

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Justice in Every Borough.

May 15, 2023

Contact:

Redmond Haskins
Director of Media Relations
The Legal Aid Society
rhaskins@legal-aid.org
929.441.2384

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

Legal Aid Lauds Staten Island Grand Jury for Declining to Indict 14-Year-Old Client in Textbook Case of Self-Defense

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society announced today that a Staten Island grand jury [declined to indict](#) a 14-year-old client (John Doe) in a textbook case of self-defense.

Last month, Mr. Doe and his friends were on the Staten Island train to a local mall when a 51-year-old man began verbally threatening the group. After Mr. Doe and his friends exited the train, the adult approached the group and proceeded to physically assault Mr. Doe's friend, a 13-year-old girl.

Mr. Doe rushed to the aid of his friend, who, in an act of self-defense, employed a knife to free herself of the attacker. Mr. Doe also used physical force to fend off the adult to rescue his friend.

Mr. Doe was arrested and charged with attempted murder in the second degree, but after evidence was presented before a Staten Island grand jury, the body declined to indict because Mr. Doe was acting in his own defense and the defense of his 13-year-old friend.

“This is a textbook case of self-defense, and we laud the Staten Island grand jury for acknowledging that reality by declining to indict our young client despite desperate attempts from local elected officials who sought to politicize this incident to advance their false narratives on bail reform and Raise the Age,” said **Marisa Filupeit, Esq., staff attorney with the Juvenile Rights Practice at The Legal Aid Society**. “It’s alarming that our elected officials would rush to demonize our young client before learning the facts of the case. This outcome will allow Mr. Doe to move past this traumatizing experience at home, supported by his family and community.”

###

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