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

***Data From NYPD Report Reaffirms Need For Albany To  
Enact The Marijuana Regulation And Taxation Act (MRTA)  
Immediately***

***New Yorkers Of Color Make Up More Than 90 Percent Of  
2019 Marijuana Arrests***

**(NEW YORK, NY) – Anthony Posada, Supervising Attorney of the Community Justice Unit at The Legal Aid Society,** issued the following statement today in response to [reporting](#) released by the New York City Police Department (NYPD) on low-level marijuana arrests showing that officers are still disproportionately targeting New Yorkers of color:

"While this data shows that marijuana arrests are down significantly compared to years ago, Black and Latinx New Yorkers are still overwhelmingly targeted by the police for low-level possession. This means paying fines, missing school, and taking off work. In some cases, it can also trigger months or even years of ICE detention and deportation, sever access to essential public benefits, and result in the loss of one's children to foster care. To correct this injustice, Albany must enact the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA) immediately this session. Decriminalization was a step in the right direction, but to fully right the wrongs of the war on drugs, Albany lawmakers cannot let another session pass without enacting this legislation."

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*The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 140 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. <https://www.legalaidnyc.org>*