



*DJJ Deputy Commissioner Herman Dawson and Assistant Commissioner Nina Aledort testify at City Council hearing.*

## **DJJ Discusses Agency LGBTQ/Anti-Discrimination Policy**

On Wednesday, November 14, 2007 the Department of Juvenile Justice testified before the New York City Council’s Committee on Juvenile Justice, chaired by Council Member Sara M. Gonzalez. The hearing, held to discuss Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) youth in the juvenile justice system, provided important follow-up to a previous held hearing at which the Department’s commitment to LGBTQ youth and its policies instituting safeguards and prohibiting discrimination were outlined.

DJJ General Counsel and Deputy Commissioner for Legal Affairs Herman Dawson and Assistant Commissioner for Program Services Nina Aledort presented testimony for the Department.

The special needs of the LGBTQ population in the juvenile justice system were discussed, as were the steps taken by the Department to ensure proper staff training and sensitivity.

“DJJ remains committed to preventing harassment based on a youth’s identification or perceived status as LGBTQ,” Deputy Commissioner Dawson said. “Training for Agency staff ensures that they are sensitive to the needs of all youth in detention. DJJ’s landmark policy is an important first step in setting a national standard for protecting all LGBTQ youth.”

DJJ remains committed to protecting the interests of LGBTQ youth and has continued its role as a member of the Family Court Advisory Council’s Juvenile Justice Subcommittee working Group on LGBTQ Youth.

