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Title: Resolution condemning the “Stop Snitching” trend.

Sponsors: Letitia James, Lewis A. Fidler, Melissa Mark-Viverito, Rosie Mendez

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Res. No. 1261

Resolution condemning the “Stop Snitching” trend.

By Council Members James, Fidler, Mark-Viverito and Mendez

Whereas, A person who sees criminal wrongdoing and helps the police put the wrongdoer behind bars is generally considered to be a witness; and

Whereas, In many inner-city neighborhoods, a person who talks to the police about any crimes within the area is considered to be a snitch; and

Whereas, Reluctance to talk to police about crimes has always been a problem in predominantly African-American communities; and

Whereas, This problem has worsened as a result of messages being sent through hip-hop music and clothing distribution; and

Whereas, Many members of the hip-hop community embrace this trend and refuse to talk to police when they have knowledge of a crime; and

Whereas, The “Stop Snitching” slogan has been placed on clothing throughout the nation, thereby encouraging silence and reinforcing a cycle of violence; and

Whereas, The 2004 “Stop Snitching” video threatened those who cooperate with the police, and highlighted the culture of witness intimidation in Baltimore, Maryland; and

Whereas, “Stop Snitching” generally means that one should never communicate with the police; and

Whereas, “Stop Snitching” has been interpreted to mean, “If you snitch, you die” in New York City communities; and

Whereas, The “Stop Snitching” trend prevents criminal behavior from being stopped; and

Whereas, Witnesses that do cooperate face harsh consequences for their actions; and

Whereas, After Angela Marie Dawson voiced concerns about suspicious behavior in her Baltimore, Maryland community, she, and six of her family members, were burned to death by a local gang; and

Whereas, After Edna McAbier, another concerned Baltimore resident, expressed concern about drug abuse in her neighborhood, a local gang fire bombed her home in an attempt to kill her, forcing her to leave her community; and

Whereas, Shawrica Lester, an innocent bystander, was killed by stray bullets as a result of gang violence, and witnesses have been too scared to go to the authorities in Akron, Ohio with any information; and

Whereas, We need to be aware of the damage and violence that the “Stop Snitching” trend brings to certain communities; and

Whereas, The “Stop Snitching” trend is a form of witness intimidation; and

Whereas, Witness intimidation is a threat to the legal system; and

Whereas, The Baltimore police department released a “Keep Talking” video in response to the stop snitching trend; and

Whereas, “Stop Snitching” attire has been banned from several courthouses; and

Whereas, Residents of inner-city communities need to know that “Stop Snitching” advocates do not

have the best interests of the community at heart; and

Whereas, Communities throughout the country are looking for ways to combat the “Stop Snitching” trend; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York condemns the “Stop Snitching” trend.

JEB
LS# 4368
2/5/08