

#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 27th, 2021, 5:00 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
- 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 Keophetlasy, 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 Of Us Community Action Group
6. All Saints' Episcopal Church
7. Allegany County Public Defender
8. Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse (ACTS)
9. Alliance of Families for Justice (statewide)
10. Alternatives to Incarceration Coalition (Westchester)

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

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

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

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

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

266. Truth Pharm (Binghamton)
267. T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
268. Unchained (Syracuse)
269. United Christian Leadership Ministry (UCLM) of Western New York, Inc.
270. United Freedom Coalition
271. United Neighborhood Houses
272. United Voices of Cortland
273. Union Settlement
274. Uptown Progressive Action
275. Urban Justice Center
276. Urban Youth Alliance International, Inc/Bronx Connect
277. Uri L'Tzedek
278. VDAY Until The Violence Stops
279. Voices of Community Activists and Leaders (VOCAL-NY)
280. Wayne County Public Defender's Office
281. Washington County Public Defender's Office
282. Welcome Home Circle (Akwasasnee Nation)
283. WESPAC
284. West End Synagogue
285. West Harlem Progressive Democratic Club
286. Westchester Coalition for Police Reform
287. Westchester for Change
288. Witness to Mass Incarceration (NYC)
289. Women's Community Justice Association
290. Women's Prison Association
291. Woodhull Freedom Foundation
292. Workers' Center of Central New York
293. Working Families Party
294. Worth Rises
295. Wyoming County Public Defender
296. Yonkers Writing Group
297. Youth Represent
298. 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).**