



Justice in Every Borough.

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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Legal Aid Statement On Bail Reform Rollback Implementation

(New York, NY) – Tina Luongo, Attorney-in-Charge of the Criminal Defense Practice at The Legal Aid Society, issued the below statement in response to the implementation of rollbacks to bail reform:

"Today is a dark day for the many, mostly Black and Latinx, innocent New Yorkers who will undoubtedly see the inside of a jail cell because our state legislators decided to rollback hard-fought bail reforms three months into their implementation. As if fueling mass incarceration isn't bad enough in ordinary times, doing so today may very much be a death sentence for some during the current global health crisis. COVID-19 still rages at Rikers Island and other local jails and it's unconscionable that Albany has opted to subject one additional soul to a facility that has earned the moniker the 'epicenter of the epicenter.' Governor Andrew Cuomo could have used his executive powers to stay the implementation of rollbacks but deliberately ignored pleas from New Yorkers of color who are already being ravaged by the criminal legal system and the coronavirus.

But this is not surprising given the Governor's discernible apathy towards incarcerated New Yorkers' wellbeing since the start of this pandemic. Today is truly shameful, and history will rightly judge all those who turned their backs on our clients at this most dire moment."

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 140 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. <https://www.legalaidnyc.org>