

TO: Interested Parties  
FROM: Global Strategy Group  
DATE: September 5, 2018  
RE: **NEW POLL RESULTS: Criminal justice reform a key issue for NY State Democratic primary voters**

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Likely Democratic primary voters are placing a high priority on pretrial reform as they evaluate candidates for office in the September 13<sup>th</sup> election. Voters feel strongly that Democratic candidates should support a variety of specific reforms, including proposals to reduce the pre-trial jail population, set firm speedy trial requirements, and ensure that people accused of crimes can see the evidence against them before entering pleas.

Candidates in the Democratic primary stand to benefit electorally from backing these criminal justice reform proposals, as Democrats statewide are overwhelmingly more likely to vote for candidates who support these policies.

Key findings from Global Strategy Group's recent statewide survey of 500 likely Democratic primary voters are as follows:

#### KEY SURVEY FINDINGS:

- **Candidates' stances on criminal justice reform are a major factor for Democratic primary voters.** Nearly nine in ten likely Democratic primary voters (87%) say it is important to them that candidates in the September 13<sup>th</sup> primary support reforming the state's criminal justice system to reduce the number of people held in jail before trial. Voters feel strongly about candidates' stances on the issue, with nearly half (47%) saying it is "very" important to them.
- **Replacing the pre-trial jail system, ensuring speedy trials, and reforming the discovery process are all key priorities for voters.** Overwhelming majorities of primary voters say it is important for candidates to support specific criminal justice reform proposals including:
  - Setting firm speedy trial requirements to reduce delays in court proceedings and prevent people from being held in jail for months or years while awaiting trial (93% important, 64% "very" important)
  - End the practice of jailing people before their trial unless they are proven to be a flight risk and are accused of a felony involving physical force against an individual (89% important, 57% "very" important)
  - Allowing people who are accused of a crime to see the evidence against them before deciding whether to plead guilty or go to trial (86% important, 58% "very" important)
- **Voters are far more likely to vote for candidates who support criminal justice reforms.** A commanding majority of voters (70% more likely/3% less likely) are more likely to vote for candidates for State Senate or Assembly if they support reforms to set firm speedy trial requirements, end pretrial jailing for most defendants, and allow defendants to see evidence against them before entering pleas. Voters also feel strongly about rewarding candidates who back these reforms, with over two in five (42%) "much" more likely to vote for a candidate who supports all three proposals.

#### ABOUT THIS POLL

*Global Strategy Group conducted a live telephone survey of 500 likely September 2018 Democratic primary voters statewide from August 29<sup>th</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018. The margin of error at the 95% confidence level is +/- 4.4%. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of the expected electorate are properly represented based on historical turnout.*