

MEDIA ADVISORY FOR:

Wednesday, March 11, 2020. New York, NY

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In Wake of Coronavirus Outbreak, Health Experts and Advocates call on Gov. Cuomo to Release Incarcerated People Vulnerable to Virus

The Group will Call on Cuomo to Grant Emergency Clemencies to Older and Sick New Yorkers in Prison

WHEN: Wednesday, March 11, 12pm

WHERE: New York City Hall Steps

WHO: Corrections and public health experts and advocacy organizations, including the Release Aging People in Prison Campaign, Parole Preparation Project, Citizen Action of NY, VOCAL-NY, #HALTsolitary Campaign, Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club, and other organizations.

WHAT: In the wake of the Coronavirus outbreak in New York State, correction and public health experts and advocates will hold an emergency press conference in New York City to call on Governor Cuomo and the state legislature to take immediate action in support of incarcerated people and their families by granting clemencies to vulnerable people in prison, including older and sick incarcerated people. They'll also call on the legislature to take action by passing Elder Parole (S.2144/A.9040) and the Fair and Timely Parole Act (S.497A/A.4346A). To maintain family ties during the Coronavirus crisis, advocates will also call for the passage of the Family Visiting Bus Bill (S.731A/A.5942), Proximity Bill (S.724A/A.6710) and Codification of In-Person Visiting (S.2698/A.2483).

BACKGROUND: On Monday, March 10th, [Governor Cuomo announced that incarcerated people at Great Meadow Correctional Facility would produce hand sanitizer for New Yorkers across the state; a product they will likely be banned from using themselves.](#) To date, Cuomo has not proposed or issued any orders to protect the health and well being of incarcerated New Yorkers who are particularly vulnerable to the virus.

Governor Cuomo has issued two clemencies to New Yorkers in prison in 2019 and 2020 combined, neither of which was given to older or sick incarcerated people. On February 18, 2020, President Trump issued four clemencies to people in federal prison, [representing more commutations than Cuomo granted in the last two years.](#) There are more than 10,000 older adults in the New York State prison system, including dozens who are confined in hospice units, units for the cognitively impaired, and regional medical units.

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