

****PRESS RELEASE****

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New York State Legislators and Advocates Unveil Justice Roadmap for 2023

Justice Roadmap 2023 Paves the Way to Long Overdue Changes to New York's Criminal Legal and Immigration Systems - The Time is Now!

NEW YORK – Today, state legislators and more than 120 advocacy groups unveiled the [Justice Roadmap 2023](#) - a legislative agenda to address the interconnected harms of the criminal legal and immigration systems and improve community safety and justice for all New Yorkers.

Legislators and advocates are calling for passage of a series of bills that will enable true and long-term solutions to community safety and well-being that do not rely on violent policies, structural oppression, or a culture of punishment that targets Black, brown and low-income people, families and communities. Instead, the Roadmap is rooted in a vision of dignity to give ALL New Yorkers the opportunity to thrive. The recent election demonstrated that lawmakers committed to a real vision for justice have only gained more support from their constituents, even though they faced millions of dollars in dishonest and racist attack ads by their opponents. We take this momentum with us into 2023.

The Justice Roadmap 2023 includes bills that will enable New York to build community safety; to stop the criminalization of mental illness, people who use drugs, street vendors, and sex workers; to expand opportunities for growth for incarcerated New Yorkers; to reform sentencing laws, promote fair and safe pathways for prison release and address systems of perpetual punishment; and to help end wealth extraction and increase investment in historically underserved and under-resourced communities.

“We’re calling on lawmakers to pass the entire Justice Roadmap, including the [Fair and Timely Parole](#), [Elder Parole](#), and Clean Slate bills, to end perpetual punishment and promote fairness, safety, and equity,” said **TeAna Taylor, Co-Director of Policy and**

Communications with the Release Aging People in Prison Campaign. “Together the parole justice bills would give my father a fair chance at release based on who he is today – a student, mentor, and overall inspiration to me, my family, and so many of the young men he’s incarcerated with. He and so many others in prison are ready to come home and be credible messengers in our communities to lead young people to help uplift our community.”

“The 2023 legislative session is an opportunity for our elected leaders to prioritize health, safety, and justice by passing the [Clean Slate Act](#) to address barriers to jobs and housing; the [Eliminate Mandatory Minimums Act](#), [Second Look Act](#), and [Earned Time Act](#) to make New York’s sentencing laws fairer and more just; the [End Predatory Court Fees Act](#) to stop the criminalization of poverty, and the full Justice Roadmap 2023,” said **Katie Schaffer, Director of Advocacy and Organizing at Center for Community Alternatives.** “This legislation will strengthen families and communities by ensuring all New Yorkers can access basic life necessities, eliminating court debt and cycles of poverty and punishment that disproportionately fall on women, and investing in community resources and rehabilitation, rather than perpetual punishment. We call on the legislature to pass and the Governor to sign these crucial, common-sense bills.”

“Immigrant New Yorkers have been waiting long enough to see action from our elected leaders,” said **Yasmine Farhang, Director of Advocacy at the Immigrant Defense Project.** “To do right by the millions of immigrants in our state, we need to pass the [New York For All Act](#) to stop our local agencies from conspiring with ICE, the [Challenging Wrongful Convictions Act](#) to challenge faulty convictions that perpetually punish immigrant New Yorkers and the [Clemency Justice Act](#) to create real transparency around the critical clemency process in New York State. We call on the legislature to prioritize and pass these bills and all the Justice Roadmap bills and on the Governor to sign these bills without delay.”

“The Justice Roadmap is a policy and moral imperative in order to dismantle systems that perpetuate police violence and provide communities with the dignity that our criminal legal system has destroyed,” said **Jared Trujillo, policy counsel at the New York Civil Liberties Union.** “The NYCLU stands with Justice Roadmap partners in the fight to end the criminalization of poverty, mental illness, drug use and consensual sex work, and begin building supportive systems for vulnerable communities to receive the targeted support they need.”

“The 13th Forward Campaign is proud to be included in the 2023 Justice Roadmap. Liberty and opportunity are New York values, period. All New Yorkers deserve freedom from forced labor and basic workplace rights. We're excited to get to work to pass *The*

No Slavery in NY Act and *The Fairness and Opportunities for Incarcerated Workers Act*, in addition to the other important pieces of legislation on the Roadmap," **said the 13th Forward Coalition Steering Committee.**

"The 2023 Justice Roadmap charts a clear path towards a more equitable, fair, and safe New York. Our elected leaders must follow this path and deliver these overdue changes," said **Tania Mattos, the director of advocacy and policy at Envision Freedom Fund.** "Currently, our interconnected immigration and criminal legal systems surveil and jail Black, Latinx, immigrant, and poor communities under the false promise of safety and accountability. The 2023 Justice Roadmap, including the Dignity Not Detention Act, offers a new vision for community safety that paves the way to dignity and freedom for everyone."

