The definitions below provide just-in-time support for understanding challenging words in the prompt and sources. Use them as needed while you read.

## **Prompt**

**Acknowledge** (verb): recognize or agree

**Activist** (noun): a person involved in supporting and arguing for change around an issue

**Bail** (noun): money paid to free a person who is in jail while they wait for their trail

**Counterclaim** (noun): an argument for the other side

**Court** (noun): a meeting led by a judge to make decisions based on laws

**Criminal justice system** (noun): a group of organizations, like police and courts, that are responsible for deciding when laws have been broken and punishing people for breaking the law.

**Equitable** (adj.): fair for everyone

**Mandatory minimum sentence** (noun): a set prison sentence for a certain crime that a judge is not allowed to reduce

**Politician** (noun): a person who is elected to to serve in the government

## **“Getting Rid of Mandatory Minimum Sentencing”:**

**Consideration** (noun): giving thought to carefully make a decision

**Contribute** (verb): to add to

**Convict** (verb): to find guilty of a crime

**Federal** (adj.): having to do with the national government

**Felony** (noun): a serious crime

**Inequality** (noun): the state of not being even or fair

**Mandatory minimum sentence** (noun): a set prison sentence for a certain crime

**Percentage** (noun): part of a whole; one one-hundredth

**Possession** (noun): having something

**Raid** (noun): a sudden entry or attack

**Sentencing laws** (noun): laws that have to do with how long someone is in jail for a crime

## **“Mandatory Minimum Sentencing Reform: More Needs to be Done”:**

**Alternative** (noun): a different choice

**Convict** (verb): to find guilty of a crime

**Democrats and Republicans** (nouns): the two main political parties in the United States

**Imprisonment** (noun): kept captive or confined such as in prison or jail

**Legislation** (noun): laws that are introduced to and passed by law makers

**Mandatory minimum sentence** (noun): a set prison sentence for a certain crime that a judge is not allowed to reduce

**Offender** (noun): a criminal; someone who broke the law

**Probation** (noun): a time when someone who has been found guilty of a crime can stay out of prison as long as he or she does not get in trouble

**U.S. Senate** (noun): One of the two parts of the government that makes laws

## **“Bail Reform Will Level the Playing Field”:**

**Accuse** (verb): to blame for or say someone is guilty of something

**Advantage** (noun): something that helps a person to succeed

**Bail** (noun): money paid to free a person who is in jail while they wait for their trail

**Convict** (verb): to find guilty of a crime

**Critic** (noun): a person who disagrees

**Disadvantage** (noun): something that makes a person less likely to be successful

**Eliminate** (verb): to get rid of

**Fortunate** (adj.): lucky

**Prosecutor** (noun): a lawyer who argues that a person is guilty in court

**Reform** (noun): change to improve

**Statistics** (noun): math calculations that describe trends or make predictions

**Structural racism** (noun): racism that is normalized by the history, culture, and dynamics of the United States that advantages whites and produces inequality for people of color.