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

***Ahead of Hearing, Legal Aid Calls on the New York City Council to Pass Bills to Strengthen Protections for Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, Nonbinary, and Intersex Individuals Housed in City Jails***

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society, ahead of the New York City Council’s Committee on Criminal Justice [hearing](#), issued the following statement calling on the City Council to pass three bills that would strengthen and enhance the rights of transgender, gender nonconforming, nonbinary, and intersex (TGNCNBI) people in the custody of the New York City Department of Correction (DOC):

“TGNCNBI people in DOC custody face a litany of additional challenges and biases that the Department has, for years, failed to take adequate measures to correct. This has had devastating impacts on the safety and well-being of all incarcerated TGNCNBI people, because they are routinely placed in unsafe living conditions where they are exposed to serious harm and distress.

“The bills being heard today will strengthen and enhance protections for these individuals by ensuring that every incarcerated New Yorker is able to be housed in the facility that best aligns with their gender identity and sense of safety. The legislation will also improve access to medically necessary gender-affirming items and medical devices — including wigs, chest binders, tucking undergarments, prosthetics, and other similar items — which are critical for TGNCNBI individuals to affirm their identities and mitigate feelings of dysphoria, anxiety, and depression.

“Also on today’s committee agenda, council members will discuss legislation to extend the duration of a [task force](#) created in 2019 to address policies related to the treatment and housing of TGNCNBI people in DOC custody, as well as provide the task force with additional resources and authority to enact positive change throughout City jails.

“These bills serve as an important step toward bringing much needed transparency and humanity into our City jails and are consistent with the City’s history of protecting LGBTQ+ rights. We commend the City Council

members who have introduced these bills on behalf of incarcerated TGNCNBI individuals and urge the City Council to pass this package of legislation immediately.”

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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 nearly 150 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](http://www.legalaidnyc.org)*