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

Statement from the Coalition to Protect Raise the Age: Build Futures, Invest in Youth on the Senate and Assembly One-House Budgets

Coalition Applauds Legislature for Calling for Passage of the Youth Justice Innovation Fund

(ALBANY, NY) — **The Coalition to Protect Raise the Age: Build Futures, Invest in Youth** released the following statement in response to the Senate and Assembly releasing their respective one-house budget proposals:

“We applaud the Senate for establishing and fully funding the \$50 million Youth Justice Innovation Fund in their one-house budget, and the Assembly for including \$20 million for youth justice services in their proposal. This funding would help ensure that unspent dollars meant for Raise the Age implementation are directed to community-based organizations providing the supports and services young people need to avoid system contact — or to successfully get out and stay out of the system.

“Investing in community-based programs is essential to building safer, healthier communities and ensuring that young people have the opportunities and support they need to thrive. These organizations play a critical role in prevention, mentorship, and access to services that help young people stay on positive paths.

“The Coalition will continue to work with both the Legislature and the Governor’s office to ensure that the complete Youth Justice Innovation Fund legislation, funded at \$50 million, is included in the final state budget when it is voted on early next month.”

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