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Legal Aid: Governor Hochul Delays Budget Again to Ram Through Misguided, Wrongheaded Policies That Will Harm New Yorkers

(ALBANY, NY) - **The Legal Aid Society** issued the following statement on Governor Hochul delaying the budget to push through misguided and wrongheaded policies, including the repeal of discovery, which will harm New Yorkers:

“Rolling back discovery reforms should not, and must not, be the reason New York State’s budget does not get passed promptly. Governor Hochul’s insistence on exploiting the budget process to push through policies, including repealing New York’s modernized and widely successful discovery statute, is misguided and delays the critical fiscal policies New Yorkers need — especially now, as Albany faces the loss of federal support.

“Both the Senate and the Assembly, rightfully, are holding the line against rolling back the reforms. In their respective one-house budgets, they rejected the Governor's discovery repeal not only on substance but also because their constituents have been deprived of the careful consideration that must take place when changes are made to a complex statute that could have wholesale consequences.

“To state the obvious, changes to New York’s discovery statute, which would impact millions of criminal cases each year throughout the state, demand a thoughtful and careful debate in the Legislature—the branch of our government where this mandate belongs. That has not happened yet, and it is why the general public is cynical about the policymaking process, as it consistently leaves out the voices of those who would be most affected.

“The Legal Aid Society once again reaffirms our call on lawmakers to demand that these policies be removed from the budget entirely and discussed in the normal order of business when the Legislature reconvenes later this month.”

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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>