



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 0530-2006, **Version:** \*

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### Res. No. 530

Resolution calling upon the Columbia Broadcasting System, which broadcasts the television program titled “Survivor,” to cancel the program for the upcoming fall 2006 season due to the show’s programming content that segregates groups of contestants by ethnic and racial backgrounds.

By Council Members Weprin, Liu, Jackson, Fidler, Gerson, Mealy, Nelson, Sanders Jr., Mark-Viverito and Foster

Whereas, The Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), one of the nation’s oldest television broadcasting companies, attempts to remain at the vanguard of quality programming by pursuing fresh ideas to appeal to a wide range of viewers; and

Whereas, CBS aims to embark on a new season of “Survivor,” in which contestants are organized into competitive teams and, week by week, face elimination rounds such that by the end of the season the one remaining final contestant may be declared the season’s winner, earning a substantial cash prize and media exposure; and

Whereas, CBS intends to alter its “Survivor” formula in 2006 by dividing the competitive teams not into ostensibly random combinations but instead along lines of race and ethnicity; and

Whereas, CBS specifically intends to divide “Survivor” contestants into four teams: Asian, Black, Latino, and White; and

Whereas, “Survivor” host Jeff Probst has cited a lack of minority applicants seeking to appear on “Survivor” as a justification for the program’s revised format but has clearly put forward a solution that is not suitable; and

Whereas, This purported problem’s much clearer and appropriate solution is for CBS to more aggressively recruit in minority communities; and

Whereas, Probst comments to The Associated Press that “There’s a history of segregation you can’t ignore. It’s a part of our history... But the biases from home can't affect you. This is an equal opportunity game;" reveal a lack of understanding and sensitivity; and

Whereas, CBS’s crude decision to exploit delicate relationships of race and ethnicity cannot be allowed to veil itself in altruism, and the network must realize that the admittedly desperately-needed national conversations on difference and tolerance may be well suited to be televised but only in a format evidencing respect, balance, and conscientious progress; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, The Council of the City of New York calls upon CBS, which broadcasts the television program titled “Survivor,” to cancel the show for the upcoming fall 2006 season due to the show’s programming content that segregates groups of contestants by ethnic and racial backgrounds.

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