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THE COUNCIL
OF

THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Yusef Salaam

COUNCIL MEMBER, 9th DISTRICT, MANHATTAN

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AND DISPOSITIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES

Summary of Res. 0742-2025: Support for the Mayfield Act (S.1209/A.1297) to Eliminate Mandatory Minimum Sentences

Purpose:

This resolution expresses the New York City Council's support for the **Mayfield Act (S.1209/A.1297)**, which would **eliminate mandatory minimum sentencing** laws in New York State and restore judicial discretion in sentencing decisions.

Key Points:

1. Background on Mandatory Minimums:

- Introduced in the 1970s under the **Rockefeller Drug Laws**, mandatory minimums removed judicial flexibility by requiring set prison terms for certain crimes.
- Expanded in the 1990s, they included harsher penalties for repeat offenses and restricted parole options.

2. Criticism of Mandatory Minimums:

- Ineffective** at deterring crime.
- Have contributed significantly to **mass incarceration**.
- Disproportionately impact **Black, Latino, and low-income communities**.
 - In 2019, **91%** of those arrested for mandatory minimum-eligible crimes in NY were people of color.

3. Provisions of the Mayfield Act:

- Eliminates mandatory minimum sentences** for prison, jail, and probation.
- Restores judicial discretion**, allowing judges to consider **individual circumstances** and **mitigating factors**.
- Ends sentencing mandates** based on prior convictions alone.
- Prevents prosecutors** from restricting sentencing options through charging decisions or plea deal constraints.

4. Policy Goals:

- Advance **fairness and rehabilitation** over punitive incarceration.
- Reduce **racial disparities** in sentencing.
- Empower judges and shift influence away from prosecutorial overreach.

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Sponsors:

Introduced by Council Member Yusef Salaam and co-sponsored by 13 other members.

Legislative Status:

Currently in **committee** as of February 13, 2025; **not yet adopted** by the full Council.