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**THE SENATE  
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March 22, 2022

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
NYS State Capitol Building

Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

In light of the public safety plan recently proposed by you and your Administration, I write to urge you to keep New York State residents informed of any possible changes to bail or discovery reforms that are being negotiated in the State Budget or during the Legislative session.

As you may remember, the initial bail and discovery reforms in the 2019-20 State Budget were passed in the middle of the night, without any input from any interested parties such as law enforcement, crime victims, or the general public. Those 'reforms' have led to disastrous results, many of which were predicted by the very people that were excluded from the conversations. While I am pleased to see that our calls for change are finally being heeded, it is imperative that the same mistake is not repeated and the Governor's Office and the Legislature engage with the public and listen to the experts - not just the advocates.

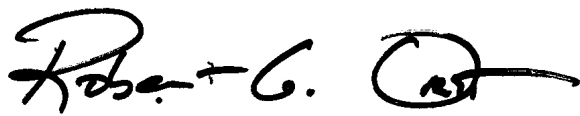
When you assumed office from our disgraced former Governor, you pledged "a new era of greater transparency and accountability" yet you recently stated that you will not negotiate in public. To negotiate changes to one of the most consequential pieces of legislation enacted over the past decade behind closed doors, is not transparency; it's secrecy.

What's worse, to date, the majorities in the Legislature have not held a single hearing on the impacts of bail reform on the criminal justice system. Nor have your executive agencies

examined this critical issue. The public deserves to know exactly who is being listened to when it comes to negotiating changes to bail and discovery laws and which provisions of the laws are being negotiated. This lack of transparency erodes the public's trust in government.

For the aforementioned reasons, I urge you to meet your own standard by keeping the public informed regarding any changes to bail or discovery reforms. As elected officials, keeping our constituents informed of any changes that may affect their safety is of the utmost importance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert G. Ortt". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "R" and a distinct "O" at the end.

Robert G. Ortt

cc: Andrea Stewart-Cousins, President Pro Tempore and Majority Leader  
Carl E. Heastie, Speaker of the Assembly