



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 3, 2020

For More Information Contact: Reynolds Graves rgraves@skdknick.com 313.205.8675

AFTER GOVERNOR CUOMO SAYS ADMINISTRATION WON'T REDUCE PRISON POPULATION ADMIST COVID-19, NEW YORKERS UNITED FOR JUSTICE ONCE AGAIN CALLS ON STATE TO IMMEDIATELY DETAIL HOW TO SOLVE CORONAVIRUS & INCARCERATION CRISIS

Outbreak in the Justice System is Already Underway in Numerous Facilities – Red and Blue State Governors Nationwide are Using Clemencies, Commutations, Home Confinement, Elder Release

Today, Governor Cuomo concerned advocates in [stating](#) that his administration was not planning to reduce the incarcerated population amidst the COVID-19 outbreak. For weeks, New Yorkers United for Justice has urged state officials to release a coordinated and comprehensive plan focused on protecting the state's vulnerable criminal justice system population - from pretrial through incarceration and reentry - from exposure to the coronavirus. This must include reducing the overall population through all means available, including the Governor's substantial powers of clemency.

In light of Governor Cuomo's statement, **Khalil A. Cumberbatch**, Chief Strategist for New Yorkers United for Justice, issued the following statement:

"You can't social distance inside – and as a formerly incarcerated New Yorker, I know this firsthand. We know there is a humanitarian crisis in New York's jails and prisons – and the absolute best way to deal with it is by reducing the state's incarcerated population. This will keep all New Yorkers safe, inside and outside the criminal justice system. We are encouraged that Governor Cuomo and his staff have taken a series of steps to protect vulnerable, incarcerated individuals during the COVID-19 outbreak, but far more needs to be done. State officials must immediately release a coordinated, comprehensive, and transparent plan to keep incarcerated individuals, as well as the communities they are returning to, safe during this public health crisis – and it needs to include a plan to reduce the prison population, including the broader use of executive clemency. Lives are stake and nothing can be left off the table."

###

About New Yorker United for Justice (NYUJ):

New Yorkers United for Justice is a statewide coalition comprised of local and national non-profit organizations committed to supporting a movement that will bring much-needed criminal justice reform to New York State and ensure that policies promote safety and fairness. NYUJ aims for legislative urgency to fix a broken criminal justice system that punishes the poor and communities of color, tears families apart, and makes New Yorkers less safe. NYUJ believes that a system that ensures equal access to justice for anyone accused in New York State, regardless of age, race, ethnicity or social economic status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin or religion, must be the standard.