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

Daniel Ball, Brooklyn Defender Services (Dball@bds.org)

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

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

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

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

On First Day of Session, NYC Public Defenders Call on Legislature to Pass Critical Criminal Legal System Reforms

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society, Brooklyn Defender Services, The Bronx Defenders, New York County Defender Services and the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem on the first day of session, called on the Legislature to prioritize and pass critical legal system reforms including overhauling New York’s costly and racially discriminatory parole system; ending marijuana prohibition; protecting young people from criminalization; outlawing invasive and dangerous surveillance; and other key measures as part of the [NYC Defenders 2021 Statewide Legislative Agenda](#).

“As New York City’s primary public defender organizations, we serve hundreds of thousands of low-income people, overwhelmingly Black and Latinx New Yorkers, who have been devastated by COVID-19, targeted and brutalized by racist policing, subjected to the abject cruelty of the federal immigration system, and incarcerated under lethal conditions in city jails and in state prisons,” said **the New York City Public Defenders**. “With urgency, we call on the Legislature to prioritize the measures detailed in our 2021 Statewide Legislature Agenda and to send them to Governor Cuomo’s desk at once.”

The NYC Defenders urge the Legislature to take action on the following critical bills:

Overhaul New York’s Costly, Racially Discriminatory Parole System

- Fair and Timely Parole – S.497A (Rivera) / A.4346A (Weprin)
- Elder Parole - S.2144 (Hoylman) / A.9040 (De La Rosa)
- Less is More: Community Supervision Revocation Reform Act - S.1343C (Benjamin)

End Marijuana Prohibition and Promote Racial and Economic Justice

- The Marihuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA) – S.1527C (Krueger) / A.1617C (Peoples-Stokes)

HALT Solitary Confinement

- The H.A.L.T. Solitary Confinement Act – S.1623 (Sepúlveda) / A.2500 (Aubry)

Expand Alternatives to Incarceration

- Treatment Not Jails – S.8687 (Ramos)

Hold Law Enforcement Accountable

- Independent Oversight of Police Discipline – S.7527 (Myrie) / A.10560 (Richardson)
- Banning Qualified Immunity – S.8668 (Jackson) / A.10978 (Hunter)
- The New York for All Act S.7562 (Salazar) /A.9586 (Reyes)

Shrink the Penal Law to Reduce Discriminatory Enforcement

- Repeal Loitering for the Purposes of Prostitution - S.2253 (Hoylman) / A.654 (Paulin)
- Stop Violence in the Sex Trades – S.6419 (Salazar) / A.8230 (Gottfried)

Improve Conditions of Confinement

- Require Jail and Prisons to Provide Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) – S.2161B (Bailey) / A.833 (Rosenthal)
- The Gender Identity Respect and Dignity Act – S4702A (Sepulveda) / A5257A (Rozic)
- Freedom from Forced Labor S6781 (Myrie) / A8661 (Epstein)

Ban Invasive and Dangerous Surveillance

- End Rogue DNA Databanks – S.6009 (Hoylman) / A.7818
- Prohibit Use of Biometric Surveillance – S.7572 (Hoylman) / A.9767 (Glick)
- Protect Our Privacy (POP) Act - S.6435B (Ramos) / A.09931 (Kim)
- Prohibit Geofence Searches – A.10246A (Quart) / S.8183 (Myrie)

Secure Due Process Protections

- Protect Fundamental Rights to Appellate Review
- Address Wrongful Convictions through Post-Conviction Reform – S.7255 (Myrie) / A.9147 (Quart)
- Ensure Judicial Review of Orders of Protection – A.7633 (Quart)
- Ensure the Right to a Jury Trial for All - S.33 (Hoylman) / A.3462
- Preclude Introduction of Confessions Obtained by Deceptive Tactics (The “Exonerated 5 Bill”) - S.6806 (Myrie)

Re-Enfranchise Communities and Support Civic Engagement

- Restore Voting Rights to People in Prison and on Parole - S.6905 (Salazar)
- Enact Clean Slate Legislation to Create Broad Automatic Expungement
- End Predatory Court Fees - A.11083 (Niou)
- Expand Post-Conviction Relief for Survivors of Trafficking - S.4981 (Ramos) / A.6983 (Gottfried)
- End the Lifetime Felony Ban on Jury Duty Service - S.221A (Benjamin) / A.4760A (Aubry)

Increase Transparency in Pre-Arrest Detention

- Transparency in Police Custody – S.8707 (Gianaris)

Protect Young People

- Expand Youthful Offender Status, Create Young Adult Status – A.8381A (O’Donnell)
- A Second Look at Youthful Offender Protections - S.6572 (Myrie) / A.8160
- Increase Protections for Juveniles Interrogated by Police - S.4980B (Bailey) / A.6982B (Joyner)

- Raise the Lower Age – S.8685 / A.10727
- Courtroom Shackling of Children – A.7528 / S.6534
- Family Court Delinquency Discovery Reform – A.8085 (Joyner)
- Exclusionary School Discipline – A.1981 / S.0767B

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