



January 14, 2020

Contact:

Redmond Haskins, *The Legal Aid Society* (RHaskins@legal-aid.org)

Lupe Todd-Medina, *New York County Defender Services* (LToddmedina@nycds.org)

Jared Chausow, *Brooklyn Defender Services* (JChausow@bds.org)

Ryan Karerat, *The Bronx Defenders* (RKarerat@bronxdefenders.org)

Sam McCann, *The Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem* (SMccann@ndsny.org)

*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

***NYC DEFENDERS APPLAUD SPEAKER HEASTIE'S
SUPPORT FOR PRETRIAL REFORMS, URGE
LEGISLATORS NOT TO GIVE IN TO LIES AND
FEARMONGERING FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT***

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society, New York County Defender Services, Brooklyn Defender Services, The Bronx Defenders, and Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem released the following statement in response to comments made last night on [Capital Tonight](#) by Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie in support of the newly enacted pretrial reforms:

“We applaud Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie for continuing to defend the new bail, discovery, and speedy trial laws – measures that an overwhelming majority of New Yorkers support. Albany cannot let lies and fearmongering from law enforcement undermine these critically important reforms, which have made our criminal legal system more just, fair, and equitable.

Reform has already added transparency by providing access to information and evidence about the accusation, has expedited court processes, helped families stay together and saved thousands across the state from the devastation of unnecessary and overly harsh pretrial incarceration on misdemeanor cases and non-violent felony charges.

This is about protecting New Yorkers’ fundamental right to a trial rather than facing extreme punishment before the trial has even begun. These laws were decades in the making, and a pre-emptive retreat would represent a betrayal of the countless New Yorkers who have been harmed by our failed discovery, bail, and speedy trial laws.”

###