



November 29, 2022

Elizabeth Fine, Esq.
Counsel to the Governor
Office of the Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Re: New York Clemency Advisory Panel

Dear General Counsel Fine,

Congratulations on your first year as General Counsel to Governor Hochul. We write to offer the assistance of members of the New York City Bar Association's Corrections and Community Reentry Committee and its Criminal Courts Committee in the formation of the New York Clemency Advisory Panel.

The work of these two committees focuses directly on matters relevant to the Panel's mission.¹ Our committee members include attorneys from a myriad of pertinent backgrounds: prosecutors, defense counsel, former hearing officers, reentry officers, private practitioners, court attorneys, members of nonprofit legal services providers and reentry specialists, and even formerly incarcerated. Combined our experience spans decades of New York trial and appellate work in state, local and federal courts.

We understand that the Clemency Advisory Panel was formed at the end of last year. Currently, however, we further understand the Panel does not have any appointed members. We write to offer our committees' services as a resource for you in advisory personnel, subject matter knowledge, and community-building.

¹ For more information on the work of the Corrections and Community Reentry Committee, *see* <https://www.nycbar.org/member-and-career-services/committees/corrections-and-community-reentry-committee>. For more information on the work of the Criminal Courts Committee, *see* <https://www.nycbar.org/member-and-career-services/committees/criminal-courts-committee>.

About the Association

The mission of the New York City Bar Association, which was founded in 1870 and has over 23,000 members, is to equip and mobilize a diverse legal profession to practice with excellence, promote reform of the law, and uphold the rule of law and access to justice in support of a fair society and the public interest in our community, our nation, and throughout the world.

The Supreme Court has called clemency the “fail safe” of the judicial system as it allows the person who wields it the opportunity to correct injustices on an individual basis. Although the committees do not believe it is a substitute for substantive criminal justice reform, it is nevertheless a powerful tool to address unjust or inhumane outcomes. We strongly endorse the work of the Panel given its important function in expanding the State’s use of its clemency power and are eager to see the Panel with a full complement of members.

Our committees stand ready to assist you in your recruitment and implementation process. If we can be helpful, please reach us through Elizabeth Kocienda, the City Bar’s Director of Advocacy, at 212-382-4788 or ekocienda@nycbar.org.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Alexis Flyer, Co-Chair
Stephanie Holmes, Co-Chair
Corrections & Community Reentry Committee

Carola Beeney, Co-Chair
Anna G. Cominsky, Co-Chair
Criminal Courts Committee