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

***In Response to State of the State, Legal Aid Calls on Gov. Cuomo to Advance Key Housing Priorities for Struggling New York Tenants***

(ALBANY, NY) – **The Legal Aid Society** issued the following statement in response to Governor Cuomo’s State of the State address:

“The Governor’s proposal to convert vacant commercial space into supportive and affordable housing sounds promising on paper, but the devil is in the details, and we need specifics on how this plan would look in reality.

In the meantime, with the expiration of the eviction moratorium only months away, we call on the Governor to allocate significant funding in his budget to assist hundreds of thousands of tenants who, as a result of the pandemic, have been unable to pay rent and face homelessness.

Lastly, New York must continue to bolster protections for tenants and combat homelessness by enacting urgent reforms including ‘good cause’ eviction legislation to codify renters’ rights to tenants in smaller, market-rate buildings; the housing access voucher program, which would create a statewide Section 8 program and a path to permanent housing; Home Stability Support

(HSS), a statewide rent supplement for low-income families and individuals who are facing eviction, homelessness, or loss of housing due to domestic violence or hazardous conditions; and increase funding for NYCHA and other struggling public housing authorities around the state.

The Legal Aid Society commits to working with the Governor and Legislature leaders to bring these priorities to fruition this session and protect the most vulnerable of tenants across the state.”

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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.*

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