

## **\*\*MEDIA ADVISORY\*\***

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### **Currently Incarcerated New Yorkers, Victim & Survivor Advocates, and 25+ State Lawmakers to Announce New Parole Reform Campaign: People's Campaign for Parole Justice**

#### **The Group Will Launch 2021 Platform: The Passage of Elder Parole and Fair and Timely Parole Bills, and a Fair and Fully Staffed Parole Board**

**WHEN:** Thursday, January 14, 12PM

**WHERE:** Zoom: [bit.ly/parole-justice-launch](https://bit.ly/parole-justice-launch)

**WHAT:** Currently incarcerated New Yorkers, victims and survivor advocates, more than 25 state lawmakers, and a coalition of criminal justice groups will host a virtual press conference launching a new statewide, grassroots campaign for parole reform in New York State: The People's Campaign for Parole Justice. The Campaign has the support of more than 250 organizations and groups across New York State and works to promote fair and meaningful release opportunities for incarcerated women and men in New York State prisons. The primary goals of the campaign are decarceration, which is particularly urgent in light of the COVID crisis behind bars, and family reunification.

**WHO: Currently incarcerated New Yorkers & family members:** Stanley Bellamy (Green Haven prison), Dino Caroselli (Sing Sing prison), Marie (Albion prison), and Chenequa Rogers (family in state prison); **Victim & Survivor Advocates** Chrys Ballerano (NYS Coalition Against Sexual Assault), Luz Marquez (anti-rape and survivor advocate), and Rachel Herzog (Crime Victims Treatment Center); **State Senators** Brad Hoylman, Jamaal Bailey, Gustavo Rivera, Julia Salazar, Zellnor Myrie, Jeremy Cooney, and Samra Brouk and **State Assembly Members** Carmen De La Rosa, Crystal Peoples Stokes, Richard Gottfried, Nily Rozic, Anna Kelles, Demond Meeks, Chantel Jackson, Dan Quart, Khaleel Anderson, Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas, Catalina Cruz, Ron Kim, Zohran Mamdani, Linda Rosenthal, JoAnn Simon, Robert Carroll, Harvey Epstein, and more.

**BACKGROUND:** The People's Campaign for Parole Justice is a new, statewide, grassroots campaign pushing for parole reform in New York State. The campaign platform is supported by more than 250 organizations across New York State and led by a coalition of the state's biggest and most influential social justice and criminal justice groups, including the Release Aging People in Prison Campaign, Parole Preparation Project, VOCAL-NY, Citizen Action, New Hour for Women and Children, NY Communities for Change, Center for Community Alternatives, Capitol Area Against Mass Incarceration, Osborne Association, NY Civil Liberties Union, [FWD.us](http://FWD.us), #HALTsolitary Campaign, Legal Aid Society, Center for Justice at Columbia, CUNY Law Defenders Clinic, NYU Law's Center on Race, Inequality, and the Law.

**[COVID-19 is worsening in NY State prisons. Since the start of the pandemic, more than 3,800 people incarcerated in prisons have tested positive for COVID-19 \(over 1,000 in the past month\).](#)** Twenty-eight incarcerated people have died of COVID so far, including 9 deaths in the last month alone. There are currently outbreaks of the virus at Attica, Albion, Bedford Hills, Bare Hill, Clinton, Woodbourne, Groveland, Cayuga, and Walsh Correctional Facilities.

The People's Campaign for Parole Justice is calling on lawmakers in Albany to pass two bills that will address this pandemic behind bars and prevent similar tragedies in the future:

- [Elder Parole \(S.15\)](#) would allow the State Board of Parole to provide an evaluation for potential parole release to incarcerated people aged 55 and older who have already served 15 or more years, including some of the state's oldest and sickest incarcerated people.
- [Fair and Timely Parole \(S.1415\)](#) would provide more meaningful parole reviews for incarcerated people who are already parole eligible.

The Campaign is also calling on Governor Cuomo to fully staff the Parole Board with 19 Commissioners who come from communities that have been directly affected by mass incarceration and come from professional and clinical backgrounds including social work, nursing, reentry services, and other fields that allow them to evaluate incarcerated people for who they are today. The Board currently has three vacancies.

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