

# #LessIsMoreNY

Less Mass Supervision = More Safety and Justice



## New York Officials and Community Organizations Call for Passage of the *Less is More Act* ([S.1343C](#) – Benjamin / [A.5493B](#) – Mosley)

New York reincarcerates 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 except Illinois.<sup>1</sup> Of people on parole whom New York sent back to prison in 2016, over 6,300 or 65% were reincarcerated for technical parole violations.<sup>2</sup> Nearly 1/3 of the new admissions to state prisons are due to people reincarcerated for technical violations of parole. Only 14% of people on parole who were reincarcerated were returned to prison because they were convicted of a new crime.<sup>3</sup> The racial disparity is stark: Black people are incarcerated in New York City jails for technical parole violations at more than 12 times the rate of whites.<sup>4</sup>

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.<sup>5</sup> 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.

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.1343C) and Assm. Walter Mosley (A.5493B). 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.
- **Bolstering due process.** Persons under community supervision shall be afforded a recognizance hearing in a local criminal court before they are detained, pending adjudication of an alleged violation of their conditions of release, whether a technical violation or a new criminal charge is alleged.
- **Providing speedy hearings.** Persons under community supervision shall be afforded a speedy adjudicatory hearing upon an alleged violation of their conditions of release.

<sup>1</sup> United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2016* (Apr. 2018), Appendix Table 7, available at [www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ppus16.pdf#page=22](http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ppus16.pdf#page=22).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* The rest were almost all reincarcerated to receive treatment.

<sup>4</sup> Vincent Schiraldi and Jennifer L. Arzu. *Less is More in New York: An Examination of the Impact of State Parole Violations on Prison and Jail Populations*. (2018), available: <https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D8RZOQ06>

<sup>5</sup> NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, *Community Supervision Staffing Legislative Report*, available at [www.doccc.ny.gov/Research/Reports/2018/Community-Supervision-Staffing-Report-2018.pdf](http://www.doccc.ny.gov/Research/Reports/2018/Community-Supervision-Staffing-Report-2018.pdf).

- **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 September 4, 2020, 3:00 p.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
- Matthew Van Houten, Tompkins County District Attorney
- David Clegg, Ulster County District Attorney
- Anthony Scarpino, Westchester 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

**District Attorney Candidates:**

- Mimi Rocah, MSNBC Journalist, Westchester County District Attorney Elect
- Alvin Bragg, former Chief Deputy at the Attorney General's office and Candidate for Manhattan District Attorney
- Tahanie Aboushi, Civil Rights Attorney and Candidate for Manhattan District Attorney

**Sheriffs and Police**

- Craig Apple, Albany County Sheriff
- 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
- Anna Kelles, 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

### **Organizations (listed alphabetically):**

1. A Little Piece of Light
2. A More Just NYC
3. Albany 518 SNUG
4. Allegany County Public Defender
5. Alliance of Families for Justice (statewide)
6. American Friends Service Committee
7. Antioch Baptist Church (Harlem)
8. Association of Legal Aid Attorneys (UAW Local 2325)
9. Auburn Seminary (NYC)
10. Black Lives Matter - Syracuse
11. Black Public Relations Society-New York, Inc
12. Brooklyn Community Bail Fund
13. Brooklyn Defenders
14. Bronx Clergy Criminal Justice Roundtable Inc.
15. Bronx Christian Fellowship Church
16. Bronx Defenders
17. Bronx Freedom Fund
18. Brownsville Think Tank Matters Inc.
19. Candles for Clemency
20. Can't Buy Respect Agency, LLC (NYC/Los Angeles)

21. Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES)
22. Center for Appellate Litigation
23. Center for Community Alternatives (statewide)
24. Center for Employment Opportunities (national)
25. Center for Family Representation
26. Center for Law and Justice (Albany)
27. Center for NuLeadership (NYC)
28. Central New York Solidarity Coalition
29. Central Synagogue
30. Circle for Justice Innovations (CJI Fund - national)
31. Citizens Against Recidivism (statewide)
32. Close Rosie's
33. College and Community Fellowship (statewide, national)
34. Columbia Justice Lab
35. Community Votes
36. Community Service Society
37. Congregation Beit Simchat Torah
38. Corporation for Supportive Housing
39. Correctional Association of New York (statewide)
40. Dismantling Racism Team of Congregation Beth Elohim
41. Democratic Socialists of America – Syracuse chapter
42. Deskovic Foundation
43. Drug Policy Alliance (statewide, national)
44. Doe Fund (NYC)
45. Educate Don't Incarcerate, LLC (NYC)
46. Exodus Transitional Community (NYC)
47. Exponents (NYC)
48. Fair and Just Prosecution (national)
49. Families for Sensible Drug Policy
50. Fines and Fees Justice Center (statewide)
51. First Corinthian Baptist Church (Harlem)
52. Fortune Society (NYC)
53. Friends of Island Academy (NYC)
54. Friends of Recovery (FOR) NY
55. FWD.us (national)
56. Getting Out Staying Out (NYC)
57. Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood
58. Greenburger Center (statewide)
59. Harm Reduction Coalition
60. Hiscock Legal Aid Society (Syracuse)
61. H.O.L.L.A. (Brooklyn)
62. Housing Works
63. Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison
64. Human Rights Watch
65. Human Services Council (HSC)
66. Immanuel & First Spanish Church
67. Incarcerated Nation (NYC)
68. Incurrigibles (national)
69. Institute for Innovation in Prosecution
70. Institute for the Black World (statewide, national)
71. It Could Happen to You (statewide)

72. Ithaca Prisoner Justice Network
73. It Takes A Village Action Organization, Inc.
74. Jail Ministry – Syracuse
75. Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club
76. John Jay College Institute for Justice and Opportunity
77. Justice Strategies
78. JustLeadershipUSA (NY, National)
79. Katal Center for Health, Equity, and Justice (NYC and Albany)
80. Kite's Nest (Hudson)
81. Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church
82. Law Enforcement Action Partnership (national)
83. League of Women Voters (NYC)
84. Legal Action Center (NY, national)
85. Legal Aid Society (NYC)
86. LIFE Camp, Inc. (Queens)
87. MADRE
88. Make The Road NY
89. Monroe County Public Defender's Office
90. Mott Haven Church
91. National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls
92. Neighborhood Defender Service
93. Neighbors Against White Supremacy (NAWS) Central Queens
94. New York City Bar Association
95. New York City Clergy Roundtable
96. New York Civil Liberties Union
97. New York Faith Leaders for Criminal Justice Reform Coalition
98. New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
99. New York State Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers (ASAP)
100. New York State Association of Counties
101. New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
102. New York State Defenders Association
103. New York State Council of Churches
104. North Bronx Racial Justice
105. NY Justice League
106. NYU Black Allied Law Students Association (BALSA)
107. Office of the Appellate Defender (NYC)
108. Onondaga County Bar Association Assigned Counsel Program
109. Ontario County Public Defender's Office
110. Opportunities, Alternatives & Resources (Tompkins County)
111. Osborne Association (NYC)
112. Our Wellness Collective (Capitol Region)
113. Partnership for the Public Good (Buffalo)
114. Party for Socialism and Liberation - Syracuse
115. Party for Socialism and Liberation - Geneva
116. Peaceprints of Western New York
117. Plymouth Church (Brooklyn)
118. Presbytery of New York City
119. Prison Families Anonymous
120. Recess (Brooklyn)
121. ReEntry Columbia (Hudson)
122. REFORM Alliance (National)

123. Repeal #WalkingWhile Trans Coaliton
124. Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
125. Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative
126. S.O.U.L. Sisters Leadership Collective
127. Sankofa (national)
128. Second Chance Educational Alliance, Inc.
129. Second Chance Reentry, Inc (Nassau)
130. St. Luke Baptist Church (Harlem)
131. St. Matthews Baptist Church (Harlem)
132. STEPS to End Family Violence - Rising Ground (NYC)
133. Syracuse Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network
134. Syracuse Peace Council
135. Tompkins County Assigned Counsel Program
136. Trellis Community Development (Brooklyn)
137. Truth Pharm (Binghamton)
138. Unchained (Syracuse)
139. United Christian Leadership Ministry (UCLM) of Western New York, Inc.
140. United Freedom Coalition
141. United Voices of Cortland
142. Urban Justice Center
143. Urban Youth Alliance International, Inc/Bronx Connect
144. Voices of Community Activists and Leaders (VOCAL-NY)
145. Wayne County Public Defender's Office
146. WESPAC
147. Westchester Coalition for Police Reform
148. Westchester for Change
149. Witness to Mass Incarceration (NYC)
150. Workers' Center of Central New York
151. Worth Rises
152. Youth Represent

**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  
Katal Center for Health, Equity, and Justice (NYC, Capitol Region), Unchained  
(Syracuse), and A Little Piece of Light (NYC).**