

#LessIsMoreNY

Less Mass Supervision = More Safety and Justice



New York Officials and Community Organizations Call for Passage of the *Less is More Act*

([S.1144A](#) – Benjamin/ [A.5576A](#) – Forrest)

New York imprisons more people on parole for technical violations like missing an appointment with a parole officer, being late for curfew, or testing positive for alcohol than any state in the country. Of people on parole who New York sent back to prison in 2018, nearly 7,500 or 85% were reincarcerated for technical parole violations.¹ This is 6 times the national average.² In 2019, 40% of people admitted to state prisons were locked up not for a new felony conviction but for a non-criminal technical violation of parole.³ The racial disparity is stark: across the state, Black people are 5 times more likely and Latinx people are 30% more likely to be reincarcerated for a technical parole violation than whites.⁴

There are approximately 35,000 people under active parole supervision in New York State who at almost any time can see their efforts to successfully rejoin the workforce and reintegrate into their families and their communities disrupted by reincarceration for a technical violation.⁵ This not only harms individual lives and families without commensurate public safety gains, but also drives up the population in the state prisons and local jails, wasting taxpayer money. New York taxpayers spend more than \$680 million annually to reincarcerate people for technical parole violations.⁶

The **Less is More: Community Supervision Revocation Reform Act** would fix this problem. Developed by people on parole, people currently incarcerated, family members, and groups across NY, the bill is sponsored by Sen. Brian Benjamin (S.1144A) and Assm. Phara Forrest (A.5576A). The bill was passed by the New York State Legislature on June 10th, 2021. It now must be signed by Governor Cuomo before it can become law. As of July 20th, Governor Cuomo has not yet signed the bill. Its provisions include:

- **Restricting the use of incarceration for technical violations.** Incarceration would be eliminated as a sanction for most technical violations. Certain technical violations could still result in jail time, but it would be capped at a maximum of 30 days.

¹ United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2017-2018* (Aug. 2020), Appendix Table 7, available at https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ppus1718.pdf?utm_content=ppus1718&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery.

² Council of State Governments Justice Center. 2019. *Confined and Costly*, at 1. Available: <https://csgjusticecenter.org/wpcontent/uploads/2020/01/confined-and-costly.pdf>.

³ NY State Assembly, Standing Committee on Correction. 2019. 2019 Annual Report, at 1. Available: https://nyassembly.gov/write/upload/postings/2020/pdfs/20201110_0094293.pdf.

⁴ Bradner, Kendra, and Vincent Schiraldi. 2020. *Racial Inequities in New York Parole Supervision*. New York, NY. Columbia Justice Lab. Available: <https://justicelab.columbia.edu/ny-parole-racial-disparities>.

⁵ NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, *Community Supervision Staffing Legislative Report*, available at www.doccs.ny.gov/Research/Reports/2018/Community-Supervision-Staffing-Report-2018.pdf.

⁶ Nims, Tyler, Kendra Bradner, Johnna Margalotti, Zachary Katznelson, and Vincent Schiraldi. 2021. *The Enormous Cost of Parole Violations in New York*. A More Just NYC and Columbia Justice Lab. Available: https://justicelab.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/Cost_Parole_Violations_in_New_York.pdf.

- **Bolstering due process.** Rather than being automatically detained in local jails, people accused of a technical violation of parole would be issued a written notice of violation with a date to appear in court and would remain at liberty for any hearings. People on parole accused of a new criminal offense would be afforded a recognizance hearing in a local criminal court before they are detained, and the standards of the bail reform statute will apply.
- **Providing speedy hearings.** Persons under community supervision shall be afforded a speedy adjudicatory hearing upon an alleged violation of their conditions of release. Hearings would be conducted within 30 days rather than taking up to 105 days.
- **Providing earned time credits.** People under community supervision would be eligible to earn a 30-day “earned time credits” reduction in their community supervision period for every 30-day period in which they do not violate a condition of supervision.

We, the undersigned, call for swift passage of the *Less is More Community Supervision and Revocation Reform Act* to reduce jail and prison populations; support people who are subject to community supervision in the reentry process; promote safety and justice for families and communities; and save taxpayers money.

