

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
COUNTY OF NEW YORK  
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**CYRUS R. VANCE, JR.**  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

February 11, 2021

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
Legislative Office Building  
188 State Street  
Room 907  
Albany, NY 12247

Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie  
Legislative Office Building  
188 State Street  
Room 932  
Albany, NY 12248

Re: S.830A/A.4448

Dear Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Speaker Heastie:

I write to thank you for your steady leadership in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and specifically, to voice my strong support S.830A/A.4448, which would help restore voting rights to reentering New Yorkers. I have long supported<sup>1</sup> 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.

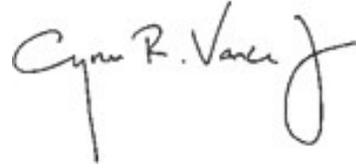
I commend Governor Cuomo for exercising his pardon power to move New York one step closer to restoring voting rights for New Yorkers on parole, but the legislature must pass

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<sup>1</sup> Vance, Cy. "[Restore parolees' voting rights permanently, and do it now.](#)" New York Daily News, May 21, 2019. Op-ed.

S.830A/A.4448 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