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

## ***Legal Aid Condemns New Law to Detain Immigrants Accused of Minor Offenses, Such as Shoplifting***

(NEW YORK, NY) - **The Legal Aid Society** issued the following statement in response to President Trump signing S.5, also known as the “Laken Riley Act,” into law, which will mandate federal immigration detention for certain non-citizens, including some who have temporary statuses such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or Temporary Protected Status (TPS), who are accused of minor offenses, and who have no criminal convictions:

“This new law marks a cruel and dystopian turn in this country, where a teenager jumping the subway turnstile, or a parent arrested for stealing diapers, formula, or other necessities for their child, could face mandatory immigration detention with no opportunity for release, even if they are never convicted of a crime. This measure will cost billions of dollars without promoting public safety.

“While this law purports to protect women and girls who suffered tragic violence like Ms. Riley, it is little more than a political vehicle to effectuate mass deportations and will result in harming many thousands of non-citizens who may themselves be survivors of gender-based violence.

“Moreover, immigration detention facilities are often hundreds or thousands of miles away from family and their communities, in jail-like conditions without the right to appointed counsel. Those detained can be incarcerated for months or years while litigating bona fide immigration claims. Their detention will destabilize the families and communities they leave behind. In many

cases, non-citizens will not be afforded due process to resolve criminal charges in state court proceedings. This injustice should be an affront to citizens and non-citizens alike.

“Despite this law’s passage, Legal Aid will continue to represent all New Yorkers. And, as a member of the [New York Immigrant Family Unity Project](#), Legal Aid will continue to lead the nation’s first universal representation program by providing immigration legal assistance to non-citizen New Yorkers in immigration detention.”

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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>*