



**NYC Department of Juvenile Justice discusses Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning youth at February 14<sup>th</sup> Council hearing**

**Wednesday, February 14, 2007** – DJJ General Counsel and Deputy Commissioner for Legal Affairs Herman Dawson and Assistant Commissioner for Program Services Nina Aledort testified before the City Council’s Juvenile Justice Committee on Wednesday, February 14, 2007.

The Juvenile Justice Committee is chaired by Council Member Sara M. Gonzalez.

The hearing focused on the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth in the juvenile justice system.

Deputy Commissioner Dawson’s testimony included details about the Department’s continuing work as a member of the Family Court Advisory Council’s Juvenile Justice Subcommittee Working Group on LGBTQ Youth. Dawson discussed services to address the special needs of this segment of the Agency’s resident population, as well as staff training, sensitivity and outreach.

Deputy Commissioner Dawson testified, “The Department has taken a strong position firmly forbidding discrimination and harassment of all youth, including those who self-identify or may be perceived as LGBTQ.”

He discussed the addition of an anti-discrimination of youth provision to the Agency’s Standard of Conduct in 2005 and a recently promulgated policy instituting additional safeguards for youth, and reaffirmed DJJ’s continuing commitment to protect the interests of LGBTQ youth.

