

November 21, 2024

Katal New York Update

Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice



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Outreach for #ShutRikers Campaign



Katal outreach team at the NYCHA's Chelsea Houses, 11.14.24

Over the last two weeks, the Katal team connected with community members across Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island about our campaign to [#ShutRikers](#). Last Thursday, we visited the Chelsea NYCHA Houses and spoke to neighborhood residents about the changes they want to see within their community. People were upset that the city is spending over \$500,000 per year per person to incarcerate someone at Rikers. At the same time, public housing, including NYCHA, continues to be woefully underfunded by the city.

On Tuesday, we were in Flushing, Queens, and we spoke to community members at the Bland NYCHA Houses about how people with mental health diagnoses need care, not incarceration. Currently, Rikers Island is the city's largest mental health institution, and over 55% of the people

incarcerated there have a mental health diagnosis. Community members want to see more resources spent on alternatives to incarceration and providing quality mental health treatment.

To join the fight to shut Rikers and invest in our communities, [sign this petition to tell Mayor Eric Adams: Shut Rikers Now!](#)

Interested in having a #ShutRikers outreach session in your neighborhood? Contact Melanie, at melanie@katalcenter.org.

November New York Criminal Justice Statewide Call Recap



During our [November Statewide Criminal Justice Reform Call](#), our lobbyist gave a detailed summary of the election results in New York. We discussed how the overall voter turnout in New York dropped this year to 58%, which is down from 61% in 2020 (which is roughly half a million

fewer votes). We also spent time processing the passage of Proposition 1 at the state level and Propositions 2-5 in NYC.

We were also joined by organizers and advocates from the New Pride Agenda, the Drug Policy Alliance, VOCAL-NY, the No Power Grab NYC campaign, NY County Defender Services, the Treatment Not Jail campaign, and the Jury of Our Peers Act.

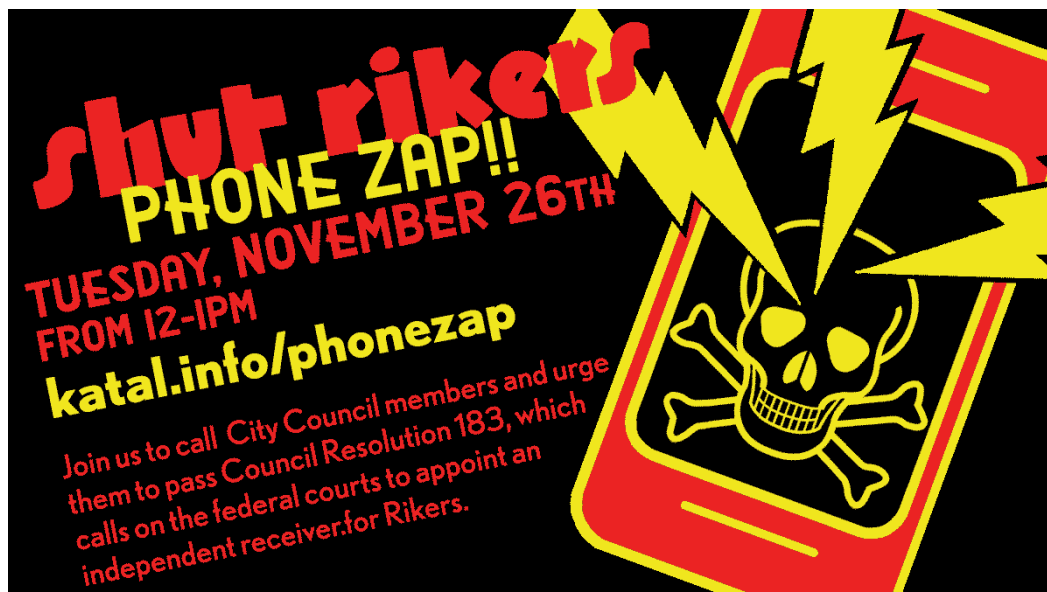
One of the few criminal justice bills that passed last session and is still waiting for Governor Hochul's signature is the Jury of Our Peers Act ([S206B/A1432C](#)). This bill will repeal New York's lifetime categorical ban on those with felony convictions to be able to serve on a jury. To support the efforts to get Gov. Hochul to sign the **Jury of Our Peers Act** into law, join their organizational sign-on letter [here](#).

We hope to see you on our December call, which will be the final call before the start of the 2025 legislative session.

[Register to join us on Thursday, December 12th, from 12 - 1 pm!](#)

If you have any questions about the statewide call or would like to be a presenter, please contact Yonah at Yonah@katalcenter.org.

Next Tuesday 11/26: #ShutRikers Phone Zap



Join us next **Tuesday, November 26th, from 12 to 1 p.m.** for our **Shut Rikers Phone Zap** via Zoom! [You can RSVP here](#).

We will call New York City Council Members to demand immediate action to improve conditions and save lives at Rikers. With the conditions at Rikers continuing to deteriorate, the federal judge overseeing the case surrounding violence and lack of safety at Rikers is on the verge of appointing a federal receiver to take over the jail system.

Yesterday, the AP released a [bombshell report](#) that found that former DOC commissioner Molina falsely claimed fentanyl was pouring into Rikers through the mail and used it as justification to ban mail from family members. This is the most recent example of the gross incompetence and mismanagement of the DOC that harms incarcerated people and their families.

Please [join us on Tuesday, November 26th at 12 pm](#) in demanding that the City Council swiftly pass [Resolution 183](#), urging the federal courts to appoint an independent receiver to take over Rikers to finally hold the DOC and city accountable for the horrible conditions and save lives until it is shut down.

Any questions? Reach out to Aryssa at aryssa@katalcenter.org

Katal Quotes of the Week

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

"I care because I want you to care about me. I care because I have become aware of my absolute dependency upon you, whoever you are, for the quality and the outcome of my social, my democratic experience." – **June Jordan**

"In 1995 racism may wear a new dress, buy a new pair of boots, but neither it nor its succubus twin fascism is new or can make anything new. It can only reproduce the environment that supports its own health: fear, denial and an atmosphere in which its victims have lost the will to fight." – **Toni Morrison**

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