



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1081

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass A.03926/S.2207, an act that would provide for the creation of psychiatric correctional facilities and transitional programs for inmates with serious mental illness.

By Council Members Lopez, Barron, Comrie, Gonzalez and Palma

Whereas, According to a study conducted by the Correctional Association of New York, serious mental illness among inmates has increased significantly over the last several years; and

Whereas, Currently, 12% of New York's prison population (approximately 8,000 inmates) are affected by serious mental illness; and

Whereas, Studies have shown that when mentally ill inmates are disciplined using solitary confinement, they engage in acts of self mutilation; and

Whereas, According to the Correctional Association, the suicide rate of mentally ill inmates is three times higher than inmates in the general prison population; and

Whereas, Between 1998 and April 2004, 34% of the system's 76 suicides occurred in disciplinary solitary confinement; and

Whereas, Over 53% of inmates with mental illness interviewed in solitary confinement reported suicide attempts; and

Whereas, A.03926/S.2207 would establish residential treatment programs that provide for the treatment and confinement of inmates with mental illness in a manner that is consistent with both the mental health treatment needs of such inmates and the safety and security of the facility; and

Whereas, The bill requires a jointly operated program by the Office of Mental Health and the

Department of Correctional Services, which would provide medically appropriate custodial care, supervision treatment and, where appropriate, discipline for inmates with serious mental illness; and

Whereas, A.03926/S.2207 would amend New York Correction Law to exclude inmates with serious mental illness from isolated confinement for discipline or maintenance of order; and

Whereas, The bill would set the standards for inmates who meet the criteria for serious mental illness who would be removed and placed in a residential mental health treatment program or any other clinically appropriate programs; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass A.03926/S.2207, an act that would provide for the creation of psychiatric correctional facilities and transitional programs for inmates with serious mental illness.

DW
LS# 2556