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

Statement on the Two-Year Anniversary of George Floyd's Murder

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society released the following statement on the two-year anniversary of George Floyd's murder:

“Today, we remember and honor the life and legacy of George Floyd, who was brutally murdered two years ago to the day by a Minneapolis police officer. Mr. Floyd's death sparked a needed global reckoning on racial injustice and inequality, and led to critical reforms to policing across the country, including the repeal of police secrecy law 50-A in New York State.

But Black men, like Eric Garner, Delrawn Smalls, Akai Gurley, Michael Brown and countless others, continue to be subjected to the most abhorrent forms of police violence everyday. Black men are almost 2.5 times more likely than white men to be killed by police in their lifetime, resulting in a pervasive fear and mistrust of police among Black men.

This violence is perpetuated by our inherently racist criminal legal system, the criminalization of poverty, mental illness and homelessness, and a culture of white supremacy that permeates all levels of public institutions and society. New York City has experienced the resurgence of antiquated, biased and ineffective policing practices, and the rollback of critical pretrial reforms, all while feeding a mass incarceration machine that has failed to make our communities safer, or protect the best interests of our clients.

While brutal police practices have had a unique impact on Black men, these systems and practices have also victimized Black women, Latinx people, and transgender, gender non-conforming, and nonbinary communities. As a consequence, these communities face the

highest levels of policing and the highest rates of incarceration in the world, without feeling any safer in their neighborhoods.

In remembrance of Mr. Floyd and all the families who have been harmed by police violence and our nation's painful legacy of racism, we at The Legal Aid Society recommit ourselves to fighting injustice in all its forms, from policing and other inequities in the criminal legal system, to housing, immigration, employment, juvenile justice and every aspect of life central to our clients' experiences."

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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 over 140 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