



June 4, 2026

To:

New York City Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani
Deputy Mayor for Community Safety Renita Francois
New York City Police Department Commissioner Jessica Tisch
Administrative Judge for Criminal Matters, Kings County Supreme Court Hon. Matthew J. D'Emic
Administrative Judge for Criminal Matters, New York County Supreme Court Hon. Ellen Biben
Administrative Judge for Criminal Matters, Bronx County Supreme Court Hon. Alvin Yearwood
Administrative Judge for Criminal Matters, Queens County Supreme Court Hon. Michelle Johnson
Administrative Judge for Criminal Matters, Richmond County Supreme Court Hon. Raymond Rodriguez
Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez
Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg
Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz
Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark
Staten Island District Attorney Michael McMahon

We, 29 Council Members, write this letter to share our outrage at the dangerous conditions that put a woman at risk after being forced to give birth in a Brooklyn courtroom on May 15, 2026. After being held overnight in police custody for a low-level violation, she was discharged from Coney Island Hospital at 8 p.m., taken to Brooklyn Central Booking, and subsequently transported, handcuffed at the back, to the courtroom for her arraignment. Her handcuffs were only removed while she was in active labor and there was no medical personnel nor sanitary equipment present to assist in the birth in this public courtroom with onlookers present. This horrific and degrading incident is the result of a series of systemic failures that reinforced conditions which put the people of New York needlessly in harm's way.

We're calling for an internal investigation into the circumstances that kept a 9-month pregnant mother in police custody for over 30 hours for an offense in which police and the district attorney have discretion to issue an appearance ticket. Importantly, this horrifying incident occurred a month after 2 New Yorkers died awaiting arraignment on low-level charges in holding cells in Brooklyn arraignment court. This also occurred in the landscape of other deaths and horrible conditions in arraignment holding cells across the City. We insist these conversations include public defender organizations, their respective unions, and community groups led by people with lived experience with policing and detention. Additionally, we write to champion the following actions:

- The City must stop the surge of quality-of-life policing and the practice of custodial arrests and detainment for arraignment for low-level charges
- District Attorneys must use their discretion to decline to prosecute low-level violations or issue Desk Appearance Tickets (DATs)

- District Attorneys must commit to automatic clearing of open bench and Summons Adjudication Part (SAP) warrants for low-level quality-of-life offenses as was done in [2017](#)
- The City must empower automatic Civilian Complaint Review Board investigations of in-custody deaths
- The City must create independent Emergency Medical Services staffing in courthouses

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Sandy Nurse
Progressive Caucus Co-Chair, District 37



Tiffany Cabán
Progressive Caucus Co-Chair, District 22



Gale Brewer
Women's Caucus Co-Chair, District 6



Rita Joseph
Women's Caucus Co-Chair, District 40



Alexa Avilés
Progressive Caucus Vice Co-Chair, District 38



Kayla Santosuosso
Progressive Caucus Vice Co-Chair, District 47



Shaun Abreu
Council Member, District 7
Majority Leader



Kamilah Hanks
Council Member, District 49
Majority Whip



Elsie Encarnacion
Council Member, District 8
Deputy Majority Whip



Chris Marte
Council Member, District 1



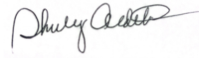
Harvey Epstein
Council Member, District 2



Virginia Maloney
Council Member, District 4



Carmen De La Rosa
Council Member, District 10



Shirley Aldebol
Council Member, District 13



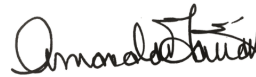
Pierina Sanchez
Council Member, District 14



Althea Stevens
Council Member, District 16



Justin Sanchez
Council Member, District 17



Amanda Farias
Council Member, District 18



Shanel Thomas-Henry
Council Member, District 21



Shekar Krishnan
Council Member, District 25




Julie Won
Council Member, District 26



Selvena Brooks-Powers
Council Member, District 31



Lincoln Restler
Council Member, District 33



Jennifer Gutiérrez
Council Member, District 34



Crystal Hudson
Council Member, District 35



Chi Ossé
Council Member, District 36



Shahana Hanif
Council Member, District 39



Farah Louis
Council Member, District 45



Mercedes Narcisse
Council Member, District 46