

New York State Jails Justice Network

“More Justice – Less Jail!”

Fighting for justice, human rights, accountability, and community-based alternatives to incarceration in local county jails throughout New York State

Goal: Accountability & Human Rights in Local Jails. Bills that can help get us there:

●A5709 Gallagher (Aubry, Dickens, Souffrant Forrest, Mamdani)/S5877 Salazar: Broaden representation on the State Commission of Correction

The State Commission of Correction is nominally the oversight body for jails and prisons in New York State. The long-time continuation of abuses, discrimination, intolerable and life-threatening conditions, and deaths in New York’s jails and prisons is testimony to the failure of the SCOC to monitor, oversee, report, and enforce the most minimal standards of respect for human life and dignity. Some specific issues are the enforcement of arcane standards of staffing that can result in more staff than incarcerated persons; the SCOC’s insistence that small communities build large expensive new jails; and the SCOC’s practice of granting waivers allowing local jails to flaunt human rights and New York State laws, for example issuing waivers to allow jails to violate the HALT Solitary Act. This bill would change the number, qualifications, and requirements for nomination of SCOC Commissioners to include a broad range of stakeholders beyond the current law enforcement personnel, including health care and mental health practitioners, formerly incarcerated individuals, and public defenders. Ensuring representation of affected communities and advocates will change the culture of the board to embrace the human rights and dignity of incarcerated individuals.

●S181 Jackson (Salazar, Hoylman-Sigal, Fernandez)/A6487 Weprin: Allow state and local legislators and their staffs full access to local jails for oversight, monitoring, & reporting.

This bill will be an avenue for greater transparency and accountability of local jails, making them more accessible to state legislators by including their staffs, and accessible for the first time to local legislators, who are responsible for approving county jail budgets but often have little information about the conditions in the facilities they are approving.

●A2746A Gallagher (Aubry, Dickens, Epstein, Mitaynes) /S6611 Brouk: Human rights in jails and prisons. Expands the definition of publicly-supported accommodations to include correctional facilities for purposes of the responsibility of the Division of Human Rights.

Will provide an avenue for redress of discriminatory and inhumane treatment beyond the current grievance process which is often short-circuited, ignored, or dismissed by the same facilities that are the subject of the grievance.

“The Status Quo Has Got To Go!”

New York State Jails Justice Network 33 Central Avenue, Albany NY 12210

www.nysjailsjustice.org nysjnn@gmail.com

Jerome Wright, Statewide Organizer 716-909-2425 jeromerwright@yahoo.com

Naomi Jaffe, Coordinator 518-312-2174 naomi643@gmail.com

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Local county jails are the front door to mass incarceration – shrink them down, reduce the harm, invest in resources for community well-being.

County jails are all little Rikerses! Curb the power of sheriffs, get real oversight, demand human rights, stop abuses, hold abusive officials and officers accountable.

Overturn the racism of mass incarceration where it starts – in local jails. Black New Yorkers are incarcerated at THREE TIMES their rate in the state population. Jails Justice is Racial Justice!

The racist impact of the criminal IN-justice system affects non-NYC as much as New York City communities. Build statewide resistance; demand non-NYC legislators pay attention and make changes. Black Lives Matter everywhere!

Family rights are human rights! Fight for in-person visits, family packages, free phone calls and emails, no tampering with mail from loved ones.

Keep our people home – they are innocent until proven guilty. More than 2/3 of people in NYS jails have not been convicted of anything. More bail reform, roll forward.

New York State Jails Justice Network is made up of local communities supporting each other in the fight against jail injustices in every county in New York State, and working together to change statewide jail policies for the well-being and safety of all.

JAILS JUSTICE NEEDS YOU – and you need Jails Justice! To get onboard the fight for justice, email nysjjn@gmail.com, and come to the next zoom general membership meeting, held on the 4th Monday of every month at 6:30:

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85914035273?pwd=cUtkd0tQTjk2K0NNMIN1ajFMU1QzQT09>
Come hear – and contribute! reports on issues, campaigns, and actions around the state.**

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