

#FREEnewyork

On any given day, **25,000** New Yorkers are caged in county jails across our state. The abuse that occurs in these jails is rampant. Human rights violations, violence, and medical neglect are commonplace. **Our jails are unjust, unsafe and inhumane.** Despite a steady decrease in crime, numerous county jails have grown – some even doubling in size. The system disproportionately criminalizes and jails people experiencing poverty, Black people, and people of color, including immigrants.

Shockingly, nearly **70%** of the people held in our jails **have not been convicted.** They are **legally innocent as they await trial**, but denied their freedom because of New York's broken bail, speedy trial and discovery laws. **This is a mockery of justice, and New Yorkers deserve better.** Although the U.S. Constitution guarantees the right to a fair and speedy trial, these rights are consistently violated in New York State. Thousands languish in jail for months or years, and even short stays can have devastating impacts for individuals, families, and communities.

Mass incarceration affects every county and every corner of New York State. While much attention has been focused on the horrors of Rikers Island, jails in other parts of the state where a majority of our neighbors and loved ones are held, deserve equal scrutiny. **63% of jailed New Yorkers are incarcerated outside of New York City.** New York spends \$2.5 billion each year to fill county jails. The impact that the criminal justice system has on people based on poverty and race, is a statewide problem that requires bold, state-level action. Solutions must be driven by the voices of directly impacted individuals.

#FREEnewyork, led by JustLeadershipUSA, in partnership with organizations and directly impacted communities, is building statewide power to demand fundamental change. We believe:

- People must have every opportunity for a fair shot at justice and freedom. New York State must prioritize justice-involved people being home with their loved ones and community in order to guarantee a fair trial and due process.
- New York State must protect families and communities from the pretrial punishments that impact legally innocent people, including: incarceration, housing and job loss, education disruption, immigration jail and deportation, loss of child custody, and many other dire consequences.

We will not settle for compromise measures or partial reforms. To address the immense and urgent issue of mass incarceration, we call on elected officials in **New York State to overhaul bail, speedy trial and discovery laws.**

- **New York must pass bail reform** that eliminates money bail, protects liberty and equity, and sets strong limits on when and how any pretrial conditions are set.
- **New York must pass a discovery law** that requires open, early, and automatic sharing of vital case evidence.
- **New York must pass a speedy trial law** that covers all crime categories and truly protects the right to a fair & timely trial.

Together, we are building a safer, more just New York that invests in communities, not incarceration. Join us.

TO LEARN MORE

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