



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1317

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation that would require the New York Public Library, the Brooklyn Public Library, and the Queens Borough Public Library to install surveillance cameras in all designated children's sections.

By Council Members Vallone, Cabrera, Eugene, Gonzalez, Koo, Mendez, Rose, Vacca, Wills, Oddo and Ulrich

Whereas, New York City's public library system is composed of three independent nonprofit corporations, the New York Public Library, the Brooklyn Public Library, and the Queens Borough Public Library, each of which serve to support the education, growth and development of the City's youth; and

Whereas, Promoting and protecting the healthy development of children so they can achieve their full potential has long been recognized as a top priority for the government; and

Whereas, It is widely accepted that children need a safe environment in which to learn and develop effectively; and

Whereas, According to the National School Climate Center, not feeling safe under any circumstances undermines learning and healthy development; and

Whereas, The American Library Association describes the purpose of public libraries as to enhance the learning process and to ensure open access to information; and

Whereas, The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) asserts that public libraries have a "special responsibility to support the process of learning to read, and to promote books and other media for children;" and

Whereas, Under the Guidelines for Children's Libraries Services as published by IFLA, "Children of all ages should find the library an open, inviting, attractive challenging and non-threatening place to visit;" and

Whereas, In August 2011, a seven-year-old girl was reading in the children's section of the Queens library in Astoria when she was "petrified" by a strange man who grabbed her feet and "[s]niffed them, rubbed them against his beard, and kissed them," according to an article on CBS New York; and

Whereas, In response to this incident, potential funding sources have been identified for security cameras to be installed at the library in Astoria; and

Whereas, While a video surveillance system will not prevent all incidents, its potential deterrent effect and its use as a means of identifying and prosecuting offenders indicate that it is a worthwhile endeavor to promote a safe and secure environment in public libraries for the children of New York City; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation that would require the New York Public Library, the Brooklyn Public Library, and the Queens Borough Public Library to install surveillance cameras in all designated children's sections.

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