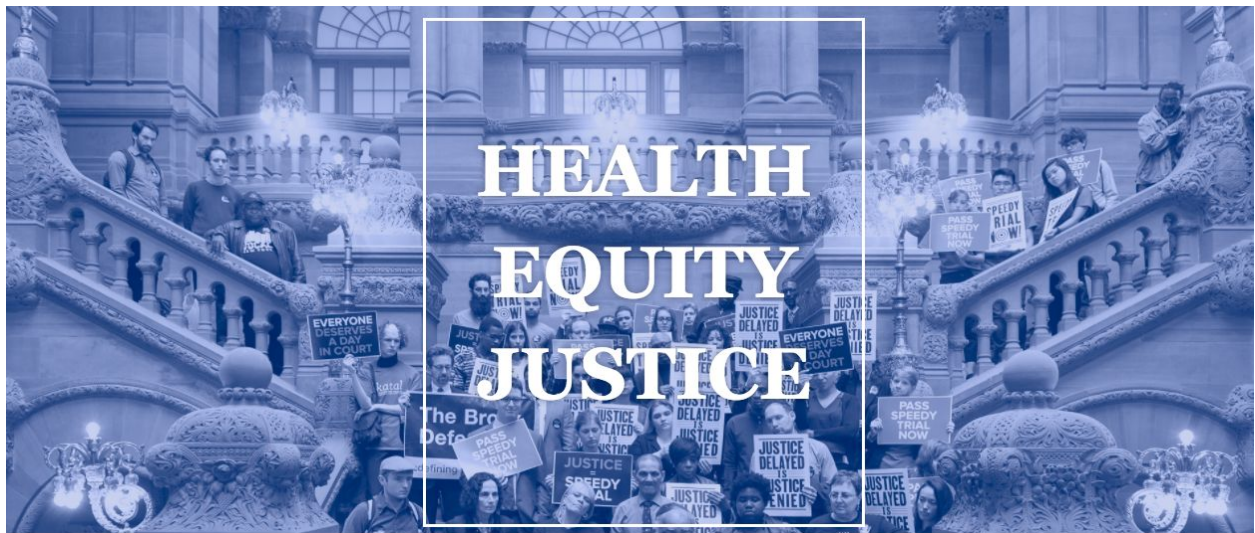


July 16, 2020

# Katal Weekly Update

Katal Center for Health, Equity, and Justice



*In this issue:*

**CT & NY Legislatures to Return for Special Sessions -- But Ending Mass Incarceration Isn't Yet on Agenda, page 3**

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## CT & NY Legislatures to Return for Special Sessions -- But Ending Mass Incarceration Isn't Yet on Agenda



Katal members and allies at a rally at the state capitol in Hartford demanding that lawmakers address systemic racism

In the midst of the pandemic and ongoing rebellion over systemic racism, the Connecticut General Assembly and the New York State Legislature are both returning this month for “special sessions.” But ending mass incarceration and addressing COVID-19 in prisons and jails are not yet on the agenda in either state. We are fighting to change that.

**In Connecticut**, the General Assembly announced it will take up four bills, related to [police accountability](#), absentee ballots, telehealth, and caps on insulin costs. But missing from the agenda is any bill to address COVID-19 in prisons and jails in CT. Throughout the crisis, Governor Lamont has coldly ignored the pleas from people in correctional facilities and their families for action to save lives; people are being left in cages to become infected by and die in jails and prisons from COVID-19. And the Legislature has done little to press Lamont to take action on this issue. The CT Special Session must include legislation related to freeing people from jails and prison in CT and addressing COVID-19 in correctional facilities. [Connecticut residents can join us in taking action to #FreeThemNowCT.](#)



**In New York**, state lawmakers are reconvening July 20 for a special session that a [legislative source](#) said will be a “robust agenda.” Much of the agenda will be “calendar-clearing” – giving final OK to bills, many of them locally oriented, that have been stalled for logistical or political reasons. And on the pandemic front, an assortment of pending bills await, from additional protections for renters to law enforcement-related measures, and more. But thus far, it appears that there are no major criminal justice reform bills yet being considered.

Today, Katal, along with our partners in the #LessIsMoreNY campaign, [issued a press release](#), calling on the legislature to include the #LessIsMoreNY Act on the agenda for the special session. The need for this bill is clearer than ever: new jail admissions data shows that during COVID-19, the Cuomo Administration is continuing to incarcerate more and more people for technical violations of parole like missing curfew. Under Cuomo, New York reincarcerates more people for technical violations of parole (TVP) than every other state in the country except Illinois. And the racial disparities are stark -- in New York City alone, Black people are incarcerated for TVP at a rate 12 times higher than that of white people. It is long past time to pass the #LessIsMoreNY Act, which would fix this problem. The Legislature must take up #LessIsMoreNY in the special session. [New York residents can join us in taking action here.](#)

*Keep practicing social distancing, wear your mask, wash your hands, and check in on your neighbors. If you want to get involved, learn more about our work, or just connect, please don't hesitate to reach out - we're online and on socials via [@katalcenter](#).*

**Katal works to strengthen the people, policies, institutions, and movements that advance health, equity, and justice for everyone. Join us: web, Twitter, Facebook! Email: [info@katalcenter.org](mailto:info@katalcenter.org). Phone: 646.875.8822.**