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

## ***Statement On NYC DOHMH Report Concerning Underreported NYPD-Involved Deaths***

**(New York, NY) – Tina Luongo, Attorney-in-Charge of the Criminal Defense Practice at The Legal Aid Society,** issued the follow statement in response to a New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene report released last night on underreported NYPD-involved deaths:

“That this report purposely remained behind closed doors for years, away from public scrutiny, epitomizes the NYPD’s and this Administration’s antipathy to transparency. It also underscores Mayor Bill de Blasio’s unwillingness to hold the NYPD accountable for anything, perpetuating a culture that leaves entirely unchecked and, indeed, feeds police violence in Black and Brown communities across New York City.

Mayor Bill de Blasio and Commissioner Shea time and again have shown New Yorkers their shared lack of interest in tackling the major systemic problems facing the NYPD. In the absence of real leadership, the only solution left to mitigate this misconduct and literally save lives is to defund the NYPD budget by at least \$1 billion and directly allocate that savings to communities that have historically shouldered the brunt of over-policing.

Lastly, the families, friends and communities of loved ones lost are owed immediate answers, and we demand a full investigation as to why this report was hidden for years.”

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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>*