

For Immediate Release

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**Advocates Slam Governor Cuomo for Playing God with Peoples' Lives
in Response to Him Releasing a Select Few Incarcerated Older New Yorkers**

(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's action to release a [select few incarcerated older New Yorkers](#) within 90 days of their release:

"While we are so excited for the incarcerated New Yorkers who will soon be released early, and delighted for their families who will welcome them home, we are appalled by the exclusionary nature of the Governor's action. People aged 55 and older convicted of "non-violent" crimes who are within 90 days of release represent only a small fraction of the aging and elderly New Yorkers in prison vulnerable to COVID-19. Excluding thousands of people who are most at risk of dying and least likely to come back to prison will not promote public health or safety.

The Governor is playing God with peoples' lives. He is telling the world that he thinks some people deserve to live in freedom, while rolling the dice with the health and well-being of countless others. If the Governor wants to take a real stand for justice, he should grant far-reaching clemencies to New Yorkers in prison and ensure that not one more incarcerated person dies of COVID-19 on his watch."

Background: Since the outbreak of COVID-19, advocates have been calling on Governor Cuomo to grant wide-ranging clemencies to New Yorkers in prison, especially older adults and others with compromised immune systems. They also released a [full list of Community Demands for New Yorkers in prison](#) that the Cuomo Administration has yet to enact.

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