

# #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.** 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.

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<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/D8RZ0Q06>

<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 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 14th, 2021, 10:00 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. Call To Action (CTA) Metro NY
23. Candles for Clemency
24. Can't Buy Respect Agency, LLC (NYC/Los Angeles)
25. Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES)
26. Center for Appellate Litigation
27. Center for Community Alternatives (statewide)
28. Center for Employment Opportunities (national)
29. Center for Family Representation
30. Center for Law and Justice (Albany)
31. Center for NuLeadership (NYC)
32. Central New York Solidarity Coalition
33. Central Synagogue
34. Certain Days
35. Circle for Justice Innovations (CJI Fund - national)
36. Citizens Against Recidivism (statewide)
37. Close Rosie's
38. Coalition for Behavioral Health
39. College and Community Fellowship (statewide, national)
40. Columbia Justice Lab
41. Community Voices Heard
42. Community Votes
43. Community Service Society
44. Congregation Beit Simchat Torah
45. Corporation for Supportive Housing
46. Correctional Association of New York (statewide)
47. Dismantling Racism Team of Congregation Beth Elohim
48. Democratic Socialists of America – Syracuse chapter
49. Deskovic Foundation
50. Destination Tomorrow
51. Doula 4 a Queen (Syracuse)
52. Drug Policy Alliance (statewide, national)
53. Doe Fund (NYC)
54. East House Corporation
55. Educate Don't Incarcerate, LLC (NYC)
56. Emergency Release Fund
57. Exodus Transitional Community (NYC)
58. Exponents (NYC)
59. Fair and Just Prosecution (national)
60. Families and Friends of the Wrongfully Convicted, Inc.
61. Families for Sensible Drug Policy
62. Family Services
63. Fines and Fees Justice Center (statewide)
64. First Corinthian Baptist Church (Harlem)

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

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

167. St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction
168. St. Luke Baptist Church (Harlem)
169. St. Matthews Baptist Church (Harlem)
170. STEPS to End Family Violence - Rising Ground (NYC)
171. Syracuse Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network
172. Syracuse Peace Council
173. Tompkins County Assigned Counsel Program
174. Trellis Community Development (Brooklyn)
175. Truth Pharm (Binghamton)
176. T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
177. Unchained (Syracuse)
178. United Christian Leadership Ministry (UCLM) of Western New York, Inc.
179. United Freedom Coalition
180. United Neighborhood Houses
181. United Voices of Cortland
182. Union Settlement
183. Uptown Progressive Action
184. Urban Justice Center
185. Urban Youth Alliance International, Inc/Bronx Connect
186. Uri L'Tzedek
187. Voices of Community Activists and Leaders (VOCAL-NY)
188. Wayne County Public Defender's Office
189. Welcome Home Circle (Akwasasnee Nation)
190. WESPAC
191. West Harlem Progressive Democratic Club
192. Westchester Coalition for Police Reform
193. Westchester for Change
194. Witness to Mass Incarceration (NYC)
195. Women's Community Justice Association
196. Woodhull Freedom Foundation
197. Workers' Center of Central New York
198. Worth Rises
199. Wyoming County Public Defender
200. Yonkers Writing Group
201. 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).**