

**SFY 2020-2021 Budget Testimony**  
**Division of Criminal Justice Services**  
**February 12, 2020**

Good morning Chairwoman Krueger, Chairwoman Weinstein and distinguished members of the Legislature. I am Mike Green, head of the Division of Criminal Justice Services. Thank you for inviting me to appear before you today.

New York continues to experience reductions both in reported crime and its prison population. Reported crime declined for the sixth consecutive year in 2018, again reaching an all-time low, and we maintain our standing as the safest large state in the nation. While numbers for this past year are not yet final, preliminary data show that crime declined even further and 2019 will mark another historic low. For the third year in a row, there will be fewer than 600 homicides, something that has not occurred since we started keeping statewide data 45 years ago. Our Gun-Involved Violence Elimination initiative, SNUG street outreach program, Crime Analysis Center network and strong alternatives to incarceration network contribute to this success and continue to be nationally recognized for their accomplishments.

Our investment in proven practices to reduce gun crimes and save lives is paying dividends. Within the 20 GIVE jurisdictions, shootings declined 4 percent in 2019. They also were 16 percent below the five-year average and 18 percent below the total reported in 2006, when tracking of shooting data in these jurisdictions began. These aren't just numbers: 145 fewer people had their lives impacted by gun violence in 2019 compared to 2006.

Governor Cuomo's proposed budget will allow DCJS to continue supporting evidence-based programs and the criminal justice system in communities across the state and developing and implementing innovative programs that continue to distinguish New York as a national leader in effective public safety policy.

Last year, the second phase of the Raise the Age law took effect and its successful implementation was possible because of a productive collaboration with the Office of Court Administration and our state and local agency partners. More than 80 percent of felony cases arraigned in newly formed Youth Parts are transferred to Family Court or probation intake, where these youth are connected to programs and services. All 16- and 17-year-olds arrested for misdemeanors are now treated as juveniles and most are diverted through probation and the courts as well.

This year's Executive Budget builds upon prior years' accomplishments and includes proposals that will improve protections for vulnerable populations and individuals targeted for their actual or perceived race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or any other characteristic protected under the law.

The Governor's proposal strengthens existing laws to better protect New Yorkers from serial sex offenders and convicted sex offenders who use social media platforms to identify and exploit victims. It also eliminates the rape intoxication loophole, which continues the state's commitment to updating its laws to help ensure justice for victims.

The budget also includes common-sense changes to regulate "ghost guns" and restrict gun ownership by individuals convicted of domestic violence-related offenses, which will save lives. A report issued last year by Everytown for Gun Safety detailed the deadly connection between

firearms and domestic violence: abusers with firearms are five times more likely to kill their victims. The Governor's proposal will address this connection and help to ensure the safety of domestic violence victims.

Public safety is our highest priority. This 2020-21 budget proposal will allow DCJS to continue its support for programs and initiatives that promote fairness, respect and transparency in the State's criminal justice system, and keep New Yorkers safe. Your support of our work will allow the State to sustain its historic reductions in crime and continue to reduce the number of individuals who enter the criminal justice system.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.