



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Eric Adams

Senator Adams Discusses Alternatives to Incarceration for Drug Offenders

ERIC ADAMS April 20, 2009

NYS SENATOR ERIC ADAMS JOINS BROOKLYN DISTRICT ATTORNEY CHARLES HYNES TO HIGHLIGHT "DTAP", A PROGRAM THAT OFFERS TREATMENT TO NON-VIOLENT DRUG ADDICTED FELONS: Friday, April 24, 2009, 10AM on BCAT

NYS Senator Adams and Kings County District Attorney Hynes will appear on Brooklyn Community Access Television (BCAT) on Friday, April 24, 2009 at 1000AM to discuss the DTAP (Drug Treatment Alternative-to-Prison) program, which offers treatment instead of a prison sentence to non-violent drug-addicted felons. If the defendant completes treatment, the charges are dismissed. Defendants who fail to complete treatment are sentenced on the original charges.

Senator Adams' statement:

"The crack epidemic caused the number of drug-related offenders in NYS prisons to skyrocket (from 3,000 in 1986 to over 23,000 in 1996). Many inmates, however, had committed non-violent crimes to support a drug habit. In late 1990, Kings County DA Hynes initiated the Drug Treatment Alternative-to-Prison program (DTAP), which offered treatment instead of

incarceration to NON-violent drug-addicted felons. DTAP rationale held that defendants will return to society better equipped to resist drugs (and related crime) after treatment than after prison.

"DTAP was the first prosecution-run program in the U.S. to divert prison-bound felony offenders to residential drug treatment. A collaboration between prosecutors, judges, defense counsels, and treatment providers increased the availability of treatment for addicted offenders, who participate in a residential therapeutic community drug treatment program for 15 to 24 months. Individuals who complete DTAP have their charges dismissed. Special warrant enforcement teams return those who fail to court for a prison sentence.

"The success of the DTAP model prompted the program's statewide promulgation. Now, all of the New York City district attorney's offices and several others throughout the state have prosecutor-run drug treatment diversion programs. Included is the use of a job developer to combat relapse/recidivism by assisting DTAP 'graduates' to find and maintain employment. More than 90% of DTAP's graduates who are able to work are employed, and 90% of participants who fail treatment have been returned to court for prosecution and sentencing within approximately three weeks.

"DTAP is highly cost effective: savings on correction, health care, public assistance, and recidivism costs, plus tax revenues produced by earnings of DTAP graduates, result in economic benefits to society. And the social value to our culture is incalculable. A Columbia University study hails DTAP as 'a promising example of what law enforcement can do to reduce the number of addicted drug offenders in America's prisons.' DTAP participants are less likely to be re-arrested or returned to prison and more likely to be productively employed.

"I support everyone involved with the evolution and development of DTAP, I endorse its dedicated efforts, and I admire its profound accomplishments."