

ALLIANCE TO PROTECT
Kalief's Law

February 11, 2025

Contacts:

Anthony Chiarito, achiarito@bronxdefenders.org

Redmond Haskins, rhaskins@legal-aid.org

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

***Alliance to Protect Kalief's Law Launches New Website to Counter
Misinformation about New York's Discovery Laws***

(ALBANY, NY) – The Alliance to Protect Kalief's Law, a statewide coalition defending New York's successful discovery statute, known as Kalief's Law, launched a new website at www.protectkaliefslaw.com to push back against misinformation and educate the public and lawmakers on the truth about evidence sharing and its impact on public safety:

- **Discovery laws are keeping New York safe.** Kalief's Law protects both witnesses and the person accused; just like similar laws in 40 other states. In fact, in North Carolina, it is a felony for prosecutors or police to withhold or misrepresent discoverable material. The Governor's proposal is an outlier - not a "tweak" but a wholesale gutting of the law.
- **Cases are not being dismissed on "technicalities," nor because defense attorneys are "gaming the system."** There is zero support for this claim. The Court of Appeals has [made clear](#) that Kalief's law does not require a "perfect prosecutor," merely a "diligent" one. Case law also makes clear that when cases are dismissed, it is because prosecutors or law enforcement fail to meaningfully turn over basic evidence in a case.
- **The NYPD's refusal to share evidence does not justify a statewide rollback.** The issue isn't the law—it's missing body cam footage, medical reports, and other key evidence. Other states have implemented open file discovery without issue. Instead of gutting Kalief's Law, targeted fixes to the evidence pipeline in NYC—like [S613/A825 \(Myrie/Lasher\)](#)—offer real solutions. The Alliance stands ready to work with the State to identify further solutions to ensure easier and quicker access to evidence.

The fair administration of justice starts with evidence sharing. Kalief's Law is working - fewer wrongful convictions, coerced plea deals, and pretrial detention, with no data to support the claim that discovery requirements are leading to an increase in crime. Lawmakers must reject the Governor's proposal and uphold the right to open, early, and complete discovery.

"Kalief Browder spent three years in Rikers—two of them in solitary—because they hid the evidence that could have set him free. What happened to him should never happen to anyone," **said Derrick Hamilton, who spent more than two decades in prison for a crime he didn't commit.** "Every New Yorker deserves to see the evidence against them. Period. No ifs, ands, or buts. This isn't about technicalities or loopholes—it's about life and death. In fact, evidence was withheld in more than half of the proven 359 wrongful convictions revealed in New York State, which is just the tip of the iceberg. I spent more than two decades behind bars for a crime I did not commit, and the idea that there is even consideration of rolling back discovery laws is an insult to those of us who experienced this horrific trauma."

About the Alliance to Protect Kalief's Law

The Alliance to Protect Kalief's Law is a statewide coalition defending New York's successful discovery statute, known as Kalief's Law. The Alliance includes Akeem Browder, NAACP New York State Conference, Innocence Project, The Bail Project, Citizen Action New York, NYSACDL, S.T.O.P., NYCLU, the Jim Owles Democratic Club, The Bronx Defenders, The Legal Aid Society, Families and Friends of the Wrongfully Convicted, the New York State Defenders Association, and more. Go to www.protectkaliefslaw.com for a full coalition list.

###