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

Statement on ICE Detaining People at Beleaguered Federal Detention Center in Brooklyn

Metropolitan Detention Center Has a Documented History of Violence, Medical Neglect, and Human and Civil Rights Violations

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society issued the following statement regarding U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) now using the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) — a facility with a documented history of violence, medical neglect, and human and civil rights violations — to detain immigrant detainees:

“The Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn is a facility notorious for its dangerous conditions. No one, let alone people with no criminal convictions who are merely seeking safety and due process, should be subjected to confinement in a facility described by federal judges as ‘barbaric’ and ‘inhuman’, where MDC officers are ‘contemptuous of human life and dignity.’

“Over the years, MDC has become synonymous with egregious neglect and abuse with the people incarcerated there having to suffer heating blackouts during winter, been served maggot-infested food, denied adequate medical care — including botched cancer diagnoses — and suffered fatal violence due to chronic understaffing.

“Expanding ICE detention to MDC is reckless and cruel. We are deeply concerned that conditions will further deteriorate due to staffing shortages, restricted access to counsel, and the overcrowding of a facility already unequipped to meet even the most basic standards of care.

“We will continue to fight tirelessly to protect the rights, safety, and dignity of the people we serve who are detained at MDC Brooklyn. We call on the federal government to immediately cease the transfer of ICE detainees into this facility and to end the use of immigration detention — where the majority of those held have no criminal conviction, let alone criminal history — as a tool of punishment.”

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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 almost 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>