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CYRUS R. VANCE, JR.
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

March 28, 2019

Senator Zellnor Myrie
New York State Senate
Chair, Committee on Elections
Legislative Office Building, Room 903
Albany, NY 12247

Assemblymember Charles D. Lavine
New York State Assembly
Chair, Committee on Election Law
Legislative Office Building, Room 713
Albany, NY 12248

Re: S.1931/A.4987

Dear Senator Myrie and Assemblymember Lavine:

I write to express my strong support for S.1931/A.4987, which would help restore voting rights to reentering New Yorkers. I strongly support this legislation because disenfranchising New Yorkers who have fully paid their debt violates foundational principles of our state's criminal laws, as well as basic humanity and dignity.

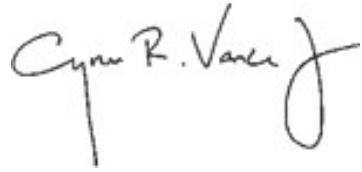
As the Manhattan District Attorney, my job is to ensure a safer New York and a fairer justice system. To effectuate this dual mission, our Office works from the presumption that the consequences of incarceration in a New Yorker's life should not last one more day than necessary. Current New York law works against this mission by imposing a grave collateral consequence on formerly incarcerated New Yorkers – one which strips them of core democratic rights, and renders them second-class citizens.

At any given time, there are nearly 30,000 New Yorkers on parole who are ineligible to vote. These reentering New Yorkers should be afforded the same opportunities as other New Yorkers to share in fundamental aspects of community building and civic engagement, whether it is working, raising a family, or participating in the political process.

I commend Governor Cuomo for exercising his pardon power to move New York one step closer to restoring voting rights for New Yorkers on parole, but the legislature must pass

S1931/A4987 to codify and build upon the Governor's executive order. My Office stands ready to support you as you advance this critical legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cyrus R. Vance, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "V" at the end.

Cyrus R. Vance, Jr.
Manhattan District Attorney