

Real Reform

Reform the Rockefeller Drug Laws *New York*

Real Reform New York FACT SHEET: *Delivering Retroactive Sentence Relief*

Deliver retroactive sentencing relief to currently incarcerated Rockefeller inmates serving unjustly long sentences.

The Rockefeller drug laws have filled New York State prisons with low-level, nonviolent offenders. **There are over 14,000 individuals incarcerated for drug offenses locked up in New York State, representing nearly 22% of the prison population.** Survivors of the Rockefeller drug laws and families of those who are currently incarcerated have formed an increasingly vocal movement for reform of the laws, including groups such as the New York Mothers of the Disappeared. Sentencing reform should be retroactive so that the majority of those currently serving harsh sentences can petition the courts to have their sentences reconsidered under a new set of judicious standards. **Retroactivity will help reduce enormous prison costs, deliver fairness in sentencing, and allow individuals to return to their families and communities.**

The Correctional Association of New York estimated that **for the New York State Budget 2006-2007, if 3,051 individuals incarcerated under the Rockefeller Drug Laws were diverted at a cost of \$60,000 in operating costs per person, the state could save over \$210 million.**

For the past three decades, **the racist implementation of the Rockefeller drug laws has had a profoundly negative impact on black and Latino communities.** The overwhelming majority of imprisoned non-violent drug offenders are taken from poor communities of color in New York City, despite the fact that whites and people of color use drugs at the approximately same rate. **Retroactive sentencing relief would unite families currently separated under the laws.**