



January 21, 2022

Contact:

Alejandra Lopez

The Legal Aid Society

917-294-9348

ailopez@legal-aid.org

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

Legal Aid Calls on Governor Hochul to Allocate Additional Funding to the Homeowner Protection Program in the FY23 Executive Budget

(New York, NY) – **The Legal Aid Society** today issued the following statement in response to Governor Kathy Hochul’s proposed \$20 million funding of the Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP), which funds 89 nonprofit legal services and housing counseling agencies across the state. HOPP is the only source of dedicated funding for foreclosure prevention, and one of the only statewide programs supporting low-income and working-class homeowners.

“We applaud the Governor’s funding of HOPP, which has served as a lifeline to countless homeowners facing foreclosure across New York State. While this is a critical step in the right direction, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to record high delinquency rates, and struggling homeowners are more in need of foreclosure prevention services than ever.

The pandemic has disproportionately impacted New York’s homeowners of color: Between July and October 2021, nearly 20% of homeowners of color reported being delinquent on their mortgages compared to only 6.6% of white homeowners, according to US Census Household Pulse Survey [data](#). Citywide, a whopping 75% of clients served by HOPP’s network providers are homeowners of color, and 43% statewide.

Allocating more funding to HOPP is a common-sense solution to the growing housing crisis. The math is simple: HOPP saves the state over \$1.2 billion a year in property value preservation, tax savings and additional cost savings to localities. Every \$1 million invested in HOPP yields a return of over \$5 million in tax and property cost savings to localities alone.

Communities are stronger when individuals and families remain housed. We echo the budget demands of the HOPP Statewide campaign, and urge Governor Hochul to increase the proposed funding for this critical program.”

###

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