

HSAN Issues Stern Warning To Greedy Lobbyists And Public Servants – Back Off Of Opposing Rockefeller Drug Law Repeal Or Risk Backlash

Lobbyists and greedy politicians, beware. Young people are watching and ready to be heard if you, once again, block the long overdue repeal of the draconian Rockefeller Drug Laws. If you believe in equal justice and fairness, this is your chance to raise your voice, once again, as we demand an end to the Rockefeller Drug Laws across the state of New York. This is also the perfect time to do away with all the unjust mandatory minimum sentencing drug laws throughout the United States.

Remember, it was Jay Z, Diddy, 50 Cent, Busta Rhymes, Mariah Carey, LL Cool J, Rev. Run, Fat Joe, Erykah Bydu, Damon Dash, Wyclef, and many other artists, along with then-Senator Hillary Clinton, Andrew Cuomo, then-Senator Patterson, and many others who took the lead on this issue and came out to speak at the National Rally drawing over a hundred thousand people at the NYC City Hall in 2003. That rally made the big difference in public consciousness about these terrible laws.

Today, right now, we have finally arrived at that auspicious moment when NY Governor David Patterson, State Senate Majority Leader Malcolm Smith, and State Assembly Leader Sheldon Silver should all be on the same page to get rid of the Rockefeller Drug Laws.

No more excuses. No more partisan bickering while thousands of people languish in prison unjustly, directly as a result of

these discriminatory, and unfair mandatory minimum sentencing drug laws. The time to repeal the Rockefeller Drug Laws is now.

Since 1973, thirty-six long years, tens of thousands of people have been imprisoned unjustly because of the reactionary enactment of the repressive Rockefeller Drug Laws.

But this is not just a New York issue, it is an urgent national matter. For more than three decades, hundreds of thousands of people have been given harsh mandatory prison sentences for low level drug offenses.

We helped to break the national silence about this issue back in 2003. Of course, we joined with the Drug Policy Alliance (www.drugpolicy.org), the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network (www.hsan.org) and many other organizations to raised public awareness about this issue.

Since then, we have had to go to federal court just to defend our right to speak out on this issue, spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on legal fees, and had to work to encourage past NY Governor Pataki to sign the first step in the reform effort. Now it is time to take more steps to finally repeal.

Jim Jones' throbbing video "Lock Down" exhibits how hip-hop keeps our communities energized and conscious about this call for action: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obvduEttees> Also check out the movie trailer "Lock Down USA" about the Rockefeller Drug Laws : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLWLpgfsr4s> You should also get more information about this important documentary film at: www.lockdownusa.com

Do the right thing now! Get rid of the Rockefeller Drug Laws and all mandatory minimum sentencing. With all of the medical and other research available, it seems criminal and irresponsible for a public servant to stand by or oppose

change. Back in 2003, then-Senator Patterson stood with us, Malcolm Smith stood with us and then-State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver stood with us. We're counting on you now.

– Russell Simmons (Chairman, HSAN) and Dr. Benjamin Chavis (President/CEO, HSAN)