



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1136-2016, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1136

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, S.6279, the Deny Firearms to Dangerous Terrorists Act, which would prohibit individuals on the federal Terrorist Watchlist from obtaining and possessing firearms.

By The Public Advocate (Ms. James) and Council Members Dromm and Chin

Whereas, The most recent terrorist attack in the U.S. occurred in San Bernardino, California, in December 2015, when a married couple suspected of religious extremism opened fire on a holiday party, resulting in 14 deaths and 22 injuries; and

Whereas, Among the many tools sought by lawmakers and advocates to prevent gun violence is legislation prohibiting known and suspected terrorists from possessing weapons; and

Whereas, The San Bernardino incident prompted renewed efforts on the federal level to prohibit individuals on the Terrorist Watchlist from purchasing and possessing firearms; and

Whereas, According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”), the Terrorist Watchlist (“Watchlist”) is also known as the Terrorist Screening Database and is maintained by the Terrorist Screening Center (“TSC”), a division of the FBI; and

Whereas, The Watchlist contains identifying information about individuals known to be or reasonably suspected of being involved in terrorist activity; and

Whereas, According to the FBI, the Watchlist is a consolidated database that combines lists formerly maintained by separate agencies into a single resource, including the “No-Fly List,” which prohibits known or suspected terrorists from boarding a commercial aircraft that departs from or arrives in the United States; and

Whereas, An FBI fact sheet titled “Ten Years After: The FBI Since 9/11” shows that as of September

2011, the Watchlist contained approximately 420,000 individuals; and

Whereas, The day after the San Bernardino mass shooting, the United States Senate voted to block a bill that would prohibit individuals on the Watchlist from purchasing and possessing guns; and

Whereas, According to the federal Government Accountability Office, individuals on the Watchlist cleared a background check for a firearm transaction in 91% of attempts between February 2004 and December 2014, resulting in 2,043 clearances for suspected terrorists to obtain guns; and

Whereas, New York State Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, citing his frustration that federal legislation is stalled in Congress, introduced S.6279, the Deny Firearms to Dangerous Terrorists Act, which would prohibit individuals on the federal Watchlist from obtaining a firearm license in New York State; and

Whereas, The act would also grant the Division of State Police the authority to revoke existing licenses of gun owners if they appear on the Watchlist; and

Whereas, In addition, the act would mandate a review of the Watchlist at least once a year by the state police, who must remove all firearms from a suspected terrorist if one is found to have been issued a license; and

Whereas, These measures are important steps in preventing known and suspected terrorists from obtaining guns and committing violence; 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, S.6279, the Deny Firearms to Dangerous Terrorists Act, which would prohibit individuals on the federal Terrorist Watchlist from obtaining and possessing firearms.

LS# 7122
2/25/2016
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