



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

# **Senator Squadron Statement on Governor Cuomo Including Speedy Trial Reform in SOTS**

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NEW YORK – “The Governor's announcement today to ‘ensure access to a speedy trial’ is a step toward fixing a broken system. In June of 2015, I wrote Kalief’s Law to address a speedy trial crisis in New York that had for too long been ignored. I was inspired by the story of Kalief Browder, who was accused of stealing a backpack and spent over a thousand days in pre-trial detention at Rikers Island, 700 of them in solitary confinement, before having his case dismissed.

“Working with Assemblymember Aubry, District Attorneys, OCA, and advocates – including the Working Families Party, Katal, Just Leadership USA, Legal Aid, Bronx Defenders, Brooklyn Defenders and others – over the past two years, we have brought focus to the critical need to restore New Yorkers’ constitutionally guaranteed speedy trial rights. At my swearing-in last week, I again raised the issue with Chief Judge DiFiore. The state’s failure to provide speedy trials infringes on the constitutional rights of the accused, and the need for justice and closure for victims. Solving the speedy trial crisis will expand justice and vastly reduce the population of Rikers Island and other jails.

“Truly fixing the crisis will require both legislative action like my Kalief’s Law, along with targeted funding increases for OCA and court personnel. Unfortunately the Republican controlled Senate has blocked these reforms. I look forward to seeing further details of the Governor’s proposal and working collaboratively to finally reform this broken Rockefeller-era system. Kalief Browder and all New Yorkers deserve no less.”

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