Officials and Groups Supporting the *Less is More Act*

List in Formation – current as of July 18th, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

District Attorneys:

- Eric Gonzalez, Kings County District Attorney
- David Soares, Albany County District Attorney
- Cy Vance, New York County District Attorney
- Darcel Clark, Bronx County District Attorney
- Melinda Katz, Queens County District Attorney
- Matthew Van Houten, Tompkins County District Attorney
- David Clegg, Ulster County District Attorney
- Mimi Rocah, Westchester County District Attorney
- Madeline Singas, Former Nassau County District Attorney
- Lucy Lang, former New York County Assistant District Attorney and Executive Director of the Institute for Innovation in Prosecution
- Anne Milgram, Former New Jersey Attorney General and CNN Legal Analyst

Sheriffs and Police

- Craig Apple, Albany County Sheriff
- Timothy B. Howard, Erie County Sherriff
- John Greenan, Erie County Undersheriff
- Derek Osborne, Tompkins County Sheriff
- Peter Volkman, Village of Chatham Police Chief
- Brendan Cox, former Albany Police Chief
- Corey Pegues, Deputy Inspector (Retired), New York Police Department
- Joanne Naughton, Lieutenant (Retired), New York Police Department

Corrections, Parole, and Probation Commissioners

- Michael Jacobson, former NYC Commissioner of Correction, former NYC Commissioner of Probation
- James Payne, former NYC Commissioner of Probation
- Vincent Schiraldi, former NYC Commissioner of Probation

- Vanda Seward, former Statewide Director of Reentry Services for the New York State Division of Parole

Attorneys General

- Karol Mason, former U.S. Assistant Attorney General and President of John Jay College of Criminal Justice
- Robin Baker, former New York Executive Deputy Attorney General for Criminal Justice
- Denise E O'Donnell, Former U.S. Attorney, Western District of New York; former Director, U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance

Judges

- Jonathan Lippman, Former Chief Justice of the State of New York

NY Citywide Officials

- New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio
- New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer
- New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
- New York City Council

NY County Officials

- Martha Robertson, Chair, Tompkins County Legislature
- Shawna Black, Vice Chair, Tompkins County Legislature
- Richard John, Chair, Tompkins County Legislature Public Safety Committee
- Amanda Champion, Tompkins County Legislator
- Deborah Dawson, Tompkins County Legislator
- Henry Granison, Tompkins County Legislator
- Rick John, Tompkins County Legislator
- Anne Korman, Tompkins County Legislator
- Mike Lane, Tompkins County Legislator
- David McKenna, Tompkins County Legislator
- David Sanders, Tompkins County Criminal Justice Coordinator
- Rochester City Council
- Eric Adams, Brooklyn Borough President
- Mary T. Kuhn, Onondaga County Legislator
- Rachel Barnhart, Monroe County Legislator
- Ernest Flagler-Michell, Monroe County Legislator
- Sabrina Lamar, Monroe County Legislator
- Frank Keophtlasy, Monroe County Legislator
- Monroe County Black and Asian Democratic Caucus

Organizations (listed alphabetically):

1. A Beautiful HEART Ministries
2. A Little Piece of Light
3. A More Just NYC
4. Albany 518 SNUG
5. All Saints' Episcopal Church
6. Allegany County Public Defender
7. Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse (ACTS)
8. Alliance of Families for Justice (statewide)
9. Alternatives to Incarceration Coalition (Westchester)
10. American Friends Service Committee

11. Amplifying Activists Together
12. Antioch Baptist Church (Harlem)
13. Anti-Defamation League New York/New Jersey
14. Appellate Advocates
15. Association of Legal Aid Attorneys (UAW Local 2325)
16. Auburn Seminary (NYC)
17. Avodah
18. Beacon Prison Action
19. Black Freedom Project
20. Black Lives Matter – Syracuse
21. Black Love Resists in the Rust
22. Black Public Relations Society-New York, Inc
23. Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law School
24. Brooklyn Community Bail Fund
25. Brooklyn Community Pride
26. Brooklyn Defenders
27. Brooklyn Ghost Project
28. Brooklyn Heights Synagogue – Social Justice Committee
29. Brooklyn Justice Advocacy Coalition
30. Broome County Public Defender’s Office
31. Bronx Clergy Criminal Justice Roundtable Inc.
32. Bronx Christian Fellowship Church
33. Bronx Defenders
34. Bronx Freedom Fund
35. Brotherhood Synagogue
36. Brownsville Think Tank Matters Inc.
37. B’nai Jeshurun
38. Call To Action (CTA) Metro NY
39. Candles for Clemency
40. Can’t Buy Respect Agency, LLC (NYC/Los Angeles)
41. Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES)
42. Center for Appellate Litigation
43. Center for Common Ground
44. Center for Community Alternatives (statewide)
45. Center for Court Innovation
46. Center for Employment Opportunities (national)
47. Center for Family Representation
48. Center for Law and Justice (Albany)
49. Center for NuLeadership (NYC)
50. Central New York Solidarity Coalition
51. Central Synagogue
52. Certain Days
53. Chemung County Public Advocate’s Office
54. Chief Defenders Association of New York
55. Circle for Justice Innovations (CJI Fund - national)
56. Citizen Action
57. Citizens Against Recidivism (statewide)
58. Close Rosie’s
59. CNY Solidarity Coalition
60. Coalition for Behavioral Health
61. College and Community Fellowship (statewide, national)

