

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Justice in Every Borough.

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

Statement on NYS Senate Passing Statewide Legislation that would Unfairly Prejudice New Yorkers Accused of Certain Crimes

(NEW YORK, NY) - Amanda Jack, Policy Director for the Criminal Defense Practice at The Legal Aid Society, issued the following statement in response to the New York State Senate passing [legislation](#) that would unfairly prejudice New Yorkers accused of certain crimes:

“This legislation would undo centuries-old doctrine protecting the presumption of innocence – in violation of the due process clause – and place New York in the conservative minority of states that have adopted this rule which was promulgated as part of the draconian provisions of the infamous 1994 Crime Bill.

“If passed by the full Legislature and enacted into law, New Yorkers would lose a key protection to defend against wrongful convictions and unjust incarceration, with communities of color inevitably shouldering the consequences.

“This rush to legislate in the wake of a notorious case must be stopped and legislators must create space for more meaningful discourse and ample debate with input from all stakeholders.

“We urge Assembly Speaker and Assembly lawmakers, in the strongest possible terms, to reject A4992/S9276, and in so doing, see this proposal for what it is: a reflexive and dangerous response that will create a wave of wrongful convictions and herald the end of any semblance of fair criminal trials in the State of New York.”

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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 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. <https://www.legalaidnyc.org>