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## Prison Standards Plan Is Criticized

BY CHRISTOPHER FAHERTY - Special to the Sun

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The New York City Board of Correction was lambasted at a public hearing yesterday for its plans to change 30-year-old standards for prisoners in city jails.

While advocates for prisoners' rights and correction officials criticized some of the proposed changes to the standards, including raising the maximum number of prisoners permitted in dorms on Rikers Island, many appeared more infuriated with the process that has led to the proposed amendments.

A group of about 20 prisoners' rights advocates, the Coalition to Raise the Minimum Standards at New York City Jails, said that while the board has spent two years preparing the changes, the advocates' input hasn't been sufficiently taken into account in the decision-making process.

"There has been no consultation with the communities involved," the executive director of the Innocence Project, Madeline deLone, a former deputy director of the correction board, said. "We call on the board to stop the process now."

The chairwoman of the Board of Correction, Hildy Simmons, said the public has been sufficiently involved in the process.

The minimum standards for prisoners were created in 1978 in response to mass prison riots around the country. The proposed changes, which would be the first overhaul of the standards, would increase the maximum number of prisoners held in dorms at Rikers Island to 60 from 50, allow for surveillance of inmates' telephone calls and mail without warrants, and prolong isolation periods for inmates seeking protective custody.

The amendments to the standards are expected to be voted into effect at a board meeting in June.

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