



Katten Joins Law Firm Leaders in Support of the Repeal of New York State Civil Rights Law Section 50-a

June 12, 2020

Katten Chairman Roger Furey and CEO Noah Heller joined the leaders of 30 other law firms in signing a letter urging New York state lawmakers to overturn a 44-year-old provision, Section 50-a of the state's Civil Rights Law, that kept the disciplinary records of police secret, protecting wayward officers from public scrutiny.

On June 8, as calls for more transparency and police accountability intensify throughout the nation and the world sparked by a Minneapolis police officer killing George Floyd, the New York State Legislature voted to abolish 50-a, allowing public access to records of police misconduct as part of a package of police reforms currently under review.

"The terrible events of recent weeks have shined a bright light on the racism, discrimination and injustice in our country," Furey said. "We must do everything we can to use the energy of this moment to bring about real, lasting change."

The push to discard 50-a started after the death of another Black man, Eric Garner, at the hands of a NYPD officer in 2014 but stalled despite many groups advocating for reform. In addition to Katten and other law firms, the Legal Aid Society, the New York Civil Liberties Union and the Metropolitan Black Bar Association are among many that worked to repeal 50-a. Rihanna and Ariana Grande joined several other celebrities who signed a letter to New York Governor Andrew Cuomo pushing for the repeal, stating, "We mourn the killing of George Floyd and the unnecessary loss of so many other black lives before his."

Read "[Katten's Response to the Death of George Floyd](#)" in its entirety.

CONTACTS

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