



June 5, 2020

Andrea Stewart Cousins
New York State Senate Majority Leader
Jamaal Bailey
New York State Senator, 26th District
Alessandra Biaggi
New York State Senator, 34th District
Shelley Mayer
New York State Senator, 37th District
David Carlucci
New York State Senator, 38th District
Peter Harckham
New York State Senator, 40th District

Gary Pretlow
New York State Assembly Member, 89th District
Amy Paulin
New York State Assembly Member, 88th District
Nader Sayegh
New York State Assembly Member, 90th District
Steve Otis
New York State Assembly Member, 91st District
Thomas Abinanti
New York State Assembly Member, 92nd District
David Buchwald
New York State Assembly Member, 93rd District
Kevin Byrne
New York State Assembly Member, 94th District
Sandra Galef
New York State Assembly Member, 95th District

Honorable Members of the Westchester County New York State Delegation:

We, the undersigned members of the Westchester County Legislature, urge you to work to pass Senator Bailey & Assemblyman O'Donnell's bill (S.3695/A.2513) regarding 50-a. We also call on you to stand firmly in opposition to any attempts to water down this legislation or offer partial measures that will continue to shield abusive officers and brutality from public view.

We write to you as our Westchester State leaders at an unprecedented time. As you know, against the backdrop of a pandemic disproportionately killing and economically devastating Black, Latinx and other communities of color, our communities are also facing escalating police violence. This weekend, we witnessed police violence while New Yorkers gathered to mourn and protest the police killings of George Floyd, Tony McDade, Breonna Taylor and other Black people across the country. The blatant police violence experienced by New Yorkers is unacceptable.

The continued police secrecy in New York State enables police violence and allows abusive officers to continue to act with impunity. We should be able to look up the misconduct and disciplinary records of every officer who mass-pepper sprayed, assaulted, blatantly covered their badge numbers and engaged in other abuse of authority and violence against New Yorkers. Instead, we are left in the dark and abusive police officers are shielded because of 50-a.

The time for change is now. We cannot afford to entertain proposals that will give a false sense of progress while loopholes continue to entrench police secrecy. New York should be a national leader with respect to police transparency. New Yorkers have taken to the streets - risking their health during a pandemic - to express to their leaders in government that we can wait no longer for police accountability.

We defer to the Legislature concerning specific provisions of the bill's final version, but we call on you to seize the moment and enact fundamental change on this issue now.

We urge you to immediately pass S3695-Bailey/A2513-O'Donnell.

CC: Hon. Carl Heastie, New York State Assembly Speaker
Hon. Daniel J. O'Donnell, New York State Assembly Member, 69th District



Chairman Benjamin Boykin
Legislator, 5th District



Majority Leader MaryJane Shimsky
Legislator, 12th District



Nancy Barr
Legislator, 6th District



Catherine Parker
Legislator, 7th District



Damon Maher
Legislator, 10th District



Terry Clements
Legislator, 11th District



David Tubiolo
Legislator, 14th District



Jose Alvarado
Legislator, 17th District



Vice Chair Alfreda Williams
Legislator, 8th District



Colin Smith
Legislator, 1st District



Majority Whip Christopher Johnson
Legislator, 16th District



Kitley Covill
Legislator, 2nd District



Vedat Gashi
Legislator, 4th District



Catherine Borgia
Legislator, 9th District



Lyndon Williams
Legislator, 13th District



Ruth Walter
Legislator, 15th District