

# THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Justice in Every Borough.

December 5, 2021

Contact:

Redmond Haskins  
The Legal Aid Society  
[rhaskins@legal-aid.org](mailto:rhaskins@legal-aid.org)  
(929) 441-2384

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

## ***Legal Aid, Electeds Call on Hochul to Grant Clemency for Reginald Randolph, LAS Client Who is Currently Serving a Prison Sentence for Stealing NyQuil from Duane Reade***

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society and New York State Senators Jessica Ramos, Julia Salazar and Gustavo Rivera [called](#) on Governor Kathy Hochul to [grant](#) a [clemency application](#) currently pending for [Reginald Randolph](#), a Legal Aid Society client who is currently serving a state prison sentence of 2-4 years for [stealing NyQuil from Duane Reade](#). The Manhattan District Attorney's Office which prosecuted Mr. Randolph does not oppose the petition given the housing and services that are in place.

Mr. Randolph is 58, disabled, and was incarcerated at Rikers Island for over 850 days before being transferred to state prison on the aforementioned charge, which did not involve an act of violence, brandishing a weapon, or making threats.

Mr. Randolph's health is extremely poor. He is fully blind in one eye and nearly blind in the other due to cataract and glaucoma conditions.

He needs vision-saving surgery, and he attended pre-operation ophthalmology appointments at a local NYC hospital while detained at Rikers Island.

Mr. Randolph is also extremely medically vulnerable, with diagnoses of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, asthma, and a history of tuberculosis—all of which, according to medical experts, make him highly susceptible to serious illness or death.

He is also at the highest risk of COVID-19 related complications should he be so unfortunate to contract the virus. He has used a walking device since March 2021 following a fall in the shower due to his failing vision, however that device was reportedly taken from him after his transfer to state prison. Mr. Randolph struggles with serious mental illness which has exacerbated his daily trauma, anxiety and feelings of worthlessness while in jail.

Lastly, Mr. Randolph has already been approved by local supportive housing and community treatment programs which are ready to take him the moment he is released.

“In commuting Reggie’s sentence and allowing him to avoid the possibility of serious illness, medical decline and possibly death in our state prison system, Governor Kathy Hochul will be acknowledging that Reginald Randolph’s life matters,” said **Jeffrey Berman, Staff Attorney at The Legal Aid Society and Counsel for Mr. Randolph**. “Reggie has already been approved for transitional and long term mental health supportive housing and robust community treatment programming. Further incarcerating Reggie puts him at risk of eventual homelessness and does nothing to further public safety. Reggie has inhumanely been subjected to punitive incarceration for a total of well over two years. We call on Governor Hochul to grant Reggie clemency so that he can be released to a community that is ready to care for and support him now.”

**Senator Julia Salazar, Chair of the NYS Senate Crime Victims, Crime & Correction Committee**, said, "Mr. Randolph must be granted clemency so he can be released. His story is compelling and calls for action. It is simply wrong to let him spend any more time incarcerated. The Governor has the authority to correct this inhuman situation and we ask that she exercise her power to let Mr. Randolph out."

"Not only is it immoral to keep an individual imprisoned for years for a non-violent offense tied to struggles with addiction, it is counterproductive to their rehabilitation. As our laws continue to change in an effort to make our system more just when dealing with non-violent drug related crimes, we have a responsibility to show clemency to those that have been incarcerated under outdated and draconian policies. Mr. Randolph needs treatment and assistance as he deals with his addiction and medical conditions, which is why I am urging the Governor to strongly consider his request for clemency," said **New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera**.

“Mr. Randolph has been incarcerated since 2018 for stealing medicine. The Governor can commute his sentence and return a 58-year-old man to the care of his community or she can continue to deny a man with a disability a chance to access healthcare. I hope Governor Hochul makes the right decision and grants him clemency soon,” said **New York State Senator Jessica Ramos**.

###

*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 145 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. [www.legalaidnyc.org](http://www.legalaidnyc.org)*