



DJJ testifies before the Juvenile Justice Committee on the Fiscal Year 2009 Preliminary Budget.

DJJ Testifies Before City Council on FY 2009 Preliminary Budget and the Adverse Impact of the Governor’s Proposed Budget Cuts

On Monday, March 24th, the Department appeared before the New York City Council’s Juvenile Justice Committee to discuss the Agency’s Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2009.

Commissioner Neil Hernandez, with First Deputy Commissioner Judith Pincus, Deputy Commissioner for Legal Affairs Herman Dawson and Deputy Commissioner for Administration and Policy Jacqueline James, discussed the Department’s plans to use funding allocated in its Fiscal Year 2009 Preliminary Budget to continue to support the enhancement of human services and the administrative functions that drive agency operations and promote the restructuring of the juvenile justice system as outlined in Mayor Bloomberg’s 2007 State of the City Address.

The budget hearing chaired by Chairperson Sara M. Gonzalez and attended by Council Members Carmen Maria Del Arroyo, Helen Sears and James Sanders Jr., afforded the Council the opportunity to hear testimony from DJJ’s Commissioner Hernandez regarding the Department’s trends, juvenile justice reform efforts, medical services, youth programming, initiatives and its fiscal year 2009 preliminary budget.

The hearing also presented the opportunity for the Department to discuss the adverse impact the Governor’s proposed budget, which looks to eliminate the 50% reimbursement given to localities statewide for detention services, will have on DJJ. The Governor’s proposed cut would negatively impact the Department’s ability to continue to provide robust services to youth in its care, notably in the area of mental health services where 83% of youth admitted to the Department are identified with a mental health need. At this point in the State budget process, the New York State Senate and Assembly have restored this funding.

The Department also reaffirmed its commitment to working both inside and outside of detention with community-based partners and stakeholders to provide the best services available to youth in its custody. In addition, the Juvenile Justice Committee acknowledged the importance of continuing its partnership with the Department to bring much-needed programs and services to youth in DJJ’s care.

