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

***Statement on DOI Report Examining Impact of Raise the Age
and Bail Reform on City's Juvenile Detention Facilities***

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society issued the following statement in response to a [report](#) by the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI) examining the impact of Raise the Age and bail reform on the New York City Administration for Children's Services' (ACS) two juvenile detention centers: Horizon Juvenile Center in the Bronx and Crossroads Juvenile Center in Brooklyn:

“New York State was one of the last states to implement reforms to ensure that most children are not treated as adults in the criminal legal system. These reforms allow for the provision of services and programming targeted to adolescents, taking into consideration their unique needs and capabilities.

“Bail reform was developed to ensure that people are not detained simply due to financial hardship - a long and cruel practice that ballooned the local jail population - and is certainly not responsible for an increase in youth held in detention.

“The lack of funding and failure to ensure that existing funds are adequately dispersed to localities has hindered these key reforms and prevented them from living up to their true intended potential.

“As the report details, inadequate staffing is at the heart of the problems in these facilities and must be addressed. Staff who are forced to work up to 16-hour shifts cannot be expected to effectively manage those in custody.

“Moreover, the overcrowding in these juvenile detention centers is a direct result of a widespread judicial disregard for the bail reform laws, rather than a failure of bail reform itself. Many young New Yorkers are in these facilities simply because they have been charged with serious offenses and not because they are a flight risk, which remains the only lawful basis for pretrial detention in New York, regardless of age. Rather than expose them to the conditions outlined in the report, these young people would be better served in their communities where they can receive adequate services and support.

“As always, we will remain an active partner with the City, the court system, and stakeholders on the implementation of these desperately needed and progressive reforms.”

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