62. Columbia Justice Lab
63. Community Voices Heard
64. Community Votes
65. Community Service Society
66. Congregation Beit Simchat Torah
67. Congregation Beth Elohim
68. Congregation Kol Ami
69. Congregation Kolot Chayeinu
70. Congregation Rodeph Sholom
71. Corporation for Supportive Housing
72. Correctional Association of New York (statewide)
73. Dismantling Racism Team of Congregation Beth Elohim
74. Democratic Socialists of America – Syracuse chapter
75. Deskovic Foundation
76. Destination Tomorrow
77. Doula 4 a Queen (Syracuse)
78. Drug Policy Alliance (statewide, national)
79. Doe Fund (NYC)
80. East End Temple
81. East House Corporation
82. Educate Don't Incarcerate, LLC (NYC)
83. Educational Opportunities Program
84. Emergency Release Fund
85. Exodus Transitional Community (NYC)
86. Experiencing God Ministries
87. Exponents (NYC)
88. Fair and Just Prosecution (national)
89. Families and Friends of the Wrongfully Convicted, Inc.
90. Families for Sensible Drug Policy
91. Family Services
92. Fines and Fees Justice Center (statewide)
93. First Corinthian Baptist Church (Harlem)
94. First Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn
95. Fortune Society (NYC)
96. Free Black Mamas Syracuse Collective
97. Freedom Agenda
98. Friends of Island Academy (NYC)
99. Friends of Recovery (FOR) NY
100. Friends of Tamika Mapp 2021
101. FWD.us (national)
102. Genesee County Public Defender Office
103. Getting Out Staying Out (NYC)
104. Good Call
105. Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood
106. Greenburger Center (statewide)
107. #HALTsolitary Campaign
108. #HALTsolitary – Buffalo/Western New York
109. Harm Reduction Coalition
110. Hebrew Institute of Riverdale Social Action Committee
111. Hiscock Legal Aid Society (Syracuse)
112. H.O.L.L.A. (Brooklyn)

113. Hour Children
114. Housing Works
115. Hudson/Catskill Housing Coalition
116. Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison
117. Human Rights Watch
118. Human Services Council (HSC)
119. Immanuel & First Spanish Church
120. Incarcerated Nation (NYC)
121. Incorrigibles (national)
122. Indivisible Nassau County
123. Institute for Innovation in Prosecution
124. Institute for the Black World (statewide, national)
125. It Could Happen to You (statewide)
126. Ithaca Prisoner Justice Network
127. It Takes A Village Action Organization, Inc.
128. Jail Ministry – Syracuse
129. Jails Action Coalition
130. JCC Harlem
131. Jewish Coalition on Criminal Justice Reform
132. Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA)
133. Jews for Racial & Economic Justice
134. Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club
135. John Jay College Institute for Justice and Opportunity
136. Justice for Women Task Force
137. Justice Strategies
138. JustLeadershipUSA (NY, National)
139. Just Write Community Project
140. Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice (NYC and Albany)
141. Kite's Nest (Hudson)
142. Kolot Chayeinu
143. Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church
144. Law Enforcement Action Partnership (national)
145. Leadership for Justice Innovations LLC
146. League of Women Voters (NYC)
147. Legal Action Center (NY, national)
148. Legal Aid Society (NYC)
149. Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo
150. Legal Aid Society of Westchester County
151. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Center
152. LIFE Camp, Inc. (Queens)
153. MADRE
154. Make The Road NY
155. Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan
156. Mental Health Association of Westchester
157. Micah Institute
158. Monroe County Conflict Defender's Office
159. Monroe County Public Defender's Office
160. Mothers On the Inside
161. Mott Haven Church
162. NAMI Huntington
163. NAMI NYS Criminal Justice

