. 863

Resolution calling on the New York State Assembly and the New York State Senate to pass the Safe Harbor for Exploited Children Act, which would create a continuum of services to address the needs of New York's sexually exploited children.

By Council Members Gonzalez, Brewer, Fidler, Foster, Gentile, James, Koppell, Liu, Mealy, Recchia Jr., Reyna, Sears, Mark-Viverito, Gerson and Oddo

Whereas, Both federal and international law recognize sexually exploited youth as victims; and

Whereas, Under New York State law, children under the age of 17 cannot consent to sex; and

Whereas, It has been reported that the number of youth victimized by the sex trade is on the rise and that youth as young as eleven and twelve years old are becoming involved; and

Whereas, The overwhelming majority of these sexually exploited youth have a history of psychological, physical or sexual abuse as younger children and many have been raised amidst stark poverty and family dysfunction; and

Whereas, Sexually exploited youth deserve the protection and services of the family court through processes in place for persons in need of supervision (PINS), including diversion, crisis intervention, counseling, and emergency and long-term housing services; and

Whereas, New York State Assemblyman William Scarborough introduced the Safe Harbor for Exploited Children Act (A.5258) and New York State Senator Dale M. Volker introduced the Senate's companion bill (S.3175); and

Whereas, The Safe Harbor for Exploited Children Act will direct every social services district to provide crisis intervention services and community based programs to serve sexually exploited youth; and

Whereas, The Safe Harbor for Exploited Children Act will require all law enforcement officials who are

likely to encounter sexually exploited youth in the course of their law enforcement duties to be trained to identify exploited youth and obtain appropriate services for such youth; and

Whereas, The Safe Harbor for Exploited Children Act will require the Office of Children and Family Services to contract with an appropriate not-for-profit agency to design and develop two residential facilities in geographically appropriate areas of the state which shall offer emergency shelter care and long term housing for sexually exploited youth; and

Whereas, The Safe Harbor for Exploited Children Act would add victims of sexual exploitation to the list of youth who may become subjects of a PINS petition; and

Whereas, The Safe Harbor for Exploited Children Act recognizes that sexually exploited children need and deserve the protection of the Family Court; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Assembly and the New York State Senate to pass the Safe Harbor for Exploited Children Act, which would create a continuum of services to address the needs of New York's sexually exploited children.

WJH  
LS # 3039  
5/21/07