

# TAKEROOT JUSTICE

June 9, 2020

## Memorandum of Support for Passage of the Safer NY Act

TakeRoot Justice submits this memorandum in support of passage of bills in the Safer NY Act, a package of critical police transparency and accountability legislation. Three of the Safer NY Act bills are currently under consideration for passage by the legislature including the bill to repeal 50-a (**A10611/S8496**), the Police STAT Act (**A10609/S1830C**), and legislation to strengthen and codify the office of the Special Prosecutor (**A1601C/S2574C**).

As of today, the New York State Senate has repealed 50-a and passed the Police STAT Act. This is a major victory, but there is still more to do. The Special Prosecutor bill will be considered tomorrow, and all will still need to be signed into law by Governor Cuomo. All of this legislation, if passed and signed into law, would be real progress on meaningful police reform for New York State. Here's how:

- The repeal of 50-a (**A10611/S8496**) would strike arguably the most regressive police secrecy law in the country from the books. A full repeal of 50-a would provide the public much needed transparency on police misconduct and discipline.
- The Police STAT Act (**A10609 /S1830C**) would require police departments throughout the state to record & report on low-level enforcement (violations & misdemeanors) and would require comprehensive reporting on the total number of people who die during an interaction with law enforcement.
- The Special Prosecutor bill (**A1601C /S2574C**) would strengthen and codify Executive Order 147 – ensuring that the Attorney General's office is able to investigate and, if warranted, prosecute all cases where a person dies during an encounter with police.

TakeRoot Justice supports the swift passage of the full Safer NY Act. In particular, our housing, immigration, and consumer practices have represented clients where discriminatory policing has ripped families apart, imposed often insurmountable financial burdens on households, threatened housing stability for clients and their family members, and/or funneled them into immigration removal proceedings -- exacerbating widespread gentrification. **Passing these legislative measures is an important step in dismantling institutionalized racism and over-policing in our Black and Brown communities and unveiling information that has been intentionally shielded from them.**

TakeRoot Justice is a non-profit law firm that provides legal, participatory research, and policy support to strengthen the work of grassroots and community-based groups in New York City to dismantle racial, economic and social oppression. For the past 18 years as the Community Development Project of the Urban Justice Center, we have partnered with multiple grassroots groups who have witnessed and sought reprieve from the devastating effects of policing in Black and Brown communities.

If you have further questions, please contact Elizabeth Clay Roy at [eclayroy@takerootjustice.org](mailto:eclayroy@takerootjustice.org).

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