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

Joint Defender Statement On Citywide Decrease In Docketed Cases Of Grand Larceny Auto

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society, The Bronx Defenders, New York County Defender Services, Brooklyn Defender Services and Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem issued the below statement concerning citywide docketed cases of grand larceny auto in 2020:

“The New York City Police Department claims that grand theft auto complaints have skyrocketed almost 65% in 2020 compared to the same period in 2019, and that arrests have increased as well. Our collective caseload, however, shows a decrease of 9%.

The only way to reconcile this is to conclude that the NYPD's repeated claims of rising crime are a story of their own making. It's clear proof that the NYPD has been up-charging, and that when these cases make it to a district attorney, prosecutors reject the charges that the NYPD are touting because they know they cannot stand up to even the most cursory legal scrutiny.

News outlets can no longer accept the narrative from the NYPD that crime has increased. Reporters should demand answers from the NYPD concerning these major discrepancies and what is motivating them.”

Background

The Defenders recently issued an [analysis](#) of data obtained from the New York State Office of Court Administration (OCA) which shows a sharp decline in the number of new criminal cases throughout the city in the first two months of 2020, as compared with the same period last year.

These numbers starkly contradict claims by the NYPD that crime has risen since the new bail law went into effect on January 1. Rather, the court figures suggest that crime has continued to plummet. This is in line with a decade-long trend in which crime has declined steadily each year since 2010.

The court case numbers are a more objective measure because each docket represents an instance in which a person has been actually accused of a crime and charged in court. Cases are scrutinized by prosecutors, defense lawyers and judges, and inflated or entirely bogus charges may not pass muster. Similarly, homicide figures would be harder to inflate because an actual death is required – and NYPD data shows them continuing to decline to historic lows.

Earlier this week, the NYPD also [acknowledged](#) that “in the first month of the year, there was an increase in ‘DP’s’ or decisions to decline to prosecute” by District Attorneys’ offices. Decisions to decline prosecution would only happen in cases fraught with problems - insufficient evidence, constitutional violations, failure to state a crime - that make it impossible for a district attorney to sustain the charges. The police have offered no other explanation for why New York City's prosecutors have simply refused to prosecute these cases.

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