

February 9, 2022

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

NYC Defenders Call on State Lawmakers to Reject Mayor Adams' Demand to Add a Discriminatory "Dangerousness" Provision to New York's Bail Statute

(ALBANY, NY) - **The Legal Aid Society, Brooklyn Defender Services, The Bronx Defenders, New York County Defender Services, Queens Defenders and the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem** issued the following statement in response to Mayor Eric Adams' testimony before the New York State Legislature today urging Albany lawmakers to add a "dangerousness" provision to New York's bail statute:

"Albany must continue to reject Mayor Adam's misguided demand for lawmakers to enact a 'dangerousness' provision to New York's bail statute. At best, 'dangerousness' is guesswork, fraught with implicit and explicit biases, and it only serves to ensnare Black and Latinx communities in the criminal legal system. Short of a crystal ball, no judge can predict behavior, and states that have added a 'dangerousness' provision in their bail statute often end up with more, not fewer, Black people in jail.

New York's bail law has never allowed for pretrial jailing based on predictions of future 'dangerousness,' and, thus, any argument that 'dangerousness' is needed to make our communities safe is patently false.

Current law allows for significant judicial discretion, and judges have recently used this discretion, in response to falsehoods from law enforcement and politicians, to dramatically increase the number of cases they set bail on from the broad range of still bail-eligible cases. This has only resulted in a sharp increase in the number of people being sent to and held on Rikers Island, a facility already engulfed by a full-fledged humanitarian crisis.

Albany was right to reform New York's punitive and draconian bail statute in 2019. Since its implementation, nearly 200,000 New Yorkers have had the chance to fight their cases in their community, maintain their job and education, and have been spared the trauma of pretrial detention. Lawmakers must refuse any changes to existing law that would further imprison New Yorkers who are presumed innocent and have not been convicted of a crime."

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