

For Immediate Release

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**Advocates Slam Governor Cuomo for His Plan
to Release a Select Few Incarcerated Older New Yorkers in the Wake of COVID-19**

(New York, NY) -- Today, the Release Aging People in Prison Campaign, Parole Preparation Project, #HALTsolitary Campaign, VOCAL-NY, Worth Rises, and Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club released the following statement in response to Governor Cuomo's action to release a select few incarcerated older New Yorkers within 90 days of their release:

"It is appalling that Governor Cuomo continues moving forward with his fundamentally insufficient plan to release a small and limited number of older people from state prison. Today, the Governor's Secretary confirmed what we feared: that Cuomo's new action will exclude 98% of older people in New York State prisons. That means many thousands of elder New Yorkers will remain at serious risk of dying behind bars from COVID-19.

This move is highly political and not based in public health or criminal justice research that has long confirmed incarcerated older people, regardless of their crime of conviction, pose almost no threat to public safety. Releasing small numbers of people will have no impact on reducing density and stopping the spread of the virus in a state prison system that currently holds 43,000. There are roughly 9,500 older people incarcerated in New York State prisons and the large majority are Black and Latinx. If the Governor is sincere about sticking to the facts and not playing politics in this critical moment, then he'll listen to the wide-range of experts pleading with him to grant broad clemency now."

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