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*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

On Election Day, Vote in NYC Jails Coalition to Hold Rally in Support of Reforms to Increase Incarcerated New Yorkers' Access to the Polls

(NEW YORK, NY) - **The Vote in NYC Jails Coalition** will hold a rally on Tuesday, June 25, 2024, at 11:30 AM outside of the New York City Board of Elections' headquarters in Manhattan calling on the New York City Board of Elections (BOE) and New York City Department of Correction (DOC) to invest in and commit to making sure that all people incarcerated in NYC jails have their ballots cast and counted.

The Coalition will also be delivering a memorandum to the Board of Elections detailing the agencies' repeated failures to provide meaningful ballot access to individuals detained in New York City's jails, and calling for the BOE to provide the same ballot access to people who are incarcerated as they do for those who are at liberty.

WHO: The Vote in NYC Jails Coalition including The Legal Aid Society, LatinoJustice PRLDEF, The Community Services Society of New York (CSS), Freedom Agenda, The Bronx Defenders, National Action Network, VOCAL-NY, League of Women Voters NYC, Sorensen Center for International Peace and Justice, New York City Public Advocate's Office, PROP (Police Reform Organizing Project), NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Five Boro Defenders, NYC Civic Engagement Commission, Legal Action Center.

WHERE: Sidewalk outside of 32-42 Broadway, New York, NY 10004

WHEN: Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at 11:30 AM

Background:

The [Vote in NYC Jails Coalition](#) is a group of legal service providers, government offices, and community-based organizations dedicated to delivering the full promise of enfranchisement to people currently incarcerated in jails. Members of the VJC routinely register people to vote in jails and provide them with information and education regarding their voting rights. The VJC also works with agencies to ensure robust registration, voter education, and absentee ballot delivery programs. Coalition members include: The Legal Aid Society, LatinoJustice PRLDEF, The Community Services Society of New York (CSS), Freedom Agenda, The Bronx Defenders, National Action Network, VOCAL-NY, League of Women Voters NYC, Sorensen Center, New York City Public Advocate's Office, PROP (Police Reform Organizing Project), NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Five Boro Defenders, NYC Civic Engagement Commission, Legal Action Center.

Earlier this year, the Coalition penned a [sign-on letter](#) demanding that the DOC and BOE invest and commit to making sure all people in NYC Jails have their ballots cast and counted. The letter called for:

- the Board of Elections must provide detailed anonymized feedback about their rejections of ballots coming from Rikers Island from the past two years and for future elections and implement measures to meaningfully mitigate the rejection rate;
- the Department of Correction must devote more resources around election season to support voters with registering to vote and requesting, receiving, and returning absentee ballots. This must include working with the Board of Elections to provide voters with the opportunity to cure their ballot before it is rejected;
- the Board of Elections must provide voters at Rikers with the same opportunity to vote in-person via the same mechanism the law provides for nursing home residents. This provision includes appointing election inspectors to preside over portable voting machines on-site at Rikers Island so that registered voters can cast their ballot directly with the Board of Elections, eliminating the need for a logistically complex curing process that the Board must undertake with regard to the absentee ballots of the detainees;
- finally, offering a voter education program and providing non-partisan resources on voting is critical to cultivating an informed and robust voting culture at NYC jails.

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