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

***Statement on Mayor Adams' Involuntary Commitment Proposal for New Yorkers
Struggling with Substance Abuse***

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society released the following statement in response to Mayor Adams' proposal for the involuntary commitment of New Yorkers struggling with substance use:

"Forcing New Yorkers struggling with addiction into involuntary detention is traumatic, raises serious civil rights concerns, and does nothing to address the root causes of substance use. Moreover, the Mayor's attempt to frame this as a 'quality of life' measure is revealing — treating people in crisis as a nuisance to be swept out of public view rather than as human beings deserving care and dignity.

"If the Mayor were serious about saving lives, he would invest in proven harm reduction strategies, voluntary treatment, permanent housing, and community-based supports — not policies that amount to state-sanctioned incarceration in medical settings. For those New Yorkers involved in the criminal legal system, proposals like the Treatment Court Expansion Act — which would connect the clients we serve to critical resources — are the types of reforms he should champion.

"Expanding involuntary commitment laws will not solve the drug war or end the overdose crisis; it will only deepen mistrust, waste resources, and cause lasting harm to the very people the City claims to want to help."

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The Legal Aid Society is a nonprofit organization that 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.

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