

Statement By Attorney General Schneiderman On The Settlement In The Hurrell-Harring V. New York State Lawsuit

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman issued the following statement in response to the settlement announced today by Governor Cuomo and the New York Civil Liberties Union in the case of Hurrell-Harring v. New York State:

“The right to effective legal representation for every criminal defendant is a fundamental tenet of our criminal justice system. As has often been said, the right to a lawyer is the right that protects all the rest of our freedoms. That is why, during my time in the State Senate, I proposed legislation that would have improved defense counsel for every New Yorker, not just the rich and powerful or those living in more affluent communities. It is also why I congratulate Governor Cuomo and the New York Civil Liberties Union for reaching a settlement that will create a system to provide effective representation for criminal defendants in the five counties covered in this lawsuit. Now that this matter has been resolved, it is my hope that the approach outlined in this agreement can be a building block toward the kind of statewide reforms we need to move closer to the ideal of providing every criminal defendant in every part of our state with effective legal representation.”