



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0081-2010, **Version:** A

Res. No. 81-A

Resolution calling on the City of New York to acknowledge the years of suffering of all those involved in the Central Park Jogger case, including both the five men whose convictions were vacated and the jogger herself, by settling this matter out of court as expeditiously as possible in order to avoid a continuation of this painful, lengthy and costly legal proceeding that will only cause further anguish for all parties involved.

By Council Members Barron, Comrie, Dilan, Dromm, Jackson, Mealy, Palma, Vann, Rodriguez, Mendez, Foster, Mark-Viverito, Rose, Cabrera, Williams, Ferreras, Arroyo, James, Chin, Reyna, Wills, King, Weprin, Levin, Dickens, Brewer, Crowley, Gennaro and Lander

Whereas, The tragic case of Trisha Meili, who is also known as the Central Park Jogger, stunned the city of New York during the spring of 1989; and

Whereas, Five teenagers, Antron McCray, Kevin Richardson, Raymond Santana, Yusef Salaam and Korey Wise, were arrested and, after lengthy police interrogations viewed by many to have been coercive, confessed to the rape and beating of Ms. Meili; and

Whereas, Despite inconsistencies and inaccuracies in these confessions, the five were indicted and tried for the crimes committed against Ms. Meili; and

Whereas, Largely on the basis of those confessions, the five teenagers were convicted of the rape and beating, and each spent between 6 and 13 years in prison; and

Whereas, In 2002, The Central Park Jogger case was re-opened when DNA left at the scene of the crime was matched to Matias Reyes, a convicted serial rapist and murderer, who came forward and claimed sole responsibility for, and confessed to the rape of, Ms. Meili; and

Whereas, The new DNA evidence and Reyes's confession eventually led to the vacating of the convictions of the teenagers; and

Whereas, This revelation came too late; the teenagers, now men, had their adolescence stolen from them as they spent those years in prison; and

Whereas, Subsequently, the five teenagers, now men, in 2003 brought a lawsuit against the city of New York, among other parties, seeking monetary damages related to their arrest, prosecution and incarceration for the rape of Ms. Meili; and

Whereas, The lawsuit is pending before the Honorable Deborah A. Batts in Federal District Court in the Southern District of New York; three of the five men commenced the lawsuit in 2003 and the two others joined as plaintiffs in 2004; and

Whereas, In May of 2010, Judge Batts stated that she was, “displeased by the apparent foot-dragging of some of the defendants in this matter” and accordingly, referred the matter to Magistrate Judge Ronald L. Ellis for “active supervision;” and

Whereas, It is incumbent upon all the defendants, but especially the city of New York, to comply with the deadlines set in the Court’s orders; and

Whereas, Discovery is still ongoing; and

Whereas, This lawsuit has been pending for many years and the five plaintiffs spent years in prison based on an investigation and prosecution that, at best, failed to discern Matias Reyes’s involvement in the crimes; and

Whereas, A sense of injustice is felt by many New Yorkers over the investigation and prosecution of the Central Park Jogger case; perhaps it is most keenly felt by people of color, for whom the investigation, prosecution, and lengthy pendency of this case deepen the powerful belief that they receive treatment tainted by bias and prejudice from the criminal justice system; and

Whereas, The Central Park Jogger case is a painful part of the City’s history and it is in everyone’s interest to bring this matter to a conclusion as quickly as possible; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the city of New York to

acknowledge the years of suffering of all those involved in the Central Park Jogger case, including both the men whose convictions were vacated and the jogger herself, by settling this matter out of court as expeditiously as possible in order to avoid a continuation of this painful, lengthy and costly legal proceeding that will only cause further anguish for all parties involved.

AP
1/24/13