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Contact:

Press@legal-aid.org

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

Legal Aid Responds to Governor Hochul's State of the State Address

(ALBANY, NY) — The Legal Aid Society released the following statement in response to Governor Kathy Hochul's State of the State address:

“At this critical moment, amid threats from Washington and other pressing challenges facing our state, Albany must step up this legislative session to protect the well-being of vulnerable New Yorkers.

“This work begins with ensuring that the nearly [\\$1 billion](#) in state funds allocated to support New York’s landmark Raise the Age law, funding that remains unspent, is made accessible to localities so this transformational law can fully deliver on its promise. Lawmakers must also codify the [Youth Justice Innovation Fund](#) to create additional pathways for unspent state dollars to reach counties and community-based organizations.

“On immigration, as the Trump Administration advances harmful policies targeting immigrant communities, New York must respond. [The New York for All Act](#) should be passed and signed into law to limit state and local involvement in federal immigration enforcement and protect immigrants’ rights. We strongly support additional related measures — including increased access to counsel to fight detention and deportation — and the Governor’s announcements today, which further strengthen protections for our immigrant neighbors.

“Lastly, the organizations tasked with carrying out this work need adequate resources. Albany should continue to support funding for public defense, immigration, housing, and other critical legal services provided by frontline organizations that protect the rights of New Yorkers and ensure access to justice statewide.

“This year, The Legal Aid Society celebrates its 150th anniversary serving New Yorkers, and we reflect on our founding mission to protect low-income people. In our first year, we focused on aiding German immigrants in New York City, and the lessons from that work still resonate today. Albany can count on the nation’s oldest and largest nonprofit law firm, with our deep institutional experience, as a partner this legislative session to help advance policies that serve the New Yorkers who rely on us during these challenging times.”

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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 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.

www.legalaidnyc.org