

****MEDIA ADVISORY****

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**ADVOCATES, STATE LAWMAKERS TO HOLD RALLY AND
VIGIL IN THE WAKE OF IN-PRISON DEATH OF SALIH
ABDULLAH**

**74 YEAR-OLD ELDER WHO SUFFERED A FATAL STROKE IN
THE MIDDLE OF HIS 14TH PAROLE BOARD INTERVIEW AT
WENDE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY AFTER 47 YEARS IN
PRISON**

*The Group will Call on Lawmakers in Albany to Pass the Fair and
Timely Parole Act and Elder Parole Bill to Address Governor Cuomo's
and the Parole Board's Fatal Lack of Prison Releases*

WHEN: Wednesday, October 14, 5:30pm

WHERE: • New York City: Foley Square
• Albany: Outside the Governor's Mansion
• Zoom option [here](#)

WHAT: Formerly incarcerated leaders, New York State Senators Brad Holyman, Julia Salazar, and other state lawmakers, and other advocates will hold a rally and vigil to demand justice in wake of the in-prison death of 74 year-old elder, Salih Abdullah, who served nearly 50 years behind bars and suffered a fatal stroke in the middle of his 14th appearance before the New York State Parole Board. Advocates will highlight their demands for lawmakers in Albany to pass the Elder Parole Bill and the Fair & Timely Parole Act in response to Governor Cuomo's and the Parole Board's unwillingness to release incarcerated older people who have served decades in prison and pose minimal risk to public safety.

WHO: Formerly incarcerated leaders, New York State lawmakers, and family members of people in prison from the Release Aging People in Prison Campaign, Center for Community Alternatives, #HALTsolitary Campaign, New Hour for Women and Children, VOCAL New York, and other community based organizations.

BACKGROUND: Salih Abdullah was sentenced to 25 years to life in 1974 for a crime in which one police officer was killed by friendly fire and another police officer was wounded. During his time in prison, Mr. Abdullah earned college degrees, mentored many of his peers, and was a leader in the Muslim community. Despite his accomplishments and clear evidence of

rehabilitation, the New York State Parole Board denied parole release to Mr. Abdullah 13 times, adding more than 20 additional years to his court-imposed minimum sentence. In the middle of his 14th Parole Board appearance at Wende Correctional Facility in Western NY, Mr. Abdullah suffered a fatal stroke. He died on September 26th at an outside Buffalo hospital. He is survived by his older brother.

The New York State Parole Board denies release to the majority of the roughly 11,000 incarcerated people in New York State prisons who annually appear before the Board. In part, the Parole Board's denials cause many incarcerated New Yorkers to spend years and decades longer in prison, often causing people to age into their older years. To address these issues, advocates and many lawmakers are calling for the Fair and Timely Parole Act and the Elder Parole bill. Both bills would collectively ensure that incarcerated New Yorkers have fair and meaningful opportunities for release during their time of incarceration.

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