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# Katal Weekly Update

Katal Center for Health, Equity, and Justice



*In this issue:*

**Parole Reform Gains Traction After Years of Organizing and Advocacy, Pg. 2**

**Instead of Expanding the Drug War, Legislators Should Focus on Solutions that Work, Pg. 3**

**Join Us for a Conversation on Bail Reform in New York State , Pg. 4**

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# Parole Reform Gains Traction After Years of Organizing and Advocacy



**Donna Hylton alongside Vincent Schiraldi and Tyler Nims discuss the Less Is More bill with Bill Sponsor Assemblyman Walter T. Mosley during our May 16, 2018 Lobby Day at the Capitol.**

Our work is featured in a major new piece in the **Queens Daily Eagle**. Our Director of the Women and Girl's Project, **Donna Hylton**, and Community Organizer, **Cedric Fulton**, both leading our #LessIsMoreNY Campaign across New York State, had the opportunity to share their lived experiences with New York's broken parole system for the article.

Journalist **Allen Arthur's** piece, "*Parole reform movement gains traction statewide after years of advocacy*," highlights the growing support for a range of parole reform measures -- Elder Parole, fully staffing the parole board, and our Less Is More bill. Together, these proposals could bring relief to thousands of people currently on or seeking parole, and it is time that Albany give New Yorkers the equitable and just parole system that they deserve.

Read the full article [here](#).

Learn more about our #LessIsMoreNY bill and take action to demand lawmakers urgently pass this transformative legislation [here](#).

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# Instead of Expanding the Drug War, Legislators Should Focus on Solutions that Work



Katal Community Organizer, Dajuan Wiggins, gives testimony at the Capitol in CT.

Last month, the Connecticut House of Representatives unanimously passed [HB 5524](#) to increase the criminal penalties for sale of fentanyl — an all-too familiar response by lawmakers to drug problems. Following our [Memo of Opposition to HB 5524](#), we published an op-ed special to the **Hartford Courant**. Penned by our Director of Health and Harm Reduction, **Keith Brown**, the piece addresses how increased penalties are a wrongheaded approach:

*“Drug war criminalization has never worked, and has always been marked by stunning racial bias. Like the inequity between enforcement of mandatory minimum penalties for crack and powder cocaine for more than 40 years, when lawmakers*

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*propose more drug wars as a solution, we never see healthier, safer communities, but we almost always wind up with disparate impact on people of color, people living in poverty, people experiencing mental illness, and those struggling with addiction.”*

Read *“Instead of expanding the drug war, legislators should focus on solutions that actually work”* [here](#).

Unfortunately, the Senate voted in favor of this bill as well, thus setting Connecticut back in efforts to end the drug war. We are calling on Governor Ned Lamont to veto the bill. We invite you to join us to win solutions that actually work, based in health, harm reduction, safety and support. For more details on how to get involved in CT, please contact Community Organizer, **Kenyatta Thompson**, at [kthompson@katalcenter.org](mailto:kthompson@katalcenter.org) or at (860) 937-6094.

## Join Us for a Conversation on Bail Reform in New York State



Mark your calendar for tomorrow’s #FirstFridayForum presented by the Pretrial Justice Institute, as our Co-Executive Director **gabriel sayegh** will be participating. The forum follows the release of our summary, “Making Sense of Bail Reform in New York State, Part 2”.

Read *“Making Sense of Bail Reform in New York State, Part 2”* [here](#).

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New York just passed historic pretrial justice reforms. Given that the Governor, Senate leaders, and the Assembly speaker made public commitments to end cash bail, why didn't that happen? And what does it mean? Join the conversation as we'll be breaking down New York State's bail reform and what the historic 2019 legislation means for our state and future criminal justice reform efforts.

**Details and RSVP here:** <http://ow.ly/Xt775OumPSs>

**Katal works to strengthen the people, policies, institutions, and movements that advance health, equity, and justice for everyone.**

Visit our website at [www.katalcenter.org](http://www.katalcenter.org) to learn more about our work and how you can get involved. Be sure to follow us across social media @katalcenter and stay in touch!

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