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Res. No. 289

Resolution calling upon the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to inspect every subway station surveillance camera at least on a quarterly basis to ensure they are working properly and effectuate repairs in a timely manner.

By Council Members Schulman, Zhuang, Gennaro, Gutiérrez and Louis

Whereas, The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is the largest transportation network in North America with several operational subsidiaries including the New York City Transit Authority (NYCTA), which provides subway service in New York City (NYC or the City); and

Whereas, NYCTA has 472 subway stations across the boroughs of Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx; and

Whereas, In 2021, the City's subway system had a daily ridership of approximately 2.4 million and an annual ridership of approximately 760 million, with ridership continuing to increase in 2022 as the City continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, While overall crime in the subway in 2022 is down 6.5 percent compared to 2019, over the past year there have been several high profile incidents that have made many New Yorkers feel unsafe while riding the subway system; and

Whereas, One of the methods that the MTA relies on to deter crime and keep New Yorkers safe while riding the subway, is the use of surveillance cameras in stations and on platforms; and

Whereas, According to the MTA, there are currently more than 11,000 surveillance cameras spread throughout the City's subway system, with 5,100 of those cameras providing a live feed in real time to the subway's security center; and

Whereas, The MTA also has announced plans to expand the use of surveillance cameras in the subway system, including the installation of at least two cameras on every subway car by the end of 2025; and

Whereas, As with any piece of technological equipment, surveillance cameras need to be regularly inspected and maintained to ensure they are working properly, especially so that they can be ready for use during an emergency; and

Whereas, It has been reported that the surveillance cameras at the 36th Street Subway Station in Brooklyn were not operating properly during a shooting incident that occurred on a train pulling in to the station on April 12, 2022; and

Whereas, Published reports also indicated that the surveillance cameras where the alleged shooter exited the system at the 25th Street Subway Station, in Brooklyn, were also malfunctioning, a situation that may have hampered the timely apprehension of the perpetrator; and

Whereas, An audit report by the New York State (NYS) Comptroller's office in 2018 on safety and security equipment at MTA subway stations found that 31 percent of the 223 surveillance cameras they reviewed had not received their expected preventive maintenance; and

Whereas, The NYS Comptroller's audit report recommended that the MTA focus its resources on meeting preventive maintenance targets and ensuring that defective cameras are repaired in a timely manner; and

Whereas, On November 21, 2022, NYS Governor Kathy Hochul signed into law A.7016B/S.5899A, sponsored respectively by NYS Assembly Member Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn and NYS Senator Kevin S. Parker, legislation that is known as "Sedrick's law" and which requires the MTA to install and reasonably maintain the proper operation of surveillance cameras at all city subway stations; and

Whereas, In order to guarantee that surveillance cameras are working properly and that they are being effective crime deterrents, the MTA should make every effort to adhere to their current preventive maintenance

schedule and regularly perform these necessary inspections; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to inspect every subway station surveillance camera at least on a quarterly basis to ensure they are working properly and effectuate repairs in a timely manner.

Session 13
LS #11,532
01/17/2024

Session 12
RA
LS #11,532
12/15/2022