

#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.¹ Of people on parole whom New York sent back to prison in 2016, over 6,300 or 65% were reincarcerated for technical parole violations.² 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.³ 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.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.

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.** 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.

¹ 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.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.* The rest were almost all reincarcerated to receive treatment.

⁴ 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/D8RZ0Q06>

⁵ 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.

- **Providing speedy hearings.** Persons under community supervision shall be afforded a speedy adjudicatory hearing upon an alleged violation of their conditions of release.
- **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 January 6th, 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
- 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
- Janos Marton, 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
- 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 Keophetlasy, Monroe County Legislator
- Monroe County Black and Asian Democratic Caucus

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. Appellate Advocates
9. Association of Legal Aid Attorneys (UAW Local 2325)
10. Auburn Seminary (NYC)
11. Beacon Prison Action
12. Black Lives Matter - Syracuse
13. Black Public Relations Society-New York, Inc

14. Brooklyn Community Bail Fund
15. Brooklyn Defenders
16. Broome County Public Defender's Office
17. Bronx Clergy Criminal Justice Roundtable Inc.
18. Bronx Christian Fellowship Church
19. Bronx Defenders
20. Bronx Freedom Fund
21. Brownsville Think Tank Matters Inc.
22. Candles for Clemency
23. Can't Buy Respect Agency, LLC (NYC/Los Angeles)
24. Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES)
25. Center for Appellate Litigation
26. Center for Community Alternatives (statewide)
27. Center for Employment Opportunities (national)
28. Center for Family Representation
29. Center for Law and Justice (Albany)
30. Center for NuLeadership (NYC)
31. Central New York Solidarity Coalition
32. Central Synagogue
33. Certain Days
34. Circle for Justice Innovations (CJI Fund - national)
35. Citizens Against Recidivism (statewide)
36. Close Rosie's
37. Coalition for Behavioral Health
38. College and Community Fellowship (statewide, national)
39. Columbia Justice Lab
40. Community Voices Heard
41. Community Votes
42. Community Service Society
43. Congregation Beit Simchat Torah
44. Corporation for Supportive Housing
45. Correctional Association of New York (statewide)
46. Dismantling Racism Team of Congregation Beth Elohim
47. Democratic Socialists of America – Syracuse chapter
48. Deskovic Foundation
49. Doula 4 a Queen (Syracuse)
50. Drug Policy Alliance (statewide, national)
51. Doe Fund (NYC)
52. East House Corporation
53. Educate Don't Incarcerate, LLC (NYC)
54. Emergency Release Fund
55. Exodus Transitional Community (NYC)
56. Exponents (NYC)
57. Fair and Just Prosecution (national)
58. Families for Sensible Drug Policy
59. Family Services
60. Fines and Fees Justice Center (statewide)
61. First Corinthian Baptist Church (Harlem)
62. First Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn
63. Fortune Society (NYC)
64. Free Black Mamas Syracuse Collective

65. Freedom Agenda
66. Friends of Island Academy (NYC)
67. Friends of Recovery (FOR) NY
68. FWD.us (national)
69. Genesee County Public Defender Office
70. Getting Out Staying Out (NYC)
71. Good Call
72. Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood
73. Greenburger Center (statewide)
74. Harm Reduction Coalition
75. Hebrew Institute of Riverdale Social Action Committee
76. Hiscock Legal Aid Society (Syracuse)
77. H.O.L.L.A. (Brooklyn)
78. Housing Works
79. Hudson/Catskill Housing Coalition
80. Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison
81. Human Rights Watch
82. Human Services Council (HSC)
83. Immanuel & First Spanish Church
84. Incarcerated Nation (NYC)
85. Incurrigibles (national)
86. Institute for Innovation in Prosecution
87. Institute for the Black World (statewide, national)
88. It Could Happen to You (statewide)
89. Ithaca Prisoner Justice Network
90. It Takes A Village Action Organization, Inc.
91. Jail Ministry – Syracuse
92. Jails Action Coalition
93. Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club
94. John Jay College Institute for Justice and Opportunity
95. Justice for Women Task Force
96. Justice Strategies
97. JustLeadershipUSA (NY, National)
98. Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice (NYC and Albany)
99. Kite's Nest (Hudson)
100. Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church
101. Law Enforcement Action Partnership (national)
102. League of Women Voters (NYC)
103. Legal Action Center (NY, national)
104. Legal Aid Society (NYC)
105. LIFE Camp, Inc. (Queens)
106. MADRE
107. Make The Road NY
108. Mental Health Association of Westchester
109. Micah Institute
110. Monroe County Public Defender's Office
111. Mott Haven Church
112. National Association of Social Workers – NYS Chapter
113. National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls
114. Neighborhood Defender Service
115. Neighbors Against White Supremacy (NAWS) Central Queens

