

MARCH for JUSTICE

Press Release

Today, the Alliance of Families for Justice (AFJ) announced its March for Justice; a 19 day walk to raise awareness of human rights abuses in the State's prisons and jails and demanding the closure of Attica prison.

Marchers from AFJ and dozens of allied organizations will begin the event on Saturday, August 26th with a kickoff rally in Harlem. The marchers will then walk approximately 10 miles a day, culminating 19 days later in a major rally and press conference in Albany on September 13, 2017, the anniversary of the 1971 Attica uprising*. A host of speakers and cultural artists will participate throughout the march and at both rallies.

"As a founding Board member of AFJ, I am proud to participate and lend my support in every way possible to the March for Justice. The scourge of mass incarceration and the criminal injustice system on the poor, Black and Brown communities throughout New York State and the country must be exposed and eliminated", shared actor and activist Danny Glover.

"I stand with Alliance of Families for Justice (AFJ) and the upcoming March for Justice. Given the horrific human rights violations that are confirmed to be happening right now in facilities such Rikers and Attica, each of us has a moral, ethical, and humanitarian responsibility to demand an end to the abuses happening to prisoners," says Heather Ann Thompson, Pulitzer Prize winning author of *Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and its Legacy*.

"Attica, like Rikers Island, has a long and troubling legacy of human rights abuses", said AFJ founder and executive director, Soffiyah Elijah. "However, Attica and Rikers are not the only problem facilities. Human rights abuses are a systemic problem inside New York's prisons and jails and the March for Justice is designed to educate and mobilize people to bring an end to them. Solitary confinement, women specific concerns, jail expansion, bail reform and treatment of people with mental health needs are just some of the issues we will address."

Among those marching will be students, community leaders, members of faith-based organizations, families of incarcerated people, organized labor, social workers, lawyers, teachers, service providers, policy makers, formerly incarcerated people, academics, athletes, elected officials from local municipalities, organizers, health professionals and celebrities.

According to Elijah, "mass incarceration and mass criminalization are issues that collectively, we can change. That is why throughout the March for Justice we will be educating people and registering them to vote. Every step counts!"

For more information contact:

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sign up to march at www.afj-ny.org

** On September 13, 1971 a four-day uprising of over 1,200 men incarcerated at the Attica State Correctional Facility in western New York ended horrifically after Governor Nelson Rockefeller ordered almost 600 state troopers to storm the prison resulting in 42 fatalities.*