Media Advisory

NYSACDL Statement on the Repeal of Civil Rights Law 50-a

June 9, 2020

Albany, NY – On June 9, 2020, New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NYSACDL) President Timothy W. Hoover released the following statement on the repeal of Civil Rights Law 50-a:

“Even before the recent tragic events, the New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers has advocated strenuously for the repeal of Civil Rights Law 50-a.

Civil Rights Law 50-a has been a blight on the fair administration of justice since the day it was enacted.

That a statute whose legacy is shielding police misconduct from public view should have resided in the Civil Rights Law, of all places, is the cruelest of ironies.

Repeal was long overdue, as 50-a was one mechanism that helped protect and shield institutional racism and biases, to say nothing of actual instances of officer misconduct.

We commend the Legislature for taking another step toward a rational, enlightened and fairer criminal-justice system.

There is much more to be done to ensure that all New Yorkers receive equal treatment from their government, but make no mistake, this is a concrete achievement.”

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New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NYSACDL) is a statewide organization of criminal defense attorneys, representing approximately 1,000 private attorneys and public defenders who practice in courthouses in all parts of New York State. We are the New York affiliate of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, a professional bar association founded in 1958 that has over 40,000 members nationally.