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**ICYMI: D.A. BRAGG, LEGAL AID SOCIETY CALL ON STATE LEGISLATURE TO INCREASE
STUDENT LOAN AID FOR PUBLIC INTEREST ATTORNEYS**

“The efficient and fair administration of justice is essential for fairness, safety and trust in the criminal justice system.”

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin L. Bragg, Jr. and Chief Attorney of the Criminal Defense Practice at The Legal Aid Society Tina Luongo [wrote an op-ed in the Albany Times Union](#) calling on the New York State Legislature to bolster the District Attorney and Indigent Legal Services Attorney Loan Forgiveness (DALF) Program.

Bragg and Luongo write that they are joining together “to fight for a solution to a critical issue that impacts all of us: crippling student loan debt. For attorneys, education debt is driving record-high rates of attrition systemwide, creating new backlogs and delays in our legal system, and ultimately leaving New Yorkers in need of services in a lurch.”

To address this problem, Bragg and Luongo urge the state legislature to expand the eligibility period and increase the amount of assistance attorneys can receive from DALF.

Under the current version of DALF, “lawyers serving the public interest can receive no more than \$20,400 over six years to pay down their student loans, putting them well behind the award amounts allotted for registered nurses on teaching faculties and social workers.”

New legislation passed by the State Senate in consecutive sessions would significantly increase the eligibility period for DALF and the amount of aid that public interest attorneys can receive. It has widespread support across the state from attorneys, district attorney's offices, public defender offices, unions and more.

Bragg and Luongo note that "Everyone in New York suffers from this systemwide attrition -- low-income New Yorkers in need of legal services, victims, and the public at large. The efficient and fair administration of justice is essential for fairness, safety and trust in the criminal justice system."

Read the full op-ed [here](#).

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