



Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 1874-2009, **Version:** \*

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Res. No. 1874

Resolution condemning the New York Post for its racist depiction of President Barack Obama in a political cartoon.

By Council Members Seabrook, Mark-Viverito, Sanders Jr., James, Vann, Baez, Comrie, Liu, Barron, Foster, Jackson, Dickens, Brewer, Gonzalez, Koppell, Recchia Jr., Sears, Stewart, Weprin, and White Jr.

Whereas, On February 18, 2009, President Barack Obama signed into law an historic \$787 billion economic stimulus package, aimed at resuscitating the stagnating financial system in the United States; and

Whereas, Two days earlier, a Connecticut woman was viciously mauled by a chimpanzee, which was subsequently shot to death by police officers at the scene; and

Whereas, The same day that the economic stimulus package was signed into law, the New York Post ran a cartoon depicting two police officers standing over the body of a chimpanzee that they had just shot to death, with one police officer remarking to the other, “They’ll have to find someone else to write the next stimulus bill;” and

Whereas, Since the birth of this country, there have existed racist and despicable cartoons and illustrations depicting African Americans as primates in an effort to dehumanize them; and

Whereas, Whether subconscious or intentional, the cartoon is associating President Obama, our country’s first African American president and the driving force behind the economic stimulus package, with a chimpanzee that has been shot to death by police officers; and

Whereas, The cartoon also cruelly makes light of the tragic mauling in Connecticut, which left the victim with severe and permanent facial disfigurements; and

Whereas, Sean Delonas, the cartoonist who drew the offending cartoon, has previously drawn other

cartoons that denigrate women, as well as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community;  
and

Whereas, Comparing the country's chief executive to a dead chimpanzee not only communicates disrespect for the Office of the President, but also for communities of color throughout the United States; and

Whereas, As a body that financially supports the New York Post through advertisements, listings and subscriptions, it is worthwhile for the City Council to reevaluate its business relationship with the newspaper;  
and

Whereas, In establishing the New York City Commission on Human Rights, the City Council found that prejudice and bigotry threaten the rights and privileges of City residents and menace the foundations of a free democratic state; and

Whereas, Though no entity, be it governmental or otherwise, has the right to limit the freedoms of speech or press, it is the responsibility of the City Council to call attention to instances of bigotry when and where they occur; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City condemns the New York Post for its racist depiction of President Barack Obama in a political cartoon.

DMB  
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