



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 155

Resolution in support of legislation pending in the New York State Legislature that seeks to combat the alarming increase in gang activity in schools by empowering local police departments and school officials.

By Council Members Gennaro, Nelson and Koo

Whereas, In the past few years, many communities in Queens have been besieged by a spate of violent gang incidents occurring near high schools; for example, in October 2009, a stray bullet fired by gang members killed a Campus Magnet Humanities and the Arts High School freshman and another stray bullet injured another teenager; in January 2006, four Hillcrest High School students were hospitalized after a brawl between two rival gangs; in October 2005, three teenagers were beaten and stabbed by 30 suspected gang members near Newtown High School; and

Whereas, Reports from community groups and local press throughout New York State indicate a disturbingly visible rise in gang activity in similar neighborhoods throughout New York State; and

Whereas, In order to curtail gang activity in schools not only in Queens, but also in New York State, various members of the New York State Legislature have introduced several bills that would empower police and school authorities as they contend with the upswing of gang violence in communities throughout New York; and

Whereas, One bill (S2213-A/A265-A), sponsored by State Senator Ruben Diaz and Assemblymember José Peralta, seeks to define various criminal street gang activities as prosecutable crimes; this bill gives law enforcement officials new tools to fight the recruitment, retention and solicitation of gang members who are adults and minors; and

Whereas, This bill also establishes new crimes for coercion of a minor into a criminal street

gang enterprise conspiracy and criminal street gang enterprise leadership; and

Whereas, In addition, this bill calls for the abatement of premises that have been used on more than two occasions, within a six month period of time for criminal street gang enterprise activity; and

Whereas, Assemblymember Bob Barra introduced a bill (A6262), which would authorize the superintendent of the New York State Police to establish and maintain a statewide gang database consisting of identification information pertaining to criminal street gang members; and

Whereas, This database will assist state and local law enforcement agencies in the apprehension and prosecution of those suspected of gang-related crimes and would create a repository of information accessible to state and local law enforcement agencies and state agencies (as deemed appropriate by the superintendent of the division of the state police) for investigative purposes; and

Whereas, A third bill (S2214/A304), sponsored by State Senator Diaz and Assemblymember Peralta, would allow school boards to establish policies prohibiting the wearing of gang-related apparel, markings or symbols; this same legislation may allow the school district superintendent to mandate counseling or community service or both in order to promote continue attendance in the school district; and

Whereas, State Senator John Sampson and Assemblymember Peralta sponsored a bill (S69-A/A267-A), which would provide that seventy-five percent of funds seized as forfeitures of the proceeds derived from criminal street gang enterprise activities be given to local schools where the convicted member resides; the confiscated assets would be used by the superintendent to develop, implement or maintain after-school sports or after-school academic programs designed to deter and prevent youths from associating with or joining criminal street gang enterprises; and

Whereas, A bill (A06580) sponsored by Assemblymember Joseph Lentol seeks to impose stricter laws against weapons at school; this legislation would provide for safer school environments

by raising the level of certain criminal possession and criminal sale of weapons crimes if they are committed on school grounds; this bill also provides a definition of school grounds as it applies to firearm offenses; and

Whereas, These gang-related bills are necessary to address the troubling rise in gang activity in New York State localities, including New York City; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York supports legislation pending in the New York State Legislature that seeks to combat the alarming increase in gang activity in schools by empowering local police departments and school officials.

SA
Res 0268/2006