



CITIZENS CRIME COMMISSION
OF NEW YORK CITY

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Contact: Alexis Grenell (212) 916-3189 or agrenell@gmail.com

Crime Commission Backs Chief Judge Lippman's Call to Raise the Age of Criminal Responsibility

Chief Judge reveals success of pilot youth court, offers to offset cost to localities of legislation with OCA budget

NEW YORK-Today Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman delivered his 2013 State of the Judiciary in which he once again called on the Legislature to raise the age of criminal responsibility for certain non-violent crimes. Currently, 16 and 17 year olds are treated as adults by the criminal justice system, making New York one of only two states in the nation to do so.

Last year Judge Lippman instituted a pilot adolescent diversion part in nine jurisdictions which has adjudicated over 3,000 cases to great success, offering increased access to social services rather than the punitive structure of the criminal justice system. According to a preliminary review by the Center for Court Innovation, this model has resulted in lower rates of recidivism and hence improved public safety.

"New York's unique status as one of only two states to treat kids as adults in the criminal justice system is a blight on our reputation as the progressive capital of the nation. This unduly punitive practice can have devastating effects on a youth's future, creating restrictions to education, employment, and housing, and rendering them more vulnerable, not less, to criminality. Thanks to Chief Judge Lippman's extraordinary vision and leadership we know that the courts can hold kids accountable while addressing the underlying motivation for their actions without sacrificing their future. The pilot program is proof that intervention works, and it must be expanded with legislation. The Crime Commission applauds Chief Judge Lippman, and joins with him in a renewed effort to raise the age of criminal responsibility in New York State," said Richard Aborn, President of the Citizens Crime Commission of New York City.

In his speech, Judge Lippman offered to use his own budget to offset the expected cost of the legislation on local departments of probation, thereby relieving localities of any financial burden.

The Citizens Crime Commission of New York City is a non-partisan non-profit organization working to make criminal justice and public safety policies and practices more effective through innovation, research, and education. In the last three decades, the Crime Commission has been a leader on key issues such as: increasing the size of the NYPD, expanding the use of DNA evidence in crime fighting, creating innovations that reduce juvenile crime, developing interventions against gun violence and illegal gun crime, and highlighting the changing nature of the threat of terrorism.

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