



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0868-2023, **Version:** *

Res. No. 868

Resolution calling on the State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign legislation to increase criminal penalties for individuals who threaten, harass, or assault elected officials and their staff members.

By Council Members Velázquez and Brannan

Whereas, Elected officials and their staff members play a crucial role in the functioning of government and are essential to the democratic process; and

Whereas, These dedicated government workers should be able to carry out their responsibilities without fear of threats, harassment, or assault that goes beyond the risks faced by the general public, as they are targeted specifically due to the nature of their work; and

Whereas, Threats, harassment, and assaults against elected officials and their staffers poses a serious threat to the functioning of democratic institutions and undermines the ability of elected officials to serve their communities effectively; and

Whereas, It is the responsibility of the State Legislature to enact legislation that ensures a safe and secure working environment for elected officials and their employees; and

Whereas, While the First Amendment's to the United States Constitution safeguards free speech, it does not allow citizens to threaten, harass or assault anyone; and

Whereas, The existing criminal penalties for threats, harassment, and assaults against elected officials and their staffers don't provide sufficient deterrence to potential offenders, and

Whereas, stronger penalties for those who engage in threatening, harassing, or assaulting elected

officials' and their staffers can serve as a greater deterrent and reinforce the importance of respecting and protecting those who work for us while preserving citizens' rights to disagree with their views; and

Whereas, The New York City Council is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of elected officials and their employees; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign legislation to increase criminal penalties for individuals who threaten, harass, or assault elected officials and their staff members.

CMB
LS#10461
12/14/23