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

***STATEMENT FROM NEW YORK COUNTY DEFENDER
SERVICES ON GOVERNOR'S BAIL PROPOSAL***

(NEW YORK, NY) – Sergio De La Pava, Legal Director at New York County Defender Services, issued the following statement about Governor Hochul's latest proposal to amend the landmark 2019 criminal justice reforms:

“Thanks to long-overdue bail reform, more than 180,000 people have been spared the trauma of incarceration, while maintaining public safety.

New York County Defender Services was deeply disappointed to hear that Governor Hochul has now caved to intellectually dishonest and racist fearmongering with her new plan to roll back both bail reform and the equally laudable Raise the Age legislation.

Judges already retain virtually unfettered discretion to set bail for people who are charged with violent felonies, persistently skip court dates, violate a protective order, or are rearrested on a second felony, among other legal bases. The Governor's proposal will only ensure that more people charged with crimes of poverty and legally presumed innocent will languish on the human rights disaster that is Rikers Island rather than receiving the treatment they need, and that society would benefit from.

Serious efforts to make New York safer and healthier would emphasize access to mental health treatment and health care, safe housing, and robust education and employment opportunities. Instead, the Governor proposes a return to the very mass incarceration tools that have proven so toxic for half a century.”

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New York County Defender Services is an elite public defense firm serving New York City's most vulnerable communities since 1997. Our skilled trial attorneys zealously defend people accused of crimes in Manhattan's Criminal and Supreme Courts, at no cost to the accused.