



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1797

Resolution urging the Commissioner of the New York City Police Department to establish and implement procedures requiring police officers to obtain and review any and all available surveillance video within 24 hours in all cases where a driver leaves the scene of a motor vehicle accident that resulted in the death or critical injury of another.

By Council Members Comrie, Koo, Mendez, Barron, Brewer, Chin, Dromm, Fidler, James, Koppell, Koslowitz, Lander, Palma, Richards and Vann

Whereas, Hit-and-run drivers attempt to evade personal responsibility by leaving the scene of motor vehicle accidents and fail to report the accident to the appropriate authorities; and

Whereas, Law enforcement officials have the difficult task of identifying and apprehending those individuals who leave the scene of accidents; and

Whereas, In New York City, the New York City Police Department (NYPD) is responsible for responding to and investigating all motor vehicle accidents including hit-and-run accidents; and

Whereas, Upon arriving to the scene of an accident, the NYPD determines if anyone has been injured; and

Whereas, The NYPD's level of response to a motor vehicle accident depends on several factors, including but not limited to: (i) severity of the victim's injuries, (ii) the extent of the damage, (iii) whether the facts or degree of damage indicate the operator intentionally left the scene knowing he or she caused damage, and (iv) availability of witnesses to testify, among other factors; and

Whereas, For motor vehicle accidents that result in death or critical injury, the NYPD deploys patrol officers, detective squad members, and the Highway District's Collision Investigation Squad ("CIS") to the scene; and

Whereas, CIS is a specialized unit comprised of, among others, detectives who conduct a comprehensive investigation at the accident scene, including interviewing witnesses, preparing crash scene diagrams, and analyzing physical evidence; and

Whereas, In order to ensure that the NYPD reviews all crash scene evidence within a reasonable time period, the NYPD should mandate that its officers obtain and review all available surveillance video located near the crime scene within 24 hours of a motor vehicle accident that results in death or critical injury; and

Whereas, Reviewing all video surveillance within 24 hours is an important element of an investigation since most cameras operate on a time loop that erases previous footage; and

Whereas, Such crucial crime scene evidence should not be compromised given the numerous hit-and-run accidents that occur on the streets of New York City; and

Whereas, On November 2, 2012, in one such incident, Dante Dominguez, a 45-year-old father, was reportedly struck and killed by a driver in Flushing, Queens; and

Whereas, According to reports, the driver left the scene of the accident and has yet to be identified; and

Whereas, Reports indicate in October 2010, an alleged speeding driver hit James Paz and Michelle Matson and fled the scene; and

Whereas, Mr. Paz suffered a broken rib while Ms. Matson suffered a fractured skull, a broken neck and a broken leg; and

Whereas, Despite witnesses who saw the car hit Ms. Matson, the driver has yet to be identified; and

Whereas, NYPD should seek out and review surveillance video within 24 hours to assist them in apprehending hit-and-run drivers and bring justice to accident victims; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the Commissioner of the New York City Police Department to establish and implement procedures requiring police officers to obtain and review any and all available surveillance video within 24 hours in all cases where a driver leaves the scene of a motor vehicle accident that resulted in the death or critical injury of another.

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