

3 #5837 - Prohibiting the Placement of 16+17
Year Olds at Juvenile Training
Schools



Resolution No. 37-08

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE CLOSURE OF THE CONNECTICUT JUVENILE
TRAINING SCHOOL**

WHEREAS, at the request of the State of Connecticut in 1999, the City of Middletown agreed to be the host community for the state-owned and operated Connecticut Juvenile Training School, a correctional facility for adolescent males, ages 9-15, which opened in July 2001; and

WHEREAS, as part of the agreement with the State of Connecticut, the State agreed to pay the City of Middletown 100% of Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) grant, to help compensate the City and the community for the burden associated with being a host community for such a facility; and

WHEREAS, from 2001 to the present, the City of Middletown has never received the full amount of this agreed-upon PILOT revenue, the State has not kept its word and the City is currently receiving PILOT revenue at approximately 74.1% of the grant amounts or \$1,299,000; and

WHEREAS, from the date of opening, CJTS has been the subject of controversy, allegations of contract bid-rigging and corruption, leading to the conviction and incarceration of people at the highest levels of state government and allegations of inadequate treatment services for the residents, high numbers of improper restraints and numerous calls by the Child Advocate and the Attorney General and many child experts, demanding that (the best interest of the boys would be better served in smaller, regional facilities closer to their homes), the facility be closed; and

WHEREAS, by press release from Gov. M. Jodi Rell dated July 11, 2005, Governor Rell vetoed a law that would have allowed CJTS to be used as an adult prison, wherein she promised the citizens and local officials of Middletown that CJTS would never be used as an adult prison, when she said, "As long as I am Governor, that facility will never be used for an adult prison"; and

WHEREAS, she is still the Governor; and

WHEREAS, the Governor announced on August 1, 2005 that she was going to close the Connecticut Juvenile Training School saying, by press release, "I am making the tough decision—the right decision—in closing CJTS"; and

WHEREAS, the citizens and public officials of the City of Middletown believed the Governor's said representation, and trusted that she would keep her word to close CJTS; and

WHEREAS, the public officials of the City of Middletown relied upon the Governor's promise to close CJTS and began to explore other, tax-generating economic development proposals near this site, including riverfront development which has the potential to enhance the City and enrich the lives of our citizens; and

WHEREAS, the entire membership of the Middletown Common Council, including the Mayor, supports the Governor's decision to close the Connecticut Juvenile Training School and ask that she close it with all due speed; and

WHEREAS, from 2005, when the Governor pledged to close CJTS, until now, there has been no progress toward this goal, and the citizens of our City now doubt that CJTS will ever be closed and now believe CJTS will likely be expanded—even over the objection of the City—to accommodate older teenage males, thus increasing the risk to the public safety; and

WHEREAS, the State of Connecticut has changed the law (policy) defining the age of juveniles from age 16 to age 18, beginning on January 1, 2010, opening up the expectation by many that older adolescent males, ages 16 and 17, who were adults at the time CJTS was developed and agreed to, will now be sent to the Connecticut Juvenile Training School, giving credence to our concern; and

WHEREAS, changing the age of juvenile jurisdiction does not change our expectation that CJTS will never be available to adult males, which we view as a violation of the covenant that the City had with the state in 2001 as well as the Governor's 2005 representations and is expressly opposed by this City; and

WHEREAS, Governor Rell, in her mid-term budget adjustments for Fiscal Year 2009, has proposed reconfiguring CJTS into the Connecticut Juvenile Services Complex and allocates \$8,000,000 to expand the facility to serve 120 older offenders in addition to 36 younger offenders as well as an 18 bed "Reception and Diagnostic Unit", a 15 bed "Respite Unit", and a 15 bed "transitional Living Unit" – thus expanding the potential population at the facility to over 200 offenders;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN: That we request that the Mayor arrange an immediate meeting with the Governor of the State in order to learn what the State of Connecticut's current plan is for this correctional facility; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Common Council authorizes the Mayor to appoint a Committee of the Mayor and three (3) Council members and four (4) citizens to work with our State Delegation in our effort to defeat this initiative.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City of Middletown through its elected bi-partisan leadership, does not support the placement of adolescent males, ages 16 to 18 at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School and views any effort to use CJTS for such purpose as a violation of the "no adult prison" promise; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City of Middletown, through its elected bi-partisan leadership, asks our entire state legislative delegation to work zealously and tirelessly to reject the Governor's plan to expend \$8,000,000 to reconfigure the Connecticut Juvenile Training School into the "Connecticut Juvenile Services Complex" and to require her to honor her commitment to close the Connecticut Juvenile Training School and to prevent the placement of older adolescent males, ages 16-18, at the facility until it is closed entirely; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City of Middletown, through its elected bi-partisan leadership, implores the Governor and the General Assembly in the strongest possible terms, to close this facility as soon as legally feasible so that the State will not look to this area whenever a new public policy wind blows—please honor the commitment to our people and their safety; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the State of Connecticut is hereby requested to honor its commitment to fully fund a 100% Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) grant to the City of Middletown for CJTS including back payments for shortfalls in previous years of PILOT funding (estimated to be \$1,811,177.70).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That a copy of this Resolution be mailed immediately to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families, the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and all members of the Connecticut General Assembly.

Submitted by: Councilman Thomas Serra

**Status: AMENDED AND APPROVED
by Common Council, City of Middletown
at its meeting held on: MARCH 3, 2008**