

January 6, 2021

Katal New York Update

Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice



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Start of 2022 Legislative Session



#LessIsMoreNY Rally at the State Capital in Albany, 1.28.2020

Happy new year! We are entering 2022 ready to continue the fight to promote equity, health, and justice.

Yesterday marked the first day of the 2022 Legislative session in New York - the third now during this COVID pandemic. Governor Kathy Hochul gave her first [State of the State](#) address, outlining her legislative and budget priorities for the year. Hochul included [Clean Slate legislation](#) and legislation to [restore TAP funding](#) as priorities for 2022, but there wasn't much else by way of criminal justice reform in her State of the State address.

What's in store for 2022 in Albany? What are lawmakers going to prioritize? What about the hard push being made by some moderates and conservatives to roll back bail reform? What about the implementation of laws that passed last year, like #LessIsMoreNY, #HALTsolitary, cannabis legalization?

We'll be tackling these questions, and more, during our next [NY Statewide Criminal Justice Reform Call](#)! Next Thursday, January 13th, we'll be convening the monthly

call with organizers, advocates, and community members working on every aspect of criminal justice reform in the state. Each call starts with an insider report from the lobbyist, about what's happening behind the scenes. [Register for our next NY Statewide Criminal Justice Reform Call, on Thursday, January 13, 2022 from 12:00 - 1:00 pm.](#)

If you have any questions about the statewide call or would like to present on an upcoming call, please contact Yonah at yonah@katalcenter.org.

Crisis on Rikers Continues



#CloseRikers and #LessIsMoreNY Rally at entrance to Rikers Island Jail Complex, 9.13.2021

As the Omicron variant spreads across the country, the crisis on Rikers continues to get worse. This week, the NY Daily News reported that COVID-19 cases are spiking on Rikers with a [seven-day positive test rate of 37%](#). This is a crisis so long standing that it

has become normalized, and the old mayor and the new mayor seem to be completely indifferent to the continued suffering and death of incarcerated people.

Over the weekend, [the NYTimes released an incredible and scathing article](#) that highlights the utter dysfunction and dangerous conditions of Rikers Island. The article outlines how decades of failed city policies made the Rikers Island Jail Complex ripe for crisis, violence, and preventable deaths. In response to this continued crisis on Rikers, Mayor Adams has already made it clear that he has a cozy relationship with the corrections union and he supports regressive policies like solitary confinement, which is an internationally recognized tool of torture. This means we must continue to organize and build a people-powered movement strong enough to close Rikers once and for all.

One clear first step to closing Rikers is making sure that the #LessIsMoreNY Act is implemented fully and effectively. This way no individual on Rikers – or in any jail and prisons across the state – is incarcerated for a non-criminal technical of parole and put at a heightened risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus. [Take action here to demand Governor Hochul fully implement the #LessIsMoreNY.](#)

New Op-Ed by Katal's Lorenzo Jones



Our Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director, Lorenzo Jones, [published an op-ed](#) today discussing the movement to end mass incarceration and the role philanthropy must play to grow and support the movement. As the field continues to grow and more funders allocate resources to criminal justice reform, it is vital that they support groups on the ground and follow the leadership of the grassroots movement. [Read Lorenzo's op-ed here](#) and please share it with funders, organizers, advocates and anyone else involved in the movement to end mass incarceration.

Katal Quotes of the Week

These are some of the quotes we're thinking about this week.

"Impossible is just a big word thrown around by small men who find it easier to live in the world they've been given than to explore the power they have to change it. Impossible is not a fact. It's an opinion. Impossible is not a declaration. It's a dare. Impossible is potential. Impossible is temporary. Impossible is nothing."

--**Muhammad Ali**

"Millions of people exist in digital space. So what organizer worth their salt doesn't actively engage them?" --**Mariame Kaba**

"I must become the action of my fate." --**June Jordan**

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Interested to receive updates about our work in Connecticut? [Click here to sign up for the Katal Connecticut Update!](#)

Be safe as possible out there, and get vaccinated as soon as you can. If you want to get involved, learn more about our work, or just connect, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Katal works to strengthen the people, policies, institutions, and movements that advance equity, health, and justice. Join us: web, Twitter, Facebook!
Email: info@katalcenter.org. Phone: 646.875.8822.