



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

Senator Rivera and Assemblyman Aubry Pass Charitable Bail Bond Legislation Governor Cuomo signs bill into Law

GUSTAVO RIVERA July 20, 2012

| ISSUE: **CORRECTIONAL**

Bronx, NY- Senator Gustavo Rivera (D,WF-Bronx) bill S7752/ A10640-B, the Charitable Bail Bonds Bill was signed into law by Governor Cuomo yesterday. The bill will allow charitable organizations to post bail for individuals who cannot afford to do so themselves. This legislation was carried in the Assembly by Assembly Member Jeff Aubry (D-Queens).

"I want to thank Governor Cuomo for working with Assembly Member Jeff Aubry and me to make the justice system fairer for working class people by making it legal for charitable organizations to post bail for those who cannot afford to do so themselves" said Senator Gustavo Rivera "Both in the Bronx and throughout New York, working people plead guilty to misdemeanors, despite their innocence, because they can't afford bail and are trying to avoid the devastating consequences that come with jail time while awaiting trial such as job loss, child custody issues or eviction. The alternative is just as bad or worse - an unwarranted conviction on their record. This law takes an important step toward leveling the playing field for working people and creating a more just bail system."

"Justice should not depend on the size of your wallet. Charitable Bail Organizations could help thousands of New Yorkers who would otherwise languish in jails, often losing their jobs and facing long-term collateral consequences, just because they can't afford a small amount of bail to fight their case. The inability to post bail on minor charges shouldn't put low income people at a disadvantage in our justice system. Charitable Bail Organizations are an important step toward leveling the playing field." said Assembly Member Jeffrion Aubry

"Senator Rivera's leadership has led to this remarkable bill that will allow non-profit organizations to provide bail assistance to people in jail who have not been convicted of any crime, but who remain there because they don't have enough money to post bail," said Robin Steinberg, Executive Director of the Bronx Defenders. "We are one step closer to envisioning a criminal justice system where justice is no longer determined by the size of your bank account."

S7752/A 10640-B was based on a pilot project in the Bronx where a fund called the Bronx Freedom Fund was created and functioned for three years posting small amount of bail for individuals who could not afford it. The result was that 95% of people bailed out returned to every court date, and 50% of clients had their cases dismissed or had cases not result in criminal convictions.