



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt: Where is the Transparency on Bail Reform?

ROBERT G. ORTT March 22, 2022

| ISSUE: **BAIL REFORM, CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS, PUBLIC SAFETY**



ALBANY, NY - New York State Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt today penned a letter to Governor Kathy Hochul calling on her to keep the public informed on potential changes to bail and discovery reforms and bring all stakeholders to the discussion table. This urgent demand follows the Governor's recent commitment to not **negotiate the budget or policies in public**.

“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,” wrote **Leader Ortt**.

Last week, a ten-point public safety plan proposed by Governor Hochul was **leaked to the press**. However, the Governor has been reluctant to provide a **detailed blueprint** of the plan, provide substantive answers on the plan, or discuss it with stakeholders in public. In reaction to the ten-point plan, Leader Ortt in a **statement** said the Senate Republican Conference will not stop fighting for policies that put the needs of crime victims ahead of criminals and keep communities safe.

When bail reform was **passed in the budget in 2019**, the public and critical stakeholders – like law enforcement, district attorneys, judges, and victims – were given little to no input on the changes. Senate Republicans have long called for both transparency and real fixes to bail reform:

- In July of 2021, Senate Republicans **called for data** on the impacts of bail reform;
- For years – and most recently in the “**Take Back New York**” 2022 agenda – Senate Republicans have called for a **restoration of public safety** by rejecting bail reform, supporting law enforcement, and passing a victims’ justice agenda.

“New Yorkers are being left in the dark by their representatives in the state government – who are supposed to be faithful, open, and accessible public servants. This is Albany business-as-usual: politicians pass broken, failed policies with NO transparency and everyday New Yorkers are left to deal with the disastrous effects. This is exactly what happened when bail and discovery ‘reforms’ were rammed through the budget the first time.

This provides ZERO opportunities for the people to provide input to their elected representatives. There is no other way to do this – we must deliberate bail reform in front of the eyes of the public,” **concluded Leader Ort.**

A copy of the letter is attached.

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