



State Senator Velmanette Montgomery

25th New York Senatorial District

Ranking Member, Children & Families

New York City Borough-Based Jail System Draft Scope of Work Statement- Brooklyn House of Detention

I represent the 25th Senate District, which includes the neighborhoods of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Clinton Hill, Fort Greene, Ocean Hill, Red Hook, Downtown Brooklyn, the Gowanus, Crown Heights, and Boerum Hill.

Let me begin by saying that I am unequivocally against increasing the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of the Brooklyn House of Detention from 3.5 to a FAR of 20.0. This proposal more than doubles the height of the current building from 216 feet to 430 feet to accommodate an increase in housing for people in detention from 810 to a 1,510-bed facility. This is completely unacceptable and contradicts the City's *Borough-Based Jail System* plan for smaller, safer, fairer jails.

The Brooklyn House of Detention has been a part of the Boerum Hill community since 1957. Along with the Brooklyn House of Detention, the community has accepted the presence of the Brooklyn parole office on 2nd Avenue. Boerum Hill and the neighboring communities represent a substantial part of the City's criminal justice system.

Civic engagement is the backbone of our democracy. It is unfortunate and a direct insult to my constituents that there was not a Brooklyn Town Hall meeting held to gather feedback and present the plan to the community in its entirety. I also reject a universal ULURP process, which does not take each communities concerns into account.

I am very much for modernizing the Brooklyn House of Detention to allow for the support services needed to help incarcerated individuals. I am adamant about implementing tailored programming, mental health facilities and providing an environment that truly ensures a productive re-entry back into society. However, I agree with my colleagues that the draft scope should be withdrawn in consideration for fulfilling the mission of smaller, safer, fairer jails.