

**\*\*PRESS STATEMENT\*\***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN FOR PAROLE JUSTICE RESPONDS TO FAIR & TIMELY PAROLE ACT PASSING NY ASSEMBLY CORRECTION COMMITTEE**

**NEW YORK** -- Today, the New York State Assembly Committee on Correction passed the Fair & Timely Parole Act (A.4231). **In response, the People's Campaign for Parole Justice's policy and communications associate, TeAna Taylor, released the following statement:**

"If signed into law, the Fair & Timely Parole Act would ensure that parole release decisions are based on who incarcerated people are today. Rehabilitation and redemption would actually be taken into account rather than pure vengeance and retribution. It would also mean that people like my father, who will one day go before New York's Parole Board, will actually receive a fair chance at release. Passage of this bill will immediately begin the work of reconnecting families that have for far too long been separated and fractured by mass incarceration. This bill offers a renewed hope for so many people who, like me, desperately need their loved ones back home where they can make tremendous contributions."

**Background:** The New York State Parole Board routinely denies release to the majority of incarcerated New Yorkers who appear before them based solely on the nature of a person's conviction, all while completely ignoring a person's years or even decades-long transformation. In a recent six month period (August 2020 - January 2021) the Parole Board granted release to less than 40 percent of all parole-eligible people.

Parole denials disproportionately impact Black and Brown New Yorkers. According to a front-page Albany Times Union story published in November 2020, Black and Latinx people are disproportionately denied release when compared to white people going before the Board. This is merely one of the many ways the criminal legal system yields racial biases. The Times Union found that between October 2018 through October 2020, 41 percent of white people were granted parole, compared to 34 percent of Black people and 33 percent of Latinx people. Their analysis found that if Black and Latinx people were paroled at the same rates as whites over the last two years alone, on any given day, 675 more people would be home.

The Fair and Timely Parole Act (A.4231) would provide already parole-eligible people with fairer and more meaningful opportunities for release based on who they are today. While the bill would allow the Parole Board to consider a number of factors when determining someone's release, including the nature of someone's crime, it would ensure that parole release decisions are based on who incarcerated people are today. The bill passed the Senate Committee on Crime Victims, Crime and Correction on February 22nd.

The Fair and Timely Parole Act is one of two bills included in the 2021 platform of the People's Campaign for Parole Justice, a grassroots, statewide parole reform campaign with the support of nearly 300 groups across New York State. The Coalition includes the Working Families Party, 1199, the NY State Coalition Against Sexual Assault, and the Law Enforcement Action Partnership. The Campaign also supports Elder Parole (S.15), which would allow incarcerated people aged 55 and older who have served 15 or more years an individualized release assessment before the State Parole Board.

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