116. New Hour for Women and Children (Long Island)
117. New York City Bar Association
118. New York City Clergy Roundtable
119. New York City Jericho Movem
120. New York City Metro Raging Grannies
121. New York Civil Liberties Union
122. New York County Defender Services
123. New York Faith Leaders for Criminal Justice Reform Coalition
124. New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
125. New York State Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers (ASAP)
126. New York State Association of Counties
127. New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
128. New York State Defenders Association
129. New York State Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
130. New York State Council of Churches
131. North Bronx Racial Justice
132. NY Justice League
133. NYU Black Allied Law Students Association (BALSA)
134. Office of the Appellate Defender (NYC)
135. Omo Obatala Egbe, Inc.
136. Onondaga County Bar Association Assigned Counsel Program
137. Ontario County Office of the Conflict Defender
138. Ontario County Public Defender's Office
139. Opportunities, Alternatives & Resources (Tompkins County)
140. Osborne Association (NYC)
141. Our Wellness Collective (Capitol Region)
142. Partnership for the Public Good (Buffalo)
143. Party for Socialism and Liberation - Syracuse
144. Party for Socialism and Liberation - Geneva
145. Peaceprints of Western New York
146. Plymouth Church (Brooklyn)
147. Police Reform Organizing Project (PROP)
148. Presbytery of New York City
149. Prison Families Anonymous
150. Recess (Brooklyn)
151. ReEntry Columbia (Hudson)
152. REFORM Alliance (National)
153. Repeal #WalkingWhile Trans Coaliton
154. Riverside Church
155. Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
156. Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative
157. Rockland Coalition to End the New Jim Crow
158. S.O.U.L. Sisters Leadership Collective
159. Sankofa (national)
160. Second Chance Educational Alliance, Inc.
161. Second Chance Reentry, Inc (Nassau)
162. Southern Tier Independence Center
163. St. Luke Baptist Church (Harlem)
164. St. Matthews Baptist Church (Harlem)
165. STEPS to End Family Violence - Rising Ground (NYC)
166. Syracuse Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network

167. Syracuse Peace Council
168. Tompkins County Assigned Counsel Program
169. Trellis Community Development (Brooklyn)
170. Truth Pharm (Binghamton)
171. T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
172. Unchained (Syracuse)
173. United Christian Leadership Ministry (UCLM) of Western New York, Inc.
174. United Freedom Coalition
175. United Neighborhood Houses
176. United Voices of Cortland
177. Union Settlement
178. Uptown Progressive Action
179. Urban Justice Center
180. Urban Youth Alliance International, Inc/Bronx Connect
181. Uri L'Tzedek
182. Voices of Community Activists and Leaders (VOCAL-NY)
183. Wayne County Public Defender's Office
184. WESPAC
185. West Harlem Progressive Democratic Club
186. Westchester Coalition for Police Reform
187. Westchester for Change
188. Witness to Mass Incarceration (NYC)
189. Women's Community Justice Association
190. Woodhull Freedom Foundation
191. Workers' Center of Central New York
192. Worth Rises
193. Wyoming County Public Defender
194. Yonkers Writing Group
195. 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
Unchained (Syracuse), A Little Piece of Light (NYC), and Katal Center for Equity,
Health, and Justice (NYC, Capitol Region).**