

#LessIsMoreNY

Less Mass Supervision = More Safety and Justice



New York Officials and Community Organizations Call for Passage of the *Less is More Act*

([S.1144](#) – Benjamin/ [A.5576](#) – 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.1144) and Assm. Phara Forrest (A.5576). 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

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.

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 May 4th, 2021, 4:00 p.m.

District Attorneys:

- Madeline Singas, Nassau County District Attorney
- 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
- Mimi Rocah, 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

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. Allegany County Public Defender
6. Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse (ACTS)
7. Alliance of Families for Justice (statewide)
8. Alternatives to Incarceration Coalition (Westchester)
9. American Friends Service Committee
10. Amplifying Activists Together
11. Antioch Baptist Church (Harlem)
12. Anti-Defamation League New York/New Jersey
13. Appellate Advocates
14. Association of Legal Aid Attorneys (UAW Local 2325)

15. Auburn Seminary (NYC)
16. Avodah
17. Beacon Prison Action
18. Black Freedom Project
19. Black Lives Matter - Syracuse
20. Black Public Relations Society-New York, Inc
21. Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law School
22. Brooklyn Community Bail Fund
23. Brooklyn Defenders
24. Broome County Public Defender's Office
25. Bronx Clergy Criminal Justice Roundtable Inc.
26. Bronx Christian Fellowship Church
27. Bronx Defenders
28. Bronx Freedom Fund
29. Brotherhood Synagogue
30. Brownsville Think Tank Matters Inc.
31. B'nai Jeshurun
32. Call To Action (CTA) Metro NY
33. Candles for Clemency
34. Can't Buy Respect Agency, LLC (NYC/Los Angeles)
35. Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES)
36. Center for Appellate Litigation
37. Center for Community Alternatives (statewide)
38. Center for Court Innovation
39. Center for Employment Opportunities (national)
40. Center for Family Representation
41. Center for Law and Justice (Albany)
42. Center for NuLeadership (NYC)
43. Central New York Solidarity Coalition
44. Central Synagogue
45. Certain Days
46. Chief Defenders Association of New York
47. Circle for Justice Innovations (CJI Fund - national)
48. Citizen Action
49. Citizens Against Recidivism (statewide)
50. Close Rosie's
51. Coalition for Behavioral Health
52. College and Community Fellowship (statewide, national)
53. Columbia Justice Lab
54. Community Voices Heard
55. Community Votes
56. Community Service Society
57. Congregation Beit Simchat Torah
58. Congregation Beth Elohim
59. Congregation Kol Ami
60. Congregation Kolot Chayeinu
61. Congregation Rodeph Sholom
62. Corporation for Supportive Housing
63. Correctional Association of New York (statewide)
64. Dismantling Racism Team of Congregation Beth Elohim
65. Democratic Socialists of America – Syracuse chapter

66. Deskovic Foundation
67. Destination Tomorrow
68. Doula 4 a Queen (Syracuse)
69. Drug Policy Alliance (statewide, national)
70. Doe Fund (NYC)
71. East House Corporation
72. Educate Don't Incarcerate, LLC (NYC)
73. Educational Opportunities Program
74. Emergency Release Fund
75. Exodus Transitional Community (NYC)
76. Exponents (NYC)
77. Fair and Just Prosecution (national)
78. Families and Friends of the Wrongfully Convicted, Inc.
79. Families for Sensible Drug Policy
80. Family Services
81. Fines and Fees Justice Center (statewide)
82. First Corinthian Baptist Church (Harlem)
83. First Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn
84. Fortune Society (NYC)
85. Free Black Mamas Syracuse Collective
86. Freedom Agenda
87. Friends of Island Academy (NYC)
88. Friends of Recovery (FOR) NY
89. Friends of Tamika Mapp 2021
90. FWD.us (national)
91. Genesee County Public Defender Office
92. Getting Out Staying Out (NYC)
93. Good Call
94. Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood
95. Greenburger Center (statewide)
96. #HALTsolitary Campaign
97. #HALTsolitary – Buffalo/Western New York
98. Harm Reduction Coalition
99. Hebrew Institute of Riverdale Social Action Committee
100. Hiscock Legal Aid Society (Syracuse)
101. H.O.L.L.A. (Brooklyn)
102. Housing Works
103. Hudson/Catskill Housing Coalition
104. Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison
105. Human Rights Watch
106. Human Services Council (HSC)
107. Immanual & First Spanish Church
108. Incarcerated Nation (NYC)
109. Incurigibles (national)
110. Indivisible Nassau County
111. Institute for Innovation in Prosecution
112. Institute for the Black World (statewide, national)
113. It Could Happen to You (statewide)
114. Ithaca Prisoner Justice Network
115. It Takes A Village Action Organization, Inc.
116. Jail Ministry – Syracuse

