



Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 1473-2000, **Version:** \*

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Res. No. 1473

Resolution urging the United States Congress to pass HR 4162, a bill sponsored by Representative Jesse Jackson, Jr. that calls for a seven-year moratorium on all government-sponsored executions in the United States, and urging Governor George Pataki to follow the lead of Governor George Ryan of Illinois and declare a moratorium in New York State.

By Council Members Perkins, Freed, Lopez, Eldridge, Espada, Henry, Marshall, Quinn and Warden; also Council Members Foster, Michels, Pinkett, Rivera and Spigner

Whereas, On January 31, 2000, Governor George Ryan of Illinois, a death penalty supporter, halted all executions in his state after thirteen innocent persons were released from death row; and

Whereas, Following this unprecedented action, Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. introduced the "Accuracy in Judicial Administration Act of 2000," which calls for a seven-year ban on the use of the death penalty throughout the nation; and

Whereas, The legislation also proposes that individuals convicted of a capital offense should have a "full and fair opportunity" to any evidence, DNA or otherwise, that was not available at their trial; and

Whereas, On May 19, 2000, elected officials from the community and the nation along with the Campaign to End the Death Penalty co-sponsored a Town Hall Meeting in Harlem, where all in attendance were moved by the numerous accounts of innocent people that narrowly escaped death on death row; and

Whereas, The movement to reconsider the way many of our states administer the death penalty and acknowledge the many shortcomings of capital punishment, as it has been carried out in our nation, has been gaining steam not only in Illinois and New York but throughout the country; and

Whereas, The New York Times recently reported that the New Hampshire Legislature recently voted to abolish the death penalty; and

Whereas, Some of the most convincing arguments to support the kind of moratorium that has been proposed by Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. include the use of new technology such as DNA evidence, the increasing attention being paid to the irreversibility of an execution and the question of fairness with regard to minority and indigent persons; and

Whereas, Governor George Pataki should heed the concerns of the people, acknowledge the shortcomings of state-sponsored executions, consider the rise of new technologies that have been revolutionizing the way we prove guilt or innocence and support a moratorium on executions in New York State; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the United States Congress to pass HR 4162, a bill sponsored by Representative Jesse Jackson, Jr. that calls for a seven-year moratorium on all government-sponsored executions in the United States, and urges Governor George Pataki to follow the lead of Governor George Ryan of Illinois and declare a moratorium in New York State.

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