

# 2021 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

## ENDING MASS INCARCERATION & TRANSFORMING THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The injustice of the system necessitates bold, statewide solutions that address its root causes & state violence. The criminal legal system was constructed to punish & oppress Black, Brown, Latinx, low income & working-class people. We must address a broad array of system failures.

Citizen Action supports expanded funding of mental health services, substance use programming, affordable housing, public education & supportive community based services to address the root causes of poverty & crime.



### WE SUPPORT

#### **Legalizing Marijuana Possession, Use, & Purchase [A1248/S854]**

The Marijuana Regulation & Taxation Act (MRTA) would begin to undo decades of discriminatory enforcement of the state's marijuana prohibition which has devastated Black & Brown communities.

#### **Eliminating Fines & Fees**

Reduce & eliminate court-mandated fines & fees imposed on predominantly Black & Brown communities.

#### **Ending Long-Term Solitary Confinement**

Pass the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement Act (HALTsolitary Act), which will bring New York into line with international law principles [A2277/S2836].

#### **Parole Justice**

End repeated parole denials [A4231/S1415] & grant parole consideration for all people 55+ [A3475/S15].

#### **Restoring Voting Rights for New Yorkers on Parole**

Ensure that the right to vote for the 41,000 New Yorkers on parole is codified & expanded [A4448/S830].

#### **Prohibiting Unfair Surveillance Practices**

Prohibit search with or without a warrant of geolocation data of people who are under no suspicion of committing a crime but were simply in the area of interest [A84/S296].

#### **Reducing the Impact of Criminal Legal System on Cisgender Women & Transgender Gender Non-Conforming (TGNC) Communities [A459/S674]**

# WHY WE SUPPORT

## Ending Long-Term Solitary Confinement

**18%** of New York's population is **BLACK**

but **48%** of incarcerated New Yorkers are Black

and **57%** of people in solitary confinement are Black

Young people, people with mental illness, & gender non-conforming people are also disproportionately likely to be put in solitary.

## Parole Justice

More than 10,000 people - 20% of the NYS prison population - are **AGE 50+**

NYS has the **FIFTH HIGHEST** number of people serving a life sentence in the country.

Parole is repeatedly denied based on one unchangeable factor - the nature of a person's crime - not on age, accomplishments in prison, personal transformation, or network of support.

The NYS prison population fell **by 27%** between 2000 - 2016 but the percentage of incarcerated older people more than doubled from **4,706 to 10,239**

## Tax the Rich & Invest in Our Communities

As we work to end mass incarceration, we also need to reimagine safety & build up the infrastructure that makes communities safe & flourish. To do that we need deep investment in resources such as free education, housing, healthcare, transportation, mental health care, all the social services that actually keep us safe - but we can't get those until the rich pays their fair share.

The Invest in Our New York Act is a package of six state bills that raises \$50 billion to ensure that we rebuild our economy by taxing the wealthiest New Yorkers. The full bill package & more information can be found at [www.investinourny.org](http://www.investinourny.org).