

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE...**  
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**RELEASE AGING PEOPLE IN PRISON CAMPAIGN  
RESPONDS TO GOV. KATHY HOCHUL'S  
INAUGURATION ADDRESS**

**FOLLOWING HER HISTORIC VICTORY, AMID  
CONTINUED STRENGTH OF SENATE AND  
ASSEMBLY MAJORITIES, CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR  
CALLS FOR PROMPT ACTION ON CLEMENCY AND  
PAROLE REFORM**

(NEW YORK) — Today, Governor Kathy Hochul delivered her first-ever inauguration address after being sworn in by Dr. Hazel Dukes, the President of the NAACP New York State Conference and a [strong supporter of the Elder Parole and Fair & Timely Parole bills](#). **In response to today's event, Jose Saldana, Director of the Release Aging People in Prison Campaign, said:**

“In her inauguration address, Governor Hochul said she’s not here to make history, she’s here to make a difference. Following her historic victory, the Governor must use her power to address the pervasive racial injustices in New York State’s criminal justice system. Today, New York State incarcerates more than two times the number of people who were in prison before the era of mass incarceration and the devastation could not be more clear. People are dying in our state prisons every three days — disproportionately Black and Latinx elders. Yet there is more to the story than just these terrible losses. While prisons do not rehabilitate people, people in prison transform themselves and each other every day. They create and lead the most successful

anti-violence programs, peer counseling initiatives, healthy food drives, and formal and informal mutual aid networks. Many of our state's brightest minds and biggest hearts are locked behind bars, facing a slow death sentence no matter how much they have done to change and give back. In her speech, the Governor said she is focused on combating gun violence and to do so effectively, she will need their help. We urge Governor Hochul to heed the call of Dr. Hazel Dukes of the NAACP and help shepherd the Elder Parole and Fair & Timely Parole bills into law, as well as to follow through on her commitment to use her clemency powers on an ongoing basis."

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