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

Alliance to Protect Kalief's Law to Hold Press Conference Calling on Lawmakers to Reject Governor's Proposal to Repeal New York's Discovery Laws

Court System Data Show that Discovery Reform Has Not Increased Dismissal Rates Outside New York City

(ALBANY, NY) - **The Alliance to Protect Kalief's Law**, a coalition of exonerees, impacted New Yorkers, public defenders, advocates, and concerned citizens, will hold a press conference in the New York State Capitol, 4th Floor, Senate Side on March 3rd, 2025 at 11 AM to urge lawmakers to preserve New York's common-sense and successful discovery statute, also known as "Kalief's Law."

WHAT: Press conference calling on lawmakers to reject Governor Hochul's proposal to repeal New York's discovery laws

WHO: Elected officials, Families and Friends of the Wrongfully Convicted, NAACP New York State Conference, Freedom Agenda, Citizen Action New York, Innocence Project, The Bail Project, Chief Defenders Association of New York, New York State Defenders Association, New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NYSACDL), Erie County New York Assigned Counsel Program, Monroe County Assigned Counsel Program, Ontario County Public Defender, Wayne County Public Defender, Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Albany County Public Defender's Office, Westchester County Legal Aid Society, St. John's University School of Law Defense and Advocacy Clinic, Nassau County Legal Aid Society, The Perlmutter Center for Legal Justice at Cardozo School of Law, The Bronx Defenders, The Legal Aid Society, Queens Defenders, Brooklyn Defender Services, New York County Defender Services, Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, New Hour for Women & Children, and more.

WHEN: Monday, March 3rd at 11:00 AM

WHERE: New York State Capitol Building, 4th Floor Gallery, Senate Side

Background

In the FY2025 Executive Budget, Governor Hochul proposed sweeping changes to New York's discovery statute, which would represent a wholesale repeal of the state's common-sense evidence sharing laws.

Enacted in 2019, New York's discovery statute created a fairer evidence sharing system by ensuring prosecutors provide people accused of crimes with early, open, and complete discovery in their cases.

Before the enactment of this reform, the law allowed police and prosecutors to withhold evidence until the eve of trial, keeping New Yorkers and their defense attorneys in the dark, unable to investigate, prepare a defense, or make informed decisions about their case. This contributed to the state's high rate of wrongful convictions, coerced pleas, and prolonged pretrial incarceration.

The Governor's proposal threatens to send New York back to the era of the "Blindfold Law." The proposal, mischaracterized as mere "tweaks" to "close loopholes," would gut the law, ending open file discovery, allowing police and prosecutors to withhold evidence, and removing accountability from the system.

The Alliance to Protect Kalief's Law is a statewide coalition that was founded to defend New York's successful discovery statute, known as Kalief's Law.

Go to www.protectkaliefslaw.com for the facts about New York's landmark discovery law.

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