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

Statement on ICE's Shooting of Legal Aid Client Oscar Belgal Last Night in Marble Hill

(NEW YORK, NY) — The Legal Aid Society issued the following statement in response to the shooting of Legal Aid client Oscar Belgal by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents last night in Marble Hill:

“The shooting of Oscar Belgal by ICE in New York City is an urgent call to rein in ICE’s use of force and hold federal immigration agents accountable. Mr. Belgal’s five-year-old child was in the vehicle when ICE fired on it, raising grave concerns about the reckless endangerment of children and families during immigration enforcement operations. Our communities should not have to live in fear of federal agents who act with impunity.

“A justice system cannot be fair if accountability depends on who commits the offense. Federal agents must not be afforded a different standard of justice simply because they wear a badge. We call on the District Attorney to pursue accountability with the same resolve demonstrated by prosecutors in Minneapolis in cases involving federal immigration agents. The law must apply equally to everyone, and no one should be above it.

“Since the start of the second Trump Administration, federal immigration agents have shot at least 21 people, underscoring the alarming toll of increasingly aggressive enforcement tactics. We call for a full and transparent investigation into the shooting of Mr. Belgal, accountability for those responsible, and an end to federal immigration enforcement tactics that put the safety and well-being of New Yorkers at risk. ICE’s escalating presence in New York City must end.”

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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.

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