

CITY OF BEACON
CITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION NO. _____ OF 2020

**A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THAT THE STATE IMPLEMENT
SAFEGUARDS WITHIN THE STATE PRISON FACILITIES
TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19**

WHEREAS the City of Beacon is home to the Fishkill Correctional Facility, which has had the highest number of confirmed COVID-19 infection numbers with 86 positive COVID-19 cases and at least 5 fatalities attributed to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS the City Council is concerned about the COVID-19 infection and fatality rates within New York State's prisons; and

WHEREAS the City Council is concerned about the risk of a resurgence of COVID-19 cases and the safety of prison staff, prisoners and the Beacon community: and

WHEREAS many visitors to and employees of the Fishkill Correctional Facility are valued members of the Beacon community and frequent Beacon businesses, restaurants, parks and public places and some reside within Beacon and such interaction can contribute to community spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS the City Council is also concerned about the significant elderly population of prisoners, who are more vulnerable and have a higher risk of mortality and morbidity if they contract COVID-19; and

WHEREAS the City Council recommends preventing transmission of COVID-19 to the Beacon community and within the prison facilities by enforcing public health standards and implementing appropriate public safety measures including: staggered meal times and recreation use; spaced seating in common areas; adequate and continued provision of masks and other personal protective equipment to prisoners and prison staff; requiring mask use at all appropriate times and requiring adequate and continued provision of hand soap and sanitizer; and

WHEREAS the City Council also recommends the State test all prisoners and prison staff for the COVID-19 virus in accordance with the recommendations of the public health profession; and

WHEREAS, the City Council further recommends the State consider granting additional clemencies by reconsidering the petitions and considering the age of the petitioner, the amount of time served, and the record of rehabilitation before denying a petition submitted by a prisoner convicted of a violent offense.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council urges the State to commit to implementing immediate safeguards against the transmission of COVID-19 at the Fishkill Correctional Facility as well as all other New York State prison facilities; increasing the release of elderly and medically vulnerable prisoners; reconsidering the charge restrictions on the 90-day early release until all state prisoners are able to be vaccinated against COVID-19; fully staffing the New York State Parole Board as soon as possible; and passing appropriate enabling legislation on these topics; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Clerk shall send this resolution to the New York State Governor's Office, State Senator, State Assemblyperson, the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision Office, the Fishkill Correctional Facility Superintendent and the Town Supervisor and Town Board of Fishkill.