



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0171-2006, **Version:** *

Res. No. 171

Resolution urging the New York City Police Department to explore improved designs of the bulletproof vests worn by New York City police officers, which would provide better protection of vital organs by covering a broader span of the upper body.

By Council Members Baez, Arroyo, Avella, Comrie, Dickens, Fidler, Gentile, Gonzalez, James, Nelson, Palma, Recchia Jr., Seabrook, Weprin, White Jr. and Liu

Whereas, New York City police officers continually risk their lives and valiantly face threats to personal safety in order to fulfill the complex mission of protecting the public; and

Whereas, Ballistic-resistant body armor was developed in response to the dramatic rise in fatalities among law enforcement officers in the 1960s due to firearms; and

Whereas, Over the 30 years since the National Institute of Justice introduced the first ballistic-resistant body armor standard, there are more than 2,700 documented cases in which law enforcement officers have been saved by vests tested and worn in accordance with the standard to date; further, since the New York City Police Department initially required police officers to wear bulletproof vests in 1988, the vests are credited with saving the lives of 58 officers; and

Whereas, Although Officer Dillon Stewart, a decorated, five-year veteran of the New York City Police Department, was wearing a bulletproof vest, he was mortally wounded by a single bullet, which entered his left underarm and penetrated his heart, evading the protective plating of his armored vest “by no more than a quarter of an inch,” according to Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly; and

Whereas, While it is important for personal body armor to provide maximum protection as well as adequate mobility, and complete protective coverage of the underarm would prevent arm movement, and as the New York City Police Department has noted, it is standard for all bulletproof vests to leave a slight gap under

the arm to allow for motion, it is imperative to investigate ways to expand the coverage area of personal body armor that do not compromise necessary movement, which would increase protection of law enforcement personnel and improve their personal safety; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York urges the New York City Police Department to explore improved designs of the bulletproof vests worn by New York City police officers, which would provide better protection of vital organs by covering a broader span of the upper body.

Res. 1294/2005
JPV