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DISTRICT ATTORNEY

March 8, 2023

**For:** The Honorable Zellnor Myrie  
The Honorable Demond Meeks

**Legislative Memorandum in Support of Bill S.214/A.2105 - 2023/2024**  
**by New York County District Attorney Alvin Bragg**

**In Senate, Bill Number 214.-2023/2-24 Introduced by Senator Myrie.**  
**In Assembly, Bill Number 2105 Introduced by Assembly Member Meeks.**

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to expanding eligibility for victims and survivors of crime to access victim compensation funds by removing the mandatory law enforcement reporting requirement and providing alternative forms of evidence that would show that a qualifying crime was committed.

**SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS**

This legislation amends New York State Executive Law by (1) allowing a claimant to file for compensation regardless of whether a suspect was arrested, charged, apprehended or prosecuted for the commission of the crime or whether the claimant has interacted with a criminal justice agency investigating the crime; (2) expanding the time frame a victim can report a crime from one year to three years; and (3) expanding acceptable documentation for victim compensation claims, including a statement from a victim service provider who has provided services to the victim and victim self-attestation.

**STATEMENT OF SUPPORT**

I strongly support this legislation and its goal of expanding and creating more equitable access to victim compensation in New York State. We need to remove barriers in the current law to ensure all victims and survivors can access funding in the aftermath of a crime to pay for medical bills, burial expenses, lost wages, and other expenses. This compensation plays an important role in victims' healing and in fostering health and safety in communities impacted by crime.


Research shows that many victims and survivors do not report violent crime to law enforcement. 2020 data from the National Bureau of Justice Statistics shows that only 40 percent of violent crime, including gun violence, domestic violence, sexual violence and many other crimes, was

reported to the police. This lack of reporting can be based on different reasons including fear of the criminal justice system, fear of immigration consequences and sometimes because people don't know the victimization they have experienced constitutes a crime. Requiring victims to report crime disproportionately impacts marginalized communities and survivors, including people of color, immigrants and LGBTQIA+ communities, who are more likely to fear and mistrust law enforcement and other systems, but who are also more likely to be victims of violent crime. Removing the law enforcement reporting requirement and expanding allowable forms of evidence are critical steps in creating more access to victim compensation in our state.

Importantly, the legislation also gives victims and survivors more time to file a claim for victim compensation, expanding the time frame from one year to three years. This expansion of time recognizes the overwhelming trauma that can prevent victims from seeking compensation within the existing time frame, as well as the fact that they may not learn about their eligibility to apply for such compensation until after the one-year deadline.

This legislation centers victims' and survivors' needs, as well as promotes the health and safety of communities and I thank Senator Myrie and Assemblymember Meeks for their continued leadership and work on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alvin Bragg', written in a cursive style.

Alvin Bragg

Manhattan District Attorney