117. Jails Action Coalition
118. JCC Harlem
119. Jewish Coalition on Criminal Justice Reform
120. Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA)
121. Jews for Racial & Economic Justice
122. Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club
123. John Jay College Institute for Justice and Opportunity
124. Justice for Women Task Force
125. Justice Strategies
126. JustLeadershipUSA (NY, National)
127. Just Write Community Project
128. Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice (NYC and Albany)
129. Kite's Nest (Hudson)
130. Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church
131. Law Enforcement Action Partnership (national)
132. League of Women Voters (NYC)
133. Legal Action Center (NY, national)
134. Legal Aid Society (NYC)
135. Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo
136. Legal Aid Society of Westchester County
137. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Center
138. LIFE Camp, Inc. (Queens)
139. MADRE
140. Make The Road NY
141. Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan
142. Mental Health Association of Westchester
143. Micah Institute
144. Monroe County Conflict Defender's Office
145. Monroe County Public Defender's Office
146. Mothers On the Inside
147. Mott Haven Church
148. NAMI Huntington
149. NAMI NYS Criminal Justice
150. National Association of Social Workers – NYS Chapter
151. National Center for Access to Justice
152. National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls
153. National Council of Jewish Women NY
154. National Lawyers Guild – Brooklyn Law School Chapter
155. Neighborhood Defender Service
156. Neighbors Against White Supremacy (NAWS) Central Queens
157. Newburgh LGBTQAI+ Center
158. New Hour for Women and Children (Long Island)
159. New York City Bar Association
160. New York City Clergy Roundtable
161. New York City Department of Aging
162. New York City Brown Berets
163. New York City Jericho Movem
164. New York City Metro Raging Grannies
165. New York Civil Liberties Union
166. New York County Defender Services
167. New York Faith Leaders for Criminal Justice Reform Coalition

168. New York Immigration Coalition
169. New York Jewish Agenda
170. New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
171. New York State Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers (ASAP)
172. New York State Association of Counties
173. New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
174. New York State Defenders Association
175. New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault
176. New York State Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
177. New York State Council of Churches
178. North Bronx Racial Justice
179. NY Justice League
180. NYU Black Allied Law Students Association (BALSA)
181. Office of the Appellate Defender (NYC)
182. Omo Obatala Egbe, Inc.
183. Onondaga County Bar Association Assigned Counsel Program
184. Ontario County Office of the Conflict Defender
185. Ontario County Public Defender's Office
186. Open Box Theater Collective
187. Opportunities, Alternatives & Resources (Tompkins County)
188. Osborne Association (NYC)
189. Our Wellness Collective (Capitol Region)
190. Partnership for the Public Good (Buffalo)
191. Party for Socialism and Liberation - Syracuse
192. Party for Socialism and Liberation - Geneva
193. Peaceprints of Western New York
194. Plymouth Church (Brooklyn)
195. Police Reform Organizing Project (PROP)
196. Presbytery of New York City
197. Prison Families Anonymous
198. Prisoners Are People Too
199. Progressives Educating New Yorkers, Inc.
200. Queens Defenders
201. Recess (Brooklyn)
202. ReEntry Columbia (Hudson)
203. REFORM Alliance (National)
204. Religious Action Center (RAC) NY
205. Religious Society of Friends/Quakers
206. Repair the World
207. Repeal #WalkingWhile Trans Coaliton
208. RHI
209. Rikers Debate Project
210. Riverside Church
211. Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
212. Robin Hood
213. Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative
214. Rockland Coalition to End the New Jim Crow
215. S.O.U.L. Sisters Leadership Collective
216. S.T.R.O.N.G. Youth, Inc.
217. SAJ – Judaism That Stands for All (NYC)
218. Sankofa (national)

219. Second Chance Educational Alliance, Inc.
220. Second Chance Reentry, Inc (Nassau)
221. Southern Tier Independence Center
222. St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction
223. St. Luke Baptist Church (Harlem)
224. St. Matthews Baptist Church (Harlem)
225. STEPS to End Family Violence - Rising Ground (NYC)
226. Strategies for Black Lives
227. Syracuse Immigrant and Refugee Defense Network
228. Syracuse Peace Council
229. Temple Shaaray Tefila
230. Tompkins County Assigned Counsel Program
231. Trellis Community Development (Brooklyn)
232. Trinity Church Wall Street
233. Truth Pharm (Binghamton)
234. T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
235. Unchained (Syracuse)
236. United Christian Leadership Ministry (UCLM) of Western New York, Inc.
237. United Freedom Coalition
238. United Neighborhood Houses
239. United Voices of Cortland
240. Union Settlement
241. Uptown Progressive Action
242. Urban Justice Center
243. Urban Youth Alliance International, Inc/Bronx Connect
244. Uri L'Tzedek
245. VDAY Until The Violence Stops
246. Voices of Community Activists and Leaders (VOCAL-NY)
247. Wayne County Public Defender's Office
248. Washington County Public Defender's Office
249. Welcome Home Circle (Akwasasnee Nation)
250. WESPAC
251. West End Synagogue
252. West Harlem Progressive Democratic Club
253. Westchester Coalition for Police Reform
254. Westchester for Change
255. Witness to Mass Incarceration (NYC)
256. Women's Community Justice Association
257. Woodhull Freedom Foundation
258. Workers' Center of Central New York
259. Working Families Party
260. Worth Rises
261. Wyoming County Public Defender
262. Yonkers Writing Group
263. Youth Represent
264. 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).**