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## Statement on the State University of New York System 'Banning the Box' on Applications

September 15, 2016

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Lisa Schreibersdorf, President of the Chief Defenders Association of New York (CDANY), said:

“Yesterday, State University of New York (SUNY) trustees voted to remove questions about criminal history from applications to any SUNY schools. CDANY applauds this move, which represents a major victory for all New Yorkers. We also congratulate the countless advocates and activists who fought for it, many of whom have criminal records and benefited from higher education, themselves. We believe that, in expanding meaningful education and employment opportunities for justice-involved New Yorkers, the Trustees’ action will begin to address inequality in our society and make us all safer. Furthermore, it brings SUNY more into line with its mission to ‘provide to the people of New York educational services of the highest quality, with the broadest possible access, fully representative of all segments of the population.’ This is an important first step toward finally removing many of the barriers that disproportionately afflict low-income communities of color and prevent many from accessing success.”

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CDANY is an association of New York chief defenders, the individuals who lead public defense offices and programs across New York State. CDANY was formed to be a voice for positive change for our indigent defense programs and the justice system.