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Title: Resolution praising the NYPD, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly and all other civil service employees responsible for security for their professionalism and effectiveness during the Republican National Convention and for successfully ensuring the public safety under extremely difficult circumstances.

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Res. No. 567

Resolution praising the NYPD, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly and all other civil service employees responsible for security for their professionalism and effectiveness during the Republican National Convention and for successfully ensuring the public safety under extremely difficult circumstances.

By Council Members Oddo, Gallagher, Lanza, Avella, Gentile, Nelson, Seabrook, Stewart and Sears

Whereas, The Republican National Convention was recently held in New York City at Madison Square Garden from August 30 - September 2, 2004 in order to re-nominate President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney as the Republican nominees; and

Whereas, This was the first time that the Republican National Convention was held in New York City; and

Whereas, The United States of America is currently engaged in the worldwide war against terrorism; and

Whereas, The City has been on a state of high alert over recent revelations that terrorists conducted reconnaissance of New York financial institutions; intelligence had also been gathered that Al Qaida and/or other militant foreign terrorist groups are seeking to disrupt the upcoming presidential election; and

Whereas, In the days leading up to the Republican Convention, two people were arrested for conspiring to bomb several city locations such as the Verrazano Narrows Bridge, three Staten Island police precincts, the

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Arthur Kill Correctional Facility, and the Herald Square subway station; and

Whereas, According to the NYPD, a small group of violent anarchists were planning on causing disturbances in the City to disrupt the Convention; these extremists have histories of violent and disruptive tactics as evidenced by their actions at the World Trade Organization's conference in Seattle, Washington in November of 1999 when they smashed windows and vandalized private property, targeting stores owned by various multinational corporations; and

Whereas, Rallies, demonstrations, and other forms of protest of various sizes and for various causes were held during each of the convention's four days as well as the weekend before it opened; in addition, Mets, Yankees, and the U.S. Open tennis tournament also required a significant police presence, stretching the NYPD's resources; and

Whereas, On Sunday August 29, 2004, during the march led by the group, "United for Peace and Justice," a papier-mache dragon was set on fire by demonstrators precipitating the arrest of nine individuals for felony assault on police officers; and

Whereas, On August 30, 2004, an NYPD plainclothes Detective was beaten after police let a group called the "Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign" march toward Madison Square Garden without a permit; on Eighth Avenue and 29th Street, protestors began to push against metal fences erected by police when the officer, who was riding a scooter towards the crowd, was pushed to the ground and kicked and punched repeatedly while dozens of people looked on; and

Whereas, Hundreds of thousands of other protestors peacefully exercised their First Amendment rights of free speech and free assembly during the week of the Convention and the NYPD ensured that those who were lawfully exercising those rights were protected and allowed to do so unhindered; and

Whereas, Dozens of local, state, and federal agencies provided personnel and equipment for convention security and thousands of civil service employees assisted in ensuring security; these agencies included the New York City Police Department led by Commissioner Raymond Kelly, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the New York State Police, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the United States Secret Service, the National Guard, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the United States Coast Guard, and other local, state, and federal agencies, which were charged with securing the City from terrorism and protecting the public; and

Whereas, The NYPD, which is the nation's largest police force and has a total of 37,000 members, deployed up to 10,000 of its officers to secure the area surrounding Madison Square Garden, which is more than one-quarter of its total force; and

Whereas, The members of the Council of the City of New York believe that the officers of the NYPD showed excellent restraint and judgment while policing the various demonstrations and protests; and

Whereas, Members of the Council of the City of New York believe that policing the Convention and preserving the public safety was a very difficult task creating the need for creative and innovative policing; and

Whereas, The various agencies charged with the task of preserving safety worked in a collaborative fashion to secure and protect the streets, subways, roadways, bridges, tunnels, waterways, public buildings, and airspace; and

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Whereas, There were no terrorist incidents during the Republican National Convention by Al Qaida or any other international terrorist organization; and

Whereas, There were no riots in the streets of New York by domestic groups during the Convention; and

Whereas, The Members of the Council of the City of New York believe that members of the NYPD and other government agencies charged with protecting the City behaved admirably and professionally under extremely difficult circumstances in protecting public safety, while at the same time protecting the free speech rights of protestors of all; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York praises and thanks the NYPD and all other civil service employees responsible for security for their professionalism and effectiveness during the Republican National Convention and for successfully ensuring the public safety under extremely difficult circumstances.

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