

# #LessIsMoreNY

MEMBER PROFILE:

**GABRIELA VAZQUEZ**



New York reincarcerates more people for noncriminal technical violations of parole—like being late for curfew or testing positive for alcohol use—than every other state in the country. Approximately 35,000 people are on parole in New York and they are all daily subject to re-incarceration for technical violations. Today, more than 5,000 people are currently incarcerated in New York State prisons and local jails for technical violations of parole. The vast majority of those re-incarcerated for technical violations of parole are Black and Latino. The #LessIsMoreNY coalition is working to fix this problem by passing the #LessIsMoreNY Act (S.1144 – Benjamin/A.5576 – Forrest).

Thousands of New Yorkers have been harmed by the problems in parole. Now they are sharing their stories.

Gabriela, a Brooklyn resident and Senior at John Jay College, has seen the impact the criminal justice system has had, both in her family and in her community. Her brother-in-law is currently incarcerated for a crime he did not commit and a close friend of hers is on parole.

Gabriela and her friend on parole talk regularly about the rigid regulations imposed on him by New York's Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. Her friend feels as though he can't have a normal life because he is constantly haunted by the chance that he might be sent to prison for a minor technical parole violation. Gabriela knows her friend has paid his debt to society and should be given a fair chance to live his life without the fear of being incarcerated for a minor violation, like being late for a curfew or missing a parole appointment.

Once aware of the injustices of the criminal legal system, Gabriela began her path towards justice. As a Member of the Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice,

Gabriela is actively working on the #LessIsMoreNY campaign. Since joining, she has met with her elected officials regarding the bill and hosts Info Sessions across New York about the campaign.

Gabriela believes that no one deserves to be behind bars, especially for technical parole violations in the middle of a pandemic, and envisions a future where communities are not living under hyper-surveillance. She believes that all people should be given a fair chance, and recognizes the importance of organizing to change the criminal justice system. The #LessIsMoreNY campaign is important to Gabriela because of both her personal connection and the immense need to decarcerate. Gabriela believes no one should live with this constant fear that one minor mistake can put them behind bars and seeks to ensure that change is made for all of her currently and formerly incarcerated loved ones.

## More details about the #LessIsMoreNY Act

Developed by people on parole, people currently incarcerated, family members, and community and legal groups, the #LessIsMoreNY Act (S.1144 – Benjamin / A.5576 - Forrest) works by:

- Restricting the use of incarceration for technical violations of parole
- Bolstering due process
- Providing speedy hearings when someone is charged with an alleged violation of parole.
- Providing earned time credits to most people on parole so they get off parole faster

#LessIsMoreNY will bring sensible reform to parole practices, advancing justice, supporting people in reentry and strengthening public safety. That's why it's supported more than 270 community, legal, and faith group, law enforcement leaders, city councils, the NY State Association of Counties, and more. For a full list of supporters, please see the #LessIsMoreNY Support Letter.

For more information, please contact  
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