

June 20, 2019

Katal Weekly Update

Katal Center for Health, Equity, and Justice



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In Albany: Juneteenth for Justice, Demanding Action for #LessIsMoreNY



Groups including Katal, JustLeadershipUSA, Start SMART NY, and more gather in the War room at the Capitol for a rally and speakout demanding immediate action from lawmakers.

Albany has passed some notable criminal justice reforms earlier this year, but is ending session without fully completing the job. Critically important issues necessary to be addressed in order to end mass incarceration and advance the cause of justice in New York are being left undone including: parole reform (**#LessIsMoreNY**); solitary confinement (**#HALTsolitary**), Marijuana legalization (**#MarijuanaJustice/ #MRTA**), police accountability (**#saferNYACT**), and overdose prevention (**#A833B / #A7246B**).

In response, [our members and leaders have been at the Capitol all week](#) alongside criminal justice reform groups demanding lawmakers and the Governor give New Yorkers the equitable criminal justice system that is well beyond overdue.



Advocates of criminal justice reforms including #LessIsMoreNY participate in a die-in in front of the Assembly Chamber, Wednesday during Juneteenth for Justice.

Yesterday, our team convened at the Capitol for a full day of action in light of Juneteenth, alongside groups including: **#HALTsolitary, JustLeadershipUSA, Start SMART NY, Drug Policy Alliance, and Vocal-NY.** A historical day of remembrance, June 19th, known as Juneteenth marked the day in 1865 that Black people in Galveston, Texas learned that the Civil War had ceased, that Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, and that they were now free. Through rallies, [speakouts](#), and a [die-in in front of the Assembly Chamber](#), groups highlighted the [connection to reform in Albany and closing Rikers Island jail Complex](#), and demanded that Albany end the modern day manifestation of systemic racism known as *mass incarceration*.



Groups including our members and leaders gather in the Assembly Chamber for a rally during Wednesday's Juneteenth for Justice day of action.

Check out our blog feature about Monday's #LessIsMoreNY Lobby Day [here](#).

Learn more about our #LessIsMoreNY bill and take action to demand lawmakers urgently pass this transformative legislation this session [here](#).

Take 5 minutes today to CALL and tell leaders:

"Do not leave Albany without passing the #LessIsMoreNY Act (S1343b /A5493a)!"

Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie: 518-455-3791

Senate Leader Andrea S. Cousins: 518-455-2585

NY Governor Andrew Cuomo: 518-474-8390

In Connecticut: Statewide Criminal Justice Reform Call



Join us **next Thursday, June 27 from 11am- 12pm** for our Connecticut Statewide Criminal Justice Reform Call -- a discussion on all that happened, and failed to happen this session.

The goals of the monthly call are to:

- *Highlight* issues, campaigns, and projects that groups are working on to advance statewide reform;
- *Identify* ways to align, coordinate, and support each other in the work to end mass incarceration in Connecticut;
- *Strengthen* community organizing and advocacy organizations to build movement in Connecticut.

Register for the call [here](#), or contact **Kenyatta Thompson** at kthompson@katalcenter.org, or at (860) 937-6094 for more details.

In case you missed it: be sure to watch our Healthy & Just CT Coalition's Social Justice Advocacy Day now available to stream in full on YouTube! Watch it [here](#), and read more about this event and how to join us for our next Coalition meeting [here](#).

Join Us: Webinar on New York's Application to Waive Medicaid Exclusion for People Inside



New York State is seeking approval to waive current law and use federal Medicaid dollars to finance certain health care services for incarcerated people 30 days before release. If approval is granted, New York would become the first state in the country to use Medicaid 'inside the walls'. This represents huge opportunities to substantially improve both health and criminal justice outcomes in New York and for other states to consider and build upon New York's model.

Please join us **Wednesday, June 26, from 4-5:00pm**, as our Director of Health and Harm Reduction, **Keith Brown**, will be participating in a discussion with the [Legal Action Center](#) on next steps in New York's waiver application process and a strategy discussion on how national health and justice stakeholders can collectively weigh in to *Turn On Care* in their states.

RSVP and details available [here](#).

Katal works to strengthen the people, policies, institutions, and movements that advance health, equity, and justice for everyone.

Visit our website at www.katalcenter.org to learn more about our work and how you can get involved. Be sure to follow us across social media @katalcenter and stay in touch!

Contact us at info@katalcenter.org or at **646.875.8822**