"The 2023 Justice Roadmap is the most comprehensive, holistic, and ambitious plan to confront the interconnected harms caused by our various legal systems," **said Wesley Caines, Chief of Staff of The Bronx Defenders.** "True public safety comes from policies that keep families together, invest in communities, and provide New Yorkers with affordable housing and support. Not from policies premised on racist and harmful notions of criminality that simply dehumanize Black, Latinx, immigrant, and poor communities in order to extract resources from them to police, surveil, and jail them further. The State must have the moral clarity to enact this bold legislative agenda."

"We encourage lawmakers to take an important step towards safer and healthier communities by passing the 2023 Justice Roadmap in its entirety, including Treatment Not Jail," said **Julia Solomons, social worker and Treatment Not Jail coalition member.** "All New Yorkers are safer when those who need it can access services and support, instead of languishing in a jail cell. Treatment Not Jail, along with many of the bills on the Roadmap, shifts resources away from punishment and invests in the wellness of our communities, shrinking the harms of the criminal legal system."

"Passage of the Justice Roadmap will put New York on the right track toward repairing the harms of mass criminalization," said **Antonya Jeffrey, New York State Director at the Fines and Fees Justice Center.** "We're proud to support the Justice Roadmap and to play a leading role advocating for the End Predatory Court Fees Act and the Connecting Families Act. These bills are crucial steps toward ending racialized wealth extraction and securing dignity and opportunity for New Yorkers trapped in the criminal legal system."

"Far too often, our immigrant neighbors across New York State are targeted by unfair, often violently enforced policies – and then left on their own to navigate the ensuing

legal ramifications. The Justice Roadmap is an essential legislative agenda that would protect immigrant New Yorkers from some of the worst abuses of our criminal justice system. Legislation like the Access to Representation Act, which would guarantee a lawyer in immigration court, and New York for All, which would end the collusion between local and state law enforcement with ICE and Border Patrol (which often results in the cruel separation of families), are basic laws that our elected officials must enact to create equity and opportunity for all New Yorkers to live free and open lives. All our communities are stronger and healthier when trust and justice are the bedrocks of our governing laws,” said **Theodore Moore, Vice President of Policy & Programs, New York Immigration Coalition.**

“With the Justice Roadmap, New York State has the opportunity to choose true community safety over criminalization and punishment,” said **Anya Mukarji-Connolly, Director of Policy & Advocacy at Brooklyn Defender Services.** “As public defenders, we see everyday how the criminal, immigration, and other legal systems work together to perpetuate harm, injustice, and inequality against Black, Latine, immigrant, and low-income people. New York must not capitulate to fear-mongering tactics, and should focus on solutions that decarcerate and end perpetual punishment, such as the Youth Justice & Opportunities Act, Eliminate Mandatory Minimums Act, and Treatment Not Jails. We urge lawmakers to pass the entire Justice Roadmap platform to keep families together, support communities, and upend the cycle of punishment in our legal systems.”

“As I continue to face barriers to justice on behalf of my 22-year old son Dante, who died after he was brutally beaten by corrections officers over five years ago, I can’t help but think that had the Justice Roadmap’s vision for a safer and more just NY already been realized, he might be alive today,” said **Darlene Mc Day, Co-Leader of the Campaign to End Qualified Immunity.** “Passing the bills on the Roadmap, including the [Bill to End Qualified Immunity](#) would send a strong message to NY’s public officials that the systemic violence that disproportionately impacts black, brown, and poor New Yorkers will no longer go unchecked, and -- most importantly -- offer those who have been harmed by state-sanctioned violence hope for a fair chance at justice.”

“The Justice Roadmap advances a transformative plan to make New York a more fair and just state,” said **State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal.** “I am proud that a number of my bills are included, including the Access to Representation Act (S.81B/A.1961A), a bill to shut down New York City’s rogue DNA database (S.1347/A.6124), and provide a parole hearing for elderly incarcerated people who have already served a significant sentence (S.15A/A.8855). The Justice Roadmap outlines how we can address the deeply interconnected harms caused by our criminal justice and immigration systems.

Let's pass these bills and save lives, reunite families, and offer equal access to justice to all New Yorkers.”

