



**New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
Testimony of Commissioner Rossana Rosado
Joint Legislative Hearing on FY 2023-24 Executive Budget: Public Protection
Tuesday, February 7, 2023**

Good Afternoon Chairs Krueger and Weinstein, Legislative Fiscal Committee members, and other distinguished members of the Legislature. I am Rossana Rosado, Commissioner of the Division of Criminal Justice Services. Thank you for the opportunity to be with you today to discuss Governor Kathy Hochul's FY 2023-24 Budget for DCJS.

Last year, DCJS marked its 50th anniversary. Our multifunction support agency continues to evolve with the changes and meet the challenges in New York's criminal justice system. We work with all stakeholders to bring the resources, expertise, and information needed for a more fair, equitable, and efficient justice system. Our work is both collective and reflective of the depth and breadth of the public safety profession. To me, that is both the power and the privilege of DCJS.

We get to work every day with our local partners to help keep New Yorkers safe. However, we also recognize that we need to make our communities not just safer, but stronger. In too many communities, the persistence of poverty and crime has fractured neighborhoods, placing opportunities out of reach. In its most devastating form, we saw Buffalo's East Side torn apart last May when a hate-fueled gunman targeted a Black neighborhood, killing ten and injuring three.

The Governor's proposed budget provides DCJS with the ability to positively impact both the criminal justice system and communities across New York State. Specifically, the budget provides \$100 million to support our law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations with evidence-informed programs to better address crime, its causes, and its consequences. These programs, among others, include SNUG Street Outreach, Gun Involved Violence Elimination (GIVE), and the Crime Analysis Center (CAC) network – and these programs are making a difference.

As I shared at last week's hearing, reported shootings dropped 17 percent in New York City and 15 percent in the GIVE jurisdictions in 2022. This reflects 453 fewer shootings than in 2021. While there are still more shootings than before the pandemic, this is the first sustained decrease in gun violence since 2020.

For communities most affected by violence, DCJS launched Project RISE in 2022 dedicating \$28 million to seven cities. Our team traveled and built relationships with stakeholders in each of these cities to implement and improve programs and services. Project RISE works by listening to, learning from, and lifting up communities. We bring

local agencies, organizations, and residents together to identify and support the “grassroots” solutions that tackle the underlying causes of violence.

This effort works in parallel with our SNUG street outreach program, which now serves 14 communities. The expanding SNUG program sites deploy outreach, social, and hospital-based workers to disrupt the cycle of violence. These programs also connect community members and victims of crime with the resources they need, such as employment, education, and access to health and mental health care.

Last year, the Governor invested \$18.2 million in the GIVE initiative and \$15 million in the CAC network for our law enforcement partners. The CAC network now collects and shares information and investigative support among more than 350 law enforcement agencies across 43 counties. This network has become the “backbone” of the State’s efforts to prevent, investigate, and solve crimes – responding to more than 60,000 requests for assistance each year. DCJS also delivered \$10 million for body-worn cameras in municipal police agencies and dedicated \$20 million for local law enforcement technology.

To further reduce gun violence and curb the recent rise in crime, our job now is to “double down” on the programs that work. With your support for the Executive Budget, DCJS will be able to:

- double funding for Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) programs to \$31.4 million and provide \$20 million for pretrial services to close the system’s “revolving door” and better connect people with the resources that they need;
- double funding for the GIVE initiative to \$36.4 million, and expand the CAC network to New York City to help local law enforcement deploy evidence-based strategies informed by the best-available data to prevent, identify, and solve crimes;
- quadruple funding for Aid to Prosecution to \$52.5 million and provide \$40 million for discovery implementation to ensure prosecutors have the tools to hold people who commit crimes accountable;
- fund local law enforcement efforts to prevent the flow of illegal fentanyl and other opioids and investigate overdose deaths with \$9 million;
- triple funding for the County Re-Entry Task Force (CRTFs) to \$11.5 million to provide case management, care coordination, and stabilization services for people returning to the community after incarceration; and, finally,
- continue the Securing Communities Against Hate Crimes grant program with \$25 million and the Securing Reproductive Health Centers grant program with \$10

million, protecting our not-for-profit and other organizations at risk of hate crimes or attack.

I also want to thank the Governor for her unwavering leadership on public safety. In this year's budget, she delivers another year of unprecedented resources with a renewed focus on the "front-end" of the system. Her investments in mental health infrastructure, the ATI network, and pretrial service capacity will help people access the care they need and keep New Yorkers safe.

Our data show that failure to appear and rearrest rates have remained stable at roughly 2 out of every 10 people with pending cases. While relatively few, they present a chronic concern, and the Governor recognizes that judges in some of these cases have inconsistently applied the pretrial reforms. She is proposing to remove the "least restrictive" standard for ensuring people charged with serious offenses return to court.

Finally, I want to thank the team at DCJS who work to advance and achieve these efforts. For 15 months, I have been fortunate to lead a workforce of professionals who are among the best in government and who increasingly reflect the diversity of our great state. I am proud that DCJS continues to be recognized as a top workplace and provides an environment for our employees to feel engaged and included.

In 2023, we look forward to building upon our solutions to keep our neighborhoods safe and strong, working together with our local partners, and promoting public trust in our criminal justice system.

Thank you for your support and time today. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.