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

## ***Legal Aid Condemns NYS Senate's Proposed Changes to Bail and Discovery Reforms***

**(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society** released the following statement in response to the New York State Senate's proposed changes to bail and discovery reforms:

“For months, the New York State Senate pledged to defend the long overdue and historic reforms to New York’s bail and discovery statutes. Now, contrary to all evidence, Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and her conference have proposed changes that would completely gut pretrial reforms and lead to the caging of poor Black and Latinx New Yorkers accused, but not convicted of, low-level misdemeanors. In fact, people charged with these low level offenses would spend more time incarcerated pretrial than they would receive as a sentence.

This dangerous and bad policy will fail to make communities safer and will condemn our clients to languish in death traps like Rikers Island which, by all accounts, is wholly incapable of caring for the people in its charge.

For those remaining members of the Senate who care for their most vulnerable constituents: reject this proposal, because of its wrongheaded substance and cynical process.

Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, Deputy Majority Leader Gianaris have stated on-the-record that these reforms work and that the evidence does not support any rollbacks. We trust leadership to do right by our clients. If this proposal proceeds, politics won over the interest of the people and the people will suffer.”

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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)*