



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0579-2006, **Version:** *

Res No. 579

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass the Safe Harbour for Exploited Youth Act, S.4423/A.6597, which would amend the social services law, the family court act, and the penal law in relation to services for sexually exploited youth.

By Council Members James, Sears, Brewer, Comrie, Dickens, Foster, Gerson, Gonzalez, Mealy, Mendez, Palma, White Jr. and Jackson

Whereas, New York State prosecutes sexually exploited youths instead of providing the counseling necessary to rehabilitate them and help them transition back into the community; and

Whereas, A recent report by the American Civil Liberties Union and Human Rights Watch (“Report”) found that the juvenile justice system in New York State does not adequately care for sexually exploited youth, many of whom have suffered psychological, physical or sexual abuse and come from broken or impoverished homes; and

Whereas, The Report found that girls incarcerated in Lansing and Tyrone, two juvenile justices facilities run by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (“OCFS”), are often subjected to physical abuse, such as excessive physical restraints, and emotional, physical, and educational neglect; and

Whereas, The Safe Harbour for Exploited Youth Act (“Act”) would recognize that children cannot legally consent to sex and, therefore, exploited children should not be arrested for prostitution; and

Whereas, The Act would prohibit the prosecution of persons younger than 18 for prostitution; and

Whereas, The Act would require OCFS to work with child advocates and service providers, homeless and runaway services to provide crisis intervention services and community-based programs for sexually exploited youths; and

Whereas, The Act would require OCFS to contract with an appropriate non-for-profit agency to create

two residential facilities to serve as emergency shelters and long-term placement facilities for sexually exploited youths; and

Whereas, The Act would require all law enforcement officials who may encounter sexually exploited youths to be trained to identify and obtain appropriate services for sexually exploited youths; and

Whereas, The Act would add sexually exploited youths to the list of youths who may qualify as subjects of persons in need of supervision, known as PINS, which would increase the availability of appropriate care for sexually exploited youths; now, therefore be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass the Safe Harbour for Exploited Youth Act, S.4423/A.6597, which would amend the social services law, the family court act, and the penal law in relation to services for sexually exploited youth.

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