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Contact: Lupe Todd-Medina, ltoddmedina@nycds.org, (917) 202-0116

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

***STATEMENT FROM NEW YORK COUNTY DEFENDER SERVICES
ON EFFORTS TO UNDERMINE DISCOVERY REFORM***

(NEW YORK, NY) – Stan Germán, Executive Director at the New York County Defender Services, issued the following statement:

“We are outraged to hear that a clandestine and highly disingenuous whisper campaign by three NYC district attorneys has seemingly won the acquiescence of our state’s highest elected leaders. These same offices, with their longstanding and shameful practice of withholding discovery from those accused of crimes, were the impetus for the reforms in the first place. Under the previous “blindfold era” of discovery, prosecutors presided over atrocities like Kalief Browder’s tragic death and enough wrongful convictions to rank New York third in the nation in that dismal category.

“We are also outraged that such a complex, highly technical, and delicate issue is being decided by a covert and cursory process devoid of any input or insight from stakeholders. The irony is rich: under the former discovery regime, prosecutors amassed great power by withholding information, then routinely used that toxic advantage to leverage unfair plea deals. Perhaps it comes as no surprise, then, to learn that they have employed the same illegitimate modus operandi here. To be clear, New York’s defense bar and the communities we represent were somehow not consulted or considered during these secret negotiations.

“Our state budget is now 20 days late. Many important issues have yet to be negotiated, and [some](#) have even been jettisoned entirely. Instead, our elected leaders appear to have squandered these precious days plotting to secretly roll back the historic, long-overdue, and widely-hailed discovery reforms passed in 2019. This is a solution in search of a problem. Kowtowing in this manner to the baseless fear mongering of three NYC district attorneys would represent a dereliction of duty by our lawmakers.”

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