



## Legislation Text

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### Res. No. 13

Resolution calling upon the appropriate committee of the Council to hold oversight hearings to examine services provided by Prison Health Services to inmates in New York City's prisons, in light of recent concerns regarding the quality of care being provided.

By Council Members Foster, Brewer, Dickens, Fidler, Gennaro, James, Mark-Viverito, Palma, Sanders Jr., Vann, White Jr., Mendez and Koppell

Whereas, According to an article appearing in the December 26, 2005 edition of the *New York Times* (the "December 26<sup>th</sup> article"), Prison Health Services, a for-profit company, has, pursuant to a contract with New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), provided medical care to 100,000 inmates a year in New York City's jails since 2000, at a cost of more than \$100 million a year; and

Whereas, In quarterly report cards used to evaluate quality of care provided, DOHMH has given failing grades to Prison Health Services with respect to its delivery of medical care, such as treating diabetes, acute medical problems and mental illnesses; and

Whereas, The report card requires that standards be met 95% of the time in 39 areas of care, with a \$2,500 to \$5,000 fine imposed for each failing score, and that amount doubles if the company fails to meet a standard twice in a row; and

Whereas, According to the December 26<sup>th</sup> article, the last two report cards regarding Prison Health Services issued by DOHMH gave Prison Health Services 22 failing grades, resulting in a \$107,000 penalty for the company; and

Whereas, Despite these failing grades, there have been, according to the December 26<sup>th</sup> article, accusations that Correctional Health Services, the unit of DOHMH which audits DOHMH's contract with Prison Health Services, has given Prison Health Services passing scores 19 times since 2001, by improperly

excusing deficiencies and changing scores; and

Whereas, The December 26<sup>th</sup> article also noted that there have been concerns raised regarding the potential conflict of interest in having Correctional Health Services be the entity that both awards the contract to Prison Health Services as well as monitors the performance of Prison Health Services pursuant to such contract; and

Whereas, The December 26<sup>th</sup> article also states that there have been criticisms of DOHMH for allowing Prison Health Services to select which inmate charts may be audited, and reports of accusations that doctors and supervisors working for Prison Health Services alter charts by correcting data and omissions prior to an audit; and

Whereas, Despite failing report cards and concerns over quality of care, the City has chosen to extend the contract to Prison Health Services for another three years; and

Whereas, The Office of the State Comptroller is auditing the renewal of the three-year, \$300 million contract with Prison Health Services, stating that “the audit began because the quality of care had been a source of concern for a number of years”; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the appropriate committee of the Council to hold oversight hearings to examine services provided by Prison Health Services to inmates in New York City’s prisons, in light of recent concerns regarding the quality of care being provided.

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