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Contact:

Press@legal-aid.org

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

***Legal Aid Society Responds to Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice Report
Confirming Raise the Age Is Not Driving Crime***

***Attorneys Call on Albany to Release the Nearly \$1 Billion Allocated to Raise the
Age, Passage of the Youth Justice Innovation Fund***

(NEW YORK, NY) — The Legal Aid Society issued the following statement in response to a new [report](#) from the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ), which analyzes New York City arrest and recidivism trends from 2018–2025 and finds that youth have not driven recent increases in felony or violent crime:

“The data released today make one thing clear: youth ages 16 and 17 affected by New York’s Raise the Age law are not driving crime trends. Since 2018, the share of felony and violent felony arrests attributable to young people has remained stable, even as overall arrest numbers have fluctuated. Youth are also reoffending at rates at or below pre-Raise the Age levels. These findings reinforce what we see every day in our work: when young people receive services and programming they are supported and engaged.

“At the same time, New York has yet to fully deliver on the promise of Raise the Age. Nearly \$1 billion in state funding owed to localities for implementing Raise the Age remains tied up. Those dollars were intended to strengthen youth services, expand diversion, and build the community infrastructure that keeps young people safe and connected. Albany must release these funds so jurisdictions can finally make the investments the law envisioned.

“Because New York City is not statutorily eligible for the nearly \$1 billion in funding, lawmakers should advance the Youth Justice Innovation Fund, which would expand evidence-based violence-prevention and intervention programs delivered through trusted community-based organizations. These supports have been proven to reduce harm, strengthen stability, and enhance safety for young people and their communities.

“Raise the Age is doing what it was designed to do — protecting young New Yorkers and reducing their likelihood of reoffending. The path forward is not rolling back this landmark reform, but fully funding and strengthening the community resources that help youth thrive.”

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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 the people we serve and helps improve our communities.
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