



Legislation Text

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Preconsidered Res. No. 838

Resolution opposing the Governor's Budget proposal to close the Institute for Basic Research in Staten Island that serves children and adults with serious and persistent mental disabilities in the City and State of New York, and calling for the immediate restoration to the budget of all funds necessary to keep the Institutes' valuable research programs and treatment programs operating.

By Council Members McMahon, López, Clarke, Comrie, Davis, Gentile, Jackson, Katz, Quinn and Sanders

Whereas, Governor Pataki proposes in his State Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2003-2004 (the "Governor's Plan") to downsize the State-operated psychiatric center system by closing psychiatric centers, closing psychiatric research facilities and reducing the system's workforce by nearly 1,000 persons; and

Whereas, As part of this devastating downsizing, the Governor has proposed that the Institute for Basic Research located in Staten Island be closed; and

Whereas, The Institute for Basic Research (the "Institute") is a world renown research facility that for over 35 years has led the way in research to detect, prevent and treat mental retardation and developmental disabilities; and

Whereas, The Institute has made major discoveries that have helped prevent and effectively diagnosis and treat diseases of the mind, including: discovering the genetic defect that leads to Phenylketonuria (PKU) and developing a diet that prevents or alleviates mental retardation; developing the test to identify the fragile X syndrome, the most common cause of mental retardation, which allows family members of know carriers to discover if they are likely to have a child with fragile X; developing a test to detect and prevent fetal alcohol syndrome; pinpointing the gene for Alzheimer disease and developing the first test tube model of lesions that cause dementia in Alzheimer disease; and

Whereas, The Institute not only performs ground breaking research, but also provides extensive services and educational programs for children and adults with developmental disabilities; and

Whereas, Scientists at the Institute have published more than 100 papers each year in scientific journals; and

Whereas, The total budget for the Institute is \$17 million, a small portion of New York States' \$91 billion budget, and an amount that has been saved over and over again by the detection and treatment protocols developed by the Institute, which in turn saved the State multi-millions of dollars in treatment expenses; and

Whereas, The Governor's Plan completely ignores the adverse impact that this closure will have on our most vulnerable citizens, children and adults with serious and persistent mental illness and developmental disabilities and the countless, yet to be born children who would benefit from the Institutes' ongoing research; and

Whereas, Considering all of the ground-breaking research that the Institute has developed, which has improved and saved the lives of countless individuals, its continued existence should not even be questioned; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York opposes the Governor's Budget proposal to close the Institute for Basic Research in Staten Island that serves children and adults with serious and persistent mental disabilities in the City and State of New York, and calls for the immediate restoration to the budget of all funds necessary to keep the Institutes' valuable research programs and treatment programs operating

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