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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Legal Aid Society Applauds Passage of Anti-Harassment in Reporting Act by State Legislature, Urges Governor Hochul to Sign Into Law

(ALBANY, NY) – The Legal Aid Society issued the following statement today in response to the New York State Legislature’s passage of the [Anti-Harassment in Reporting Act](#), a critical measure that ends the practice of anonymous reporting to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment:

“The passage of the Anti-Harassment in Reporting Act marks a pivotal move toward reforming a deeply flawed reporting system that for too long has enabled harassment, traumatized families, and disproportionately harmed communities of color.

“Each year, thousands of children in New York City are subjected to problematic and meritless child protective investigations stemming from anonymous reports. In 2023 alone, [over 4,000 children](#) were investigated after anonymous calls, with only 6.7 percent of those reports deemed substantiated.

“These investigations force families to endure invasive home visits, surprise school interviews, and, in some cases, the strip-searching of children — experiences that can inflict lasting trauma, especially when based on unverified allegations.

“If enacted, this bill would bring much needed accountability to the reporting process without compromising the confidentiality or safety of those with genuine concerns. Requiring reporters to provide identifying information — while keeping that information protected — will deter misuse, better allocate child protection resources, and uphold the dignity of families.

“The Legal Aid Society thanks Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi and Senator Jabari Brisport for sponsoring this vital legislation. We now urge Governor Kathy Hochul to sign it into law without delay.”

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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