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

## ***Legal Aid Condemns Governor Hochul's Proposed Regressive Changes to Raise The Age***

**(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society** issued the following statement condemning Governor Hochul's proposed regressive and knee-jerk changes to New York's historic Raise The Age statute:

"Governor Hochul's plan to rollback New York's historic Raise The Age statute will only lead to the caging of more young Black and Latinx New Yorkers while failing to address root causes, which in many cases are directly tied to poverty and a lack of robust services.

The Governor asserts that her decisions are 'data driven' but the data here is clear: Raise The Age has not contributed to a spike in gun violence. It was not until the devastation brought upon by COVID-19, almost two years after the implementation of Raise The Age, that gun offenses began to rise. Teenagers were not the primary drivers of this change.

It's both disappointing and cynical that Governor Hochul, employing the tactics of her predecessor, would unveil this proposal with the budget due in just two weeks, exploiting her advantageous position in the budget making process to strongarm legislators to buy into these regressive rollbacks.

Albany must stand with children and families, and we call on the Legislature to push back on any proposal that would undue this transformative reform, one which we all know serves some of our most vulnerable neighbors."

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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 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)*