



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1615

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass S.5991/A.9224, legislation which would amend the penal law in relation to enhancing the criminal penalty for assaulting employees of a local social services district.

By Council Members de Blasio, Brewer, Comrie and Liu

Whereas, The New York State Legislature is considering S.5991/A.9224, legislation which would amend the penal law in relation to enhancing the criminal penalty for assaulting employees of a local social services district; and

Whereas, S.5991/A.9224 would add a subsection to Penal Law S120.05, entitled Assault in the Second Degree, specifying that any act constituting a misdemeanor assault in the third degree pursuant to Penal Law S120.00 would be elevated to a class D non-violent felony offense if committed against any local social services district employee while in direct contact with the public performing an assigned duty providing, or directly related to providing, public assistance and care; and

Whereas, According to the Massachusetts chapter of the National Association for Social Workers, it is estimated that between one-third and three-quarters of all social workers nationwide have been threatened, physically assaulted, or had their property damaged while performing their jobs; and

Whereas, Local social services district employees working directly with their clients in the provision of benefits, assistance, and services are public servants on the front line of government's effort to protect and care for those in need; and

Whereas, In New York City, these individuals include employees who work for the Administration for Children's Services, the Department of Homeless Services, and the Human Resources Administration; and

Whereas, Assaults to such employees are not uncommon, and occasionally result in injury or even more serious misfortune; and

Whereas, Current law provides for enhanced criminal assault penalties to protect police officers, firefighters, paramedics, emergency room workers, school employees, and specific transit personnel, but does not extend such protection to employees providing the public with other social services; and

Whereas, Local social services district employees require and deserve the same level of protection provided by a felony charge that would deter clients and other members of the public from the use of physical force to injure, threaten, or intimidate them; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass S.5991/A.9224, legislation which would amend the penal law in relation to enhancing the criminal penalty for assaulting employees of a local social services district.

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