

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 19, 2020

MEDIA CONTACTS

Miriam Krinsky
krinskym@krinsky.la
818-416-5218

Andrea Nill Sanchez
an3039@columbia.edu
(917) 727-7396

Over 140 Current Elected Prosecutors and Probation and Parole Leaders Issue a [Joint Statement](#) to Downsize Probation and Parole

New National Poll Shows Voters Support Making Probation and Parole Less Punitive and More Equitable

New York, NY — Today, a bipartisan group of over 50 current elected prosecutors, including District Attorneys and Attorneys General from across the United States, joined over 90 current and former probation and parole chiefs in a [statement](#) calling for probation and parole systems to be smaller, less punitive, and more equitable. This policy shift comes as efforts grow to shrink a probation and parole system that is one of the leading contributors to mass incarceration and that costs taxpayers [\\$2.8 billion](#) annually.

The statement, spearheaded by [Executives Transforming Probation and Parole](#) (EXiT), underscores the troubling growth in mass supervision over past years, with over [4.4 million people](#) in the nation now under supervision: “people are being supervised who should not be and are being kept on supervision for far too long.”

“A growing wave of 21st century prosecutors recognize that mass supervision doesn’t make communities safer, and fuels cycles of incarceration that cause significant harm to individuals and communities,” said **Miriam Krinsky, former prosecutor and Executive Director of [Fair and Just Prosecution](#)**, one of the organizers of the signatories. “We need to move away from practices and excessive supervision that simply create trip wires likely to push people back into the criminal legal system and, instead, invest in supports that enable people returning to the community to chart a successful reentry.”

The [statement](#) calls for concrete changes to make probation and parole safer, fairer, and more effective, including:

- Eliminating incarceration for technical parole and probation violations;
- Reducing reincarceration for new low-level offenses by those under supervision;
- Shortening supervision terms and allowing people on probation to earn reduced time through good behavior;
- Reinvesting savings in community-led supports and services; and
- Addressing the statutory restrictions that inhibit successful reentry and reintegration, such as restoring voting rights.

“Probation and parole systems have contributed to the senseless incarceration of millions of people,” stated **David Muhammad, Executive Director for the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR), and former Chief Probation Officer, Alameda County, California.** “The fact that over 140 prosecution, probation and parole leaders stood up to say they want that system to change and reduce the vast numbers of men and women trapped in it presents a major opening for progress.”

The perspectives of these leaders align with the views of the public. A [new poll](#) released by The Justice Collaborative Institute finds that an overwhelming majority of Americans (**65%**) agree that the United States should try to reduce the number of people on parole or probation. The poll also finds that a majority of Americans (**60%**) agree that individuals who merely violate technical probation or parole rules shouldn’t be incarcerated and that people on supervision should be allowed to vote (**55%**).

“It’s in the public interest to downsize the probation and parole system. Rather than being an alternative to locking people up, the system itself perpetuates the cycle of mass incarceration which disproportionately affects the Black and Latinx communities, by jailing those on probation and parole for minor technical violations. These reforms will not only allow folks to get on with their lives as contributing members of our communities, it will save taxpayers millions of wasted dollars,” said **Attorney General of Minnesota Keith Ellison**, one of the signatories on the statement.

In addition to AG Ellison, key signatories to the statement include **Vermont Attorney General Thomas J. Donovan Jr.; Delaware Attorney General Kathy Jennings; District of Columbia Attorney General Karl Racine; Bronx County, New York District Attorney Darcel Clark; Dallas County, Texas District Attorney John Creuzot; Wyandotte County (Kansas City), Kansas District Attorney Mark Dupree; Cook County (Chicago), Illinois State’s Attorney Kim Foxx; Los Angeles County, California District Attorney-Elect George Gascón; Kings County (Brooklyn), New York District Attorney Eric Gonzalez; Winnebago County, Wisconsin District Attorney Christian Gossett; Baltimore City, Maryland State’s Attorney Marilyn Mosby; Suffolk County (Boston), Massachusetts District Attorney Rachael Rollins; San Joaquin County, California District Attorney Tori Verber Salazar; New York County (Manhattan) District Attorney Cyrus Vance; and 13th Judicial Circuit (Tampa), Florida State Attorney Andrew Warren.**

“Our current criminal justice culture of excessively long periods of supervision on probation and parole is mass incarceration’s evil twin. We know that excessive and costly supervision doesn’t just fail to prevent crime; it causes crime, which causes even more mass incarceration, and strips our society of resources that could be re-invested for effective crime prevention,” said **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania District Attorney Larry Krasner**, another signatory to the statement.

Today, at 2:30PM ET, **San Francisco District Attorney Chesa Boudin, President and CEO of JustLeadershipUSA Deanna Hoskins, National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform Executive Director and former Chief Probation Officer of Alameda County, CA David Muhammad, and FJP Executive Director Miriam Krinsky** will discuss the statement and growing national support for reforming probation and parole on The Appeal’s The Briefing, which can be viewed live on [YouTube](#).

Read the full statement, and see the full list of signatories, [HERE](#).

Read the polling memo [HERE](#).

Watch criminal justice leaders discuss the announcement and new polling **TODAY at 2:30pm EST** [HERE](#).

###

[The Justice Lab at Columbia University](#) seeks to foundationally reconceive justice policy through actionable research, community-centered policy development, and the sustained engagement of diverse constituencies. We envision a community-centered future for justice in which healing and resiliency, rather than punishment and surveillance, are used to solve social problems often rooted in racial and economic inequity. Follow us on Twitter [@CUJusticeLab](#).

[Executives Transforming Probation and Parole](#) (EXiT) is a network convened by the Columbia Justice Lab that connects current and former community supervision executives to build a national movement to transform probation and parole to be smaller, less punitive, and more hopeful, equitable, and restorative.

[Fair and Just Prosecution](#) (FJP) brings together newly elected local prosecutors as part of a network of leaders committed to promoting a justice system grounded in fairness, equity, compassion, and fiscal responsibility. These recently elected leaders – and the vision they share for safer and healthier communities – are supported by FJP’s network through ongoing information sharing, research and resource materials, opportunities for on the ground learning, in-person convenings, technical assistance, and access to national experts.