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**\*\*\*STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\***

**(NEW YORK, NY) – Criminal justice advocacy groups, including The Release Aging People in Prison Campaign, Parole Preparation Project, VOCAL-NY, #HALTsolitary Campaign and Worth Rises released the following statement in response to New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio announcing that he has identified 40 incarcerated people to release from the New York City jail system in the wake of COVID-19:**

“The local and state response to release New Yorkers incarcerated in jails and prisons who are at serious risk of COVID-19 continues to be inadequate. There are far more than 40 people detained in New York City jails whose health and well-being weighs in the balance as the Coronavirus continues to spread. The Mayor must take immediate steps to release all of them.

Statewide, Governor Cuomo must step in and take bold action beyond the Mayor’s paltry act by releasing thousands of older people and others with compromised immune systems from his state prisons before it’s too late. He can save lives and free up some of the state’s depleting resources by granting emergency clemencies. Preventing the virus from spreading throughout New York’s system of mass incarceration requires officials to have the moral courage to take mass action.”

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