“Mass incarceration and the dual crisis of overcriminalization and under-investment in communities of color are direct threats to public safety,” said **Assemblymember Phara Souffrant Forrest**. “It is high time we stopped catering to what is politically convenient, took responsibility, and did something about it. Not only is it a moral imperative to pass the Justice Roadmap for 2023, it is an economic and social imperative as well. Safe communities are whole communities; safe communities are well resourced communities; safe communities are based on compassion and respect and care. That is the vision laid out for New York in the Justice Roadmap. It is the vision advanced by bills like Treatment Not Jails. It is the vision we must achieve.”

“In 2023, the New York State legislature must continue to work to undo the punitive, violent policies of the past that have enabled the criminal legal system to disproportionately target Black, brown, immigrant, and low-income people, families, and communities. We must instead fight for legislation that addresses the root causes of community violence head on. I'm proud to support the Justice Roadmap 2023 legislative package and grateful to the over one-hundred advocacy organizations who continue to fight to make New York a more just and equitable state for all,” said **Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas**.

“The justice roadmap is a set of policies that will truly evolve our criminal justice system into one of rehabilitation and transformation,” said **Assemblymember Anna Kelles**. It is designed to help individuals and communities recover from the devastation of crime by ensuring that people re-entering the community do so with supportive services, stable housing, and access to jobs. The status quo is a system where people with a history of conviction become trapped in a cycle of parole and recidivism, newly released people face a world that is unprepared or unwilling to welcome them into society, and law enforcement is overworked and strained beyond capacity. The Justice Roadmap will guide us toward a criminal justice system that treats everyone equally while distributing the burden of community safety in ways that protect the rights and human dignity of all people impacted by criminal activity.”

“I look forward to working with criminal justice reform warriors -- including advocates and fellow lawmakers -- during the upcoming legislative session,” said **Assemblymember Latrice Walker**. “There is so much work to be done to address the institutional harm being done to people of color who are disproportionately affected by the criminal legal system. I stand in solidarity with the coalition behind the Justice Roadmap. I will be fighting to end perpetual punishment, pushing the Fair and Timely Parole, Clean Slate, and Elder Parole bills. And I will be working with advocates and

partners in Albany to resist the criminalization of poverty and potential rollbacks to bail reform that would introduce a dangerousness standard and inevitably send more Black and brown people behind bars.”

“The past 51 years have been a half-century of mass incarceration. In the 1970s, the Rockefeller Drug laws created a sentencing regime of mandatory minimums and excessive maximums that ballooned our state’s prison population and devastated families and communities. In the 1990s, these laws were exacerbated. Reforming our criminal justice system will provide incarcerated individuals a chance towards rehabilitation and a dignified re-entry into society. I am proud to support the Justice Roadmap platform and call for its passage in 2023,” said **Assemblymember Demand Meeks**.

"New York is long overdue to take critical action to stop the criminalization of poverty, invest in our communities, and end the perpetual punishment of all New Yorkers," said **State Senator Julia Salazar**. "In 2023, the legislature must act to pass Clean Slate, New York For All, Elder Parole, Fair & Timely Parole, Second Look Act, End Predatory Court Feeds Act, Dignity Not Detention, and the full Justice Roadmap platform."

"Although New York has made historic strides in recent years—passing reforms to cash bail, speedy trial, and discovery laws in 2019, fully decriminalizing marijuana in 2020, and enacting Less is More in 2021—the fact remains that our laws still create and maintain a system of racist, mass incarceration, which every day does uncountable harm to individual New Yorkers, their families, and our communities," said **Assemblymember Emily Gallagher**. "We cannot rest on our laurels, and the Justice Roadmap presents exactly the courageous vision we need to build a safer, more beautiful, just, and humane New York."

“In a world where justice appears to be increasingly elusive for many, it’s critical that we pass the Justice Roadmap to end mass incarceration and make New York a more fair and just state,” said **Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon**. “This package of bills stops the criminalization of mental illness and puts an end to systemic perpetual punishment. I am proud to stand with a strong coalition of my colleagues and advocacy organizations to push for these reforms.”

"Our broken carceral and parole systems condemn New Yorkers to stay behind bars way beyond their minimum sentences, regardless of their effort to rehabilitate or the dangerous threats to their health as COVID continues to spread," said **State Senator Gustavo Rivera**. "We need to reform our entire parole system immediately by passing the Fair and Timely Parole and Elder Parole bills as well as the Clean Slate and Second

Look Acts. Redemption must be part of our criminal legal system so those incarcerated New Yorkers who have reformed and demonstrated remorse can be granted the opportunity to rejoin society and return home.”

A full list of Justice Roadmap endorsers can be found [here](#).