

# #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.<sup>1</sup> This is 6 times the national average.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<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. New York taxpayers spend more than \$680 million annually to reincarcerate people for technical parole violations.<sup>6</sup>

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 Hochul before it can become law. As of August 24th, Governor Hochul 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.

<sup>1</sup> 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](https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ppus1718.pdf?utm_content=ppus1718&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).

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

<sup>3</sup> 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](https://nyassembly.gov/write/upload/postings/2020/pdfs/20201110_0094293.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> 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>.

<sup>5</sup> 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](http://www.doccs.ny.gov/Research/Reports/2018/Community-Supervision-Staffing-Report-2018.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> 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](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 September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, 11:00 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 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. Bishop Holy Chapter, Union of Black Episcopalians
21. Black Freedom Project
22. Black Lives Matter – Syracuse
23. Black Love Resists in the Rust
24. Black Mind
25. Black Public Relations Society-New York, Inc
26. Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law School
27. Broadway Democrats
28. Brooklyn Community Bail Fund
29. Brooklyn Community Pride
30. Brooklyn Defenders
31. Brooklyn Ghost Project
32. Brooklyn Heights Synagogue – Social Justice Committee
33. Brooklyn Justice Advocacy Coalition
34. Brooklyn Music Week
35. Broome County Public Defender’s Office
36. Bronx Clergy Criminal Justice Roundtable Inc.
37. Bronx Christian Fellowship Church
38. Bronx Defenders
39. Bronx Freedom Fund
40. Brotherhood Synagogue
41. Brownsville Think Tank Matters Inc.
42. B’nai Jeshurun
43. Call To Action (CTA) Metro NY
44. Candles for Clemency
45. Can’t Buy Respect Agency, LLC (NYC/Los Angeles)
46. Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES)
47. Center for Appellate Litigation
48. Center for Common Ground
49. Center for Community Alternatives (statewide)
50. Center for Court Innovation
51. Center for Employment Opportunities (national)
52. Center for Family Representation
53. Center for Law and Justice (Albany)
54. Center for NuLeadership (NYC)
55. Central New York Solidarity Coalition
56. Central Synagogue
57. Certain Days
58. Chemung County Public Advocate’s Office
59. Chief Defenders Association of New York
60. Circle for Justice Innovations (CJI Fund - national)

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

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

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

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



265. Suffolk County DSA
266. Suffolk Progressives
267. Syracuse Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network
268. Syracuse Peace Council
269. Teamsters Local 237
270. Temple Shaaray Tefila
271. Tompkins County Assigned Counsel Program
272. Trellis Community Development (Brooklyn)
273. Treatment Action Group (TAG)
274. Trinity Church Wall Street
275. Truth Pharm (Binghamton)
276. T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
277. Unchained (Syracuse)
278. United Christian Leadership Ministry (UCLM) of Western New York, Inc.
279. United Freedom Coalition
280. United Neighborhood Houses
281. United Voices of Cortland
282. Union Settlement
283. Uptown Progressive Action
284. Urban Justice Center
285. Urban Youth Alliance International, Inc/Bronx Connect
286. Uri L'Tzedek
287. V-DAY Until The Violence Stops
288. Voices of Community Activists and Leaders (VOCAL-NY)
289. Wayne County Public Defender's Office
290. Washington County Public Defender's Office
291. Welcome Home Circle (Akwasasnee Nation)
292. WESPAC
293. West End Synagogue
294. West Harlem Progressive Democratic Club
295. Westchester Coalition for Police Reform
296. Westchester for Change
297. Witness to Mass Incarceration (NYC)
298. Women's Community Justice Association
299. Women & Justice Project
300. Women's Prison Association
301. Woodhull Freedom Foundation
302. Workers' Center of Central New York
303. Working Families Party
304. Worth Rises
305. Wyoming County Public Defender
306. Yonkers Writing Group
307. Youth Represent
308. Zioness Movement

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

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Emily NaPier Singletary, Unchained: [emily@weareunchained.org](mailto:emily@weareunchained.org) | 315.243-5135  
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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).**