

The Chief



COUNCIL URGES PROBE OF BAIL-OUT OF TEEN WHO ATTACKED CO

By RICHARD KHAVKINE Nov 19, 2018

Several City Council Members are calling for an investigation following the release on bail from a Rikers Island jail of an 18-year-old with a long rap sheet days after he was said to have attacked a Corrections Officer.

The man, identified as Rickeem Parker by the office of Queens Council Member Robert Holden, is alleged to have thrown a desk at the Officer at the Robert N. Davoren Center on Oct. 5, just days before he was bailed out as part of the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights foundation's "large scale Mass Bail Out Action."

Rap Sheet of Violence

According to Mr. Holden's office, Mr. Parker has been arrested eight times, including on charges of assault, robbery, fraud and weapons possession.

"It boggles the mind how someone who has this many priors and then proceeds to assault a correction officer viciously could be bailed out by the RFK Human Rights Foundation and released just one week after this incident," Mr. Holden wrote in a letter to Elizabeth Glazer, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice. Eight other Council Members signed the letter, which was also sent to Mayor de Blasio; Corrections Commissioner Cynthia Brann; and all five city District Attorneys.

"The RFK foundation [officials] don't care about victims of crime. They aren't doing a background check," said Correction Officers Benevolent Association President Elias

Husamudeen in a Nov. 14 interview. "I'm not saying they shouldn't bail anyone out. But look at the people before you do."

The foundation did not respond to an email requesting comment.

The activist organization, a nonprofit founded in 1968, announced in September that it would conduct a "large scale Mass Bail Out Action" intended to free women and young people who were behind bars because they could not afford bail.

Controversial Initiative

The effort, while underway at five city jails, is focused on bailing out suspects at two on Rikers Island: the Rose M. Singer Center, which holds women awaiting trial, and the Davoren Center, where minors are held in custody.

The foundation's undertaking has been controversial and scrutinized since it began. The organization, though, said the bail initiative would remove unjust obstacles for people who cannot meet what are often onerous financial demands.

"We see its deep flaws in the discriminatory and demeaning bail system that turns poverty into a crime, and targets people of color," the foundation's president, Kerry Kennedy, said in the statement announcing the foundation's effort. "No one should be caged just because they cannot afford the ransom price of their own freedom."