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

NYC Defenders Joint Statement on Senate, Assembly Fiscal Year 2024 One-House Budget Proposals

(ALBANY, NY) - The Legal Aid Society, New York County Defender Services, Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, Queens Defenders, Brooklyn Defender Services and The Bronx Defenders issued the following statement in response to the New York State Senate and New York State Assembly Fiscal Year 2024 one-house budget proposals:

“We laud Senate and Assembly lawmakers for including essential funding in their respective one-house budgets for our organizations to assist with discovery obligations as well as to address staffing and other operational needs that plague public defender offices statewide.

“We’re also heartened that both houses included legislation - the Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) and District Attorney and Indigent Legal Service Attorney Loan Forgiveness Program (DALF) - to assist our staff in managing exorbitant student loan debt that can be unmanageable for attorneys who choose to dedicate their careers to public service.

“New York City’s public defenders thank Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and Legislators of both chambers for putting forth a budget response that will serve justice and fairness throughout New York State.”

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