



PROTECTING KIDS.
PROVIDING HOPE.

January 10, 2023

New York City Board of Correction
One Centre Street
New York, NY 10007
VIA EMAIL

Re: Board of Correction Meeting January 10, 2023

Dear Chair Sampson and Executive Director Masters:

Since 1995, Children's Rights has been a national advocate for youth in state systems. We are also a member of the New York City Jails Action Coalition. Our experience with adolescents and young adults in foster care and juvenile justice systems often brings us into contact with young adult and youth corrections policy, as our clients are disproportionately represented in young adult and juvenile correction facilities. We advocate for young adults incarcerated on Rikers Island.

I would like raise a few questions regarding today's testimony:

First, all of today's testimony, from the rose-colored picture of programming on Rikers Island to the testimony by the Third Vice President of COBA, simply underscores the complete and utter dysfunction of Rikers Island as a place to send our fellow New Yorkers, often to wait nearly a year or more before they are even tried.

Second, the Department of Correction's presentation on programming on Rikers Island provided no data. How many community groups are coming to the Island to provide programming? How many young adults are being served on a weekly basis? How many adults are being served on a weekly basis? How many incarcerated persons are getting regular, or any, recreation at all? What is being done to have enough staff on hand actually to make the provision of programming possible?

Third, in all the testimony at today's hearing, and in all the Board's questioning, there was no mention of Commissioner Molina's and Mayor Adams's position that Rikers cannot be closed by 2027. What is the Board doing to ensure that this whim not become reality?

Finally, what steps is the Mayor taking to ensure the provision of critical mental health and drug treatment services in sufficient quantity in our communities to avoid sending our fellow New Yorkers to Rikers in the first place? What precisely is the Mayor doing to provide supportive

affordable housing? Does the Mayor really think that cutbacks in education are going to help eradicate the school to prison pipeline?

As the oversight entity for the city's jails, the Board has the authority to address these questions. We urge you to use that authority to get concrete answers, and specifically to ensure that Rikers closes as scheduled by August 2027.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniele Gerard', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daniele Gerard

Senior Staff Attorney

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