



CHIEF DEFENDERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK

Attention News Directors and Assignment Editors

STATEMENT FROM THE CHIEF DEFENDERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK (CDANY) ON THE SETTLEMENT OF *HURRELL-HARRING V. NEW YORK STATE*

The settlement between the plaintiffs and New York State benefiting Ontario, Onondaga, Schuyler, Suffolk and Washington counties is a welcome first step in the long recognized need for the State to fully fund its constitutional responsibility towards indigent defense. But it is only a first step, and the State must ensure that the citizens in the remaining 57 counties in New York State are not forgotten.

CDANY applauds Governor Cuomo and Attorney General Schneiderman's recognition that effective representation of the indigent is ultimately a State responsibility, requiring:

- The dedication of additional State resources to ensure that every indigent criminal defendant has a lawyer at their first court appearance.
- The dedication of additional State resources to ensure that indigent defense programs have the resources they need to hire sufficient lawyers, investigators and support staff to ensure that all poor criminal defendants have lawyers with the time and support necessary to vigorously represent the defendant.
- The implementation of caseload standards, as they are a necessary component of effective indigent defense.

CDANY also applauds the Governor and Attorney General in recognizing that additional resources provided to improve public defense should be implemented through a strengthened, independent Office of Indigent Legal Services.

However, the settlement provides no resources for the indigent defense providers in the rest of the State. New York cannot continue a system of justice that deprives dedicated public defenders the resources they need to effectively represent all of their clients, in every area of the State.

CDANY calls on the Governor and the New York State Legislature to immediately implement a plan to provide for the dedication of additional resources to all the remaining counties in New York State so that the indigent defense providers in those counties may implement the improvements mandated in the *Hurrell-Harring* settlement.

CDANY is an association of New York chief defenders who lead indigent defense organizations across New York State that in 2013 represented over 400,000 New Yorkers. For further media inquiries, please contact:

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