

***** Media Advisory *****

TODAY @ 10am at bit.ly/UnlockingBillions

Contact:

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**AMID BUDGET DEFICITS, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR JUSTICE TO
RELEASE NEW REPORT “UNLOCKING BILLIONS” ON MASSIVE SAVINGS FROM
PENDING SLATE OF JUSTICE REFORMS**

*ACADEMICS, ADVOCATES & LEGISLATORS WILL HIGHLIGHT FISCAL BENEFITS OF PASSING
PAROLE REFORM, HALT SOLITARY CONFINEMENT ACT, MARIJUANA TAXATION AND
REGULATION ACT, RESTORING COLLEGE IN PRISONS AND CLOSING PRISONS*

WHAT: Experts from the Columbia University Center for Justice will gather with advocates and legislators to announce and publish a new report, “Unlocking Billions: A Fiscal Analysis of Pending Justice Reforms in New York State,” finding that slate of policy changes would net the state an estimated \$1.52 billion annually, or \$15.2 billion over the next decade. The economic fall-out from the COVID-19 pandemic has led to massive budget shortfalls and significant funding cuts to essential services at the exact time that such services are needed most. This report charts a path forward for policymakers.

WHEN: Today at 10:00am

WHERE: On Zoom - Register here: bit.ly/UnlockingBillions

WHO: Geraldine Downey, Director, Columbia Center for Justice; Cameron Rasmussen, Program Director, Columbia Center for Justice; Jose Saldana, Release Aging People in Prison Campaign/RAPP, Jerome Wright, #HALTsolitary Campaign; Ivelisse Gilestra, #TurnonTheTapNY; Melissa Moore, Drug Policy Alliance; Marvin Mayfield, Justice Roadmap; and **Senate Crime, Crime Victims & Correction Committee Chair Julia Salazar and other legislators.**

BACKGROUND:

- *Unlocking Billions: A Fiscal Analysis of Pending Justice Reforms in New York State* finds slate of policy changes would net the state an estimated \$1.52 billion annually, or \$15.2 billion over the next decade.
 - The report finds that enacting Elder Parole and Fair Timely Parole would save \$522 million/year
 - HALT would save \$132 million/year
 - Closing additional prisons would save \$493.38 million/year
 - Restoring TAP for college access in prison would save \$22-27.5 million/year
 - Enacting the Marijuana Legalization & Taxation Act would generate \$350 million/year
- [*SAVE MONEY, SAVE LIVES*](#), a recent report by the Partnership for Public Good, finds that the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement Act (S.1623/A.2500) would save New York State and local governments an estimated \$132 million dollars annually, or [\\$1.3 billion dollars over 10 years](#).
- “Carceral Cash,” a report by Center for Community Alternatives found that New York spent [\\$18.2 billion](#) on the carceral system, including policing, jails, prisons, prosecutors, parole, and probation, in 2019. In contrast, New York state governments spent only \$6.2 billion on mental

health services, public health, youth programs and services, recreation, and elder services combined.

- The five bills highlighted in the report are part of the [Justice Roadmap](#), a bold legislative agenda to decarcerate jails, prisons, and detention centers and ensure the basic human dignity and core human rights of all New Yorkers. The Justice Roadmap includes both criminal justice and immigrant justice legislation and is endorsed by over 200 organizations. The full list of bills included in the Justice Roadmap is available [here](#).

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