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Contact:

Press@legal-aid.org

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

Statement on Governor Hochul Signing the Anti-Harassment in Reporting Act into Law

New Law Ends Anonymous Reporting that Fuels Unwarranted Child Protective Investigations

(ALBANY, NY) – The Legal Aid Society issued the following statement today as Governor Kathy Hochul signed the [Anti-Harassment in Reporting Act](#) into law, critical legislation that ends the practice of anonymous reporting to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment:

“With Governor Hochul’s signature on the Anti-Harassment in Reporting Act, New York has taken a significant step toward reforming a reporting system that has long 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, more than 4,000 children were investigated following anonymous calls — with only 6.7 percent of those reports deemed substantiated.

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

“This new law brings much-needed accountability to the reporting process without compromising the confidentiality or safety of those with legitimate concerns. Requiring reporters to provide identifying information — while ensuring that information remains protected — will help deter misuse, better allocate child protection resources, and uphold the dignity of families.

“The Legal Aid Society thanks Senator Jabari Brisport and Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi for championing this vital legislation, and Governor Kathy Hochul for signing it into law.”

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The Legal Aid Society is a nonprofit law firm 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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