



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
WESTCHESTER COUNTY

MIRIAM E. ROCAH
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

WESTCHESTER COUNTY COURTHOUSE
111 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
White Plains, New York 10601
(914) 995-4200

February 10, 2021

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins
President and Majority Leader of the New York State Senate
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12247

The Honorable Carl E. Heastie
Speaker of the New York State Assembly
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12248

Re: A. 4448 and S. 830

Dear Governor Cuomo, Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, and Speaker Heastie:

I write in support of passage of A. 4448 and S. 830 to restore voting rights to all New Yorkers upon their release from prison. As the District Attorney of Westchester County, I have prioritized efforts to provide support for those individuals reentering the community following a period of incarceration. Restoring their ability to vote is central to reentry and sends a powerful message that incarceration is not a bar for active citizenship.

Felony disenfranchisement is unduly punitive and lacks a justifiable purpose. Moreover, the policy has a disproportionate impact on communities of color, who make up the majority of those on parole. There is simply no reason for why these communities should be further excluded from the democratic process.

While the Governor's use of his executive authority to restore voting rights to people on parole is commendable, it should not take the place of meaningful legislation. The current process is inefficient and results in delay and confusion over who has the right to vote. The right to vote is fundamental to our society and should not be subject to the discretion of future governors.

Members of our communities who have served their incarcerated time deserve to have a role in the democratic process. Passage of A. 4448 and S. 830 will be a step towards ensuring this.

Sincerely,

Miriam E. Rocah