



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1475

Resolution calling upon the New York City Police Department and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to stop arresting people for committing minor infractions in the transit system, irrespective of whether they have an arrest record or have previously committed minor infractions in the system.

By Council Members Williams, James, Lander, Mendez and Rodriguez

Whereas, Currently, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and New York City Police Department (NYPD) are authorized to impose fines on or arrest people who commit minor infractions in the transit system; and

Whereas, These minor infractions include, but are not limited to, littering, sleeping, occupying more than one seat, and placing a foot on a seat; and

Whereas, Reports indicate that people accused of committing a minor infraction are more likely to be arrested, rather than subjected to a fine if they have an arrest record or have previously committed a minor infraction in the transit system; and

Whereas, In addition to being very disruptive, an arrest can cause significant stress, financial hardship, loss of employment and difficulty in finding employment, among other things; and

Whereas, Many people believe that MTA rules are being enforced unfairly and inconsistently across the city; and

Whereas, The New York Times recently reported that public defenders who represent many of the people arrested for seat violations indicate that their clients are working class, and are often exhausted kitchen workers beginning or ending long shifts at restaurants in Manhattan; and

Whereas, Arresting people for minor infractions is overly punitive and unfair, and officers should only

use arrest as a last resort when enforcing MTA rules and should do so uniformly and fairly; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York City Police Department and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to stop arresting people for committing minor infractions in the transit system, irrespective of whether they have an arrest record or a have previously committed minor infractions in the system.

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