164. National Association of Social Workers – NYS Chapter
165. National Center for Access to Justice
166. National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls
167. National Council of Jewish Women NY
168. National Lawyers Guild – Brooklyn Law School Chapter
169. Nationally Touching Greatness Inc.
170. Neighborhood Defender Service
171. Neighbors Against White Supremacy (NAWS) Central Queens
172. Network Support Services Inc.
173. Newburgh LGBTQAI+ Center
174. New Hour for Women and Children (Long Island)
175. New York City Bar Association
176. New York City Clergy Roundtable
177. New York City Department of Aging
178. New York City Brown Berets
179. New York City Jericho Movem
180. New York City Metro Raging Grannies
181. New York Civil Liberties Union
182. New York County Defender Services
183. New York Faith Leaders for Criminal Justice Reform Coalition
184. New York Immigration Coalition
185. New York Jewish Agenda
186. New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
187. New York Prison Family and Friends Group
188. New York Society for Ethnical Culture – Ethical Action Committee
189. New York State Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers (ASAP)
190. New York State Association of Counties
191. New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
192. New York State Defenders Association
193. New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault
194. New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
195. New York State Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
196. New York State Council of Churches
197. North Bronx Racial Justice
198. NY Justice League
199. NYU Black Allied Law Students Association (BALSA)
200. Office of the Appellate Defender (NYC)
201. Omo Obatala Egbe, Inc.
202. Onondaga County Bar Association Assigned Counsel Program
203. Ontario County Office of the Conflict Defender
204. Ontario County Public Defender’s Office
205. Open Box Theater Collective
206. Opportunities, Alternatives & Resources (Tompkins County)
207. Oratory Church of St. Boniface – Social Justice Action Group
208. Osborne Association (NYC)
209. Our Wellness Collective (Capitol Region)
210. Park Slope Jewish Center
211. Partnership for the Public Good (Buffalo)
212. Party for Socialism and Liberation - Syracuse
213. Party for Socialism and Liberation - Geneva
214. Peaceprints of Western New York

215. PEER/NYPAN – Suffolk County
216. Plymouth Church (Brooklyn)
217. Police Reform Organizing Project (PROP)
218. Presbytery of New York City
219. Prison Families Anonymous
220. Prisoners Are People Too
221. Progressives Educating New Yorkers, Inc.
222. Queens Defenders
223. Racial Justice Team, Fourth Universalist Society in the City of NY
224. Recess (Brooklyn)
225. Reentry Association of WNY
226. ReEntry Columbia (Hudson)
227. REFORM Alliance (National)
228. Religious Action Center (RAC) NY
229. Religious Society of Friends/Quakers
230. Repair the World
231. Repeal #WalkingWhile Trans Coaliton
232. RHI
233. Rikers Debate Project
234. Riverside Church
235. Riverside Sojourners
236. Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
237. Robin Hood
238. Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative
239. Rockland Coalition to End the New Jim Crow
240. RxHome NYC
241. S.O.U.L. Sisters Leadership Collective
242. S.T.R.O.N.G. Youth, Inc.
243. SAJ – Judaism That Stands for All (NYC)
244. Sankofa (national)
245. Second Chance Educational Alliance, Inc.
246. Second Chance Reentry, Inc (Nassau)
247. Southern Tier AIDS Program, Inc.
248. Southern Tier Independence Center
249. St. Ann’s Corner of Harm Reduction
250. St. Luke Baptist Church (Harlem)
251. St. Matthews Baptist Church (Harlem)
252. STEPS to End Family Violence - Rising Ground (NYC)
253. Strategies for Black Lives
254. Suffolk County DSA
255. Syracuse Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network
256. Syracuse Peace Council
257. Teamsters Local 237
258. Temple Shaaray Tefila
259. Tompkins County Assigned Counsel Program
260. Trellis Community Development (Brooklyn)
261. Trinity Church Wall Street
262. Truth Pharm (Binghamton)
263. T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
264. Unchained (Syracuse)
265. United Christian Leadership Ministry (UCLM) of Western New York, Inc.

266. United Freedom Coalition
267. United Neighborhood Houses
268. United Voices of Cortland
269. Union Settlement
270. Uptown Progressive Action
271. Urban Justice Center
272. Urban Youth Alliance International, Inc/Bronx Connect
273. Uri L'Tzedek
274. VDAY Until The Violence Stops
275. Voices of Community Activists and Leaders (VOCAL-NY)
276. Wayne County Public Defender's Office
277. Washington County Public Defender's Office
278. Welcome Home Circle (Akwesasne Nation)
279. WESPAC
280. West End Synagogue
281. West Harlem Progressive Democratic Club
282. Westchester Coalition for Police Reform
283. Westchester for Change
284. Witness to Mass Incarceration (NYC)
285. Women's Community Justice Association
286. Women's Prison Association
287. Woodhull Freedom Foundation
288. Workers' Center of Central New York
289. Working Families Party
290. Worth Rises
291. Wyoming County Public Defender
292. Yonkers Writing Group
293. Youth Represent
294. Zioness Movement

To endorse this letter, to participate in the campaign, or if you have questions, please contact:

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**The #LessIsMoreNY Campaign is coordinated by
Unchained (Syracuse), A Little Piece of Light (NYC), and Katal Center for Equity,
Health, and Justice (NYC, Capitol Region).**