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## ***New York City Public Defenders File Amicus Brief in Support of the New York City Council and Public Advocate's Lawsuit to Invalidate Mayor's Suspension of Ban on Solitary Confinement***

(New York, NY) The Bronx Defenders, Brooklyn Defender Services, Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, New York County Defender Services, and Queens Defenders, represented by pro bono counsel Selendy Gay PLLC, filed [an amicus brief](#) in support of the New York City Council and Public Advocate's lawsuit to invalidate Mayor Eric Adams' emergency executive orders that suspended parts of Local Law 42 of 2024, which bans solitary confinement in city jails.

In December 2023, the New York City Council passed Local Law 42 ("LL42") to ban many abusive DOC practices—most importantly solitary confinement—that have created abusive and torturous conditions on Rikers Island. The Council passed LL42 by an overwhelming majority, overriding a veto from Mayor Adams. However, on the eve of LL42's effective date, Mayor Adams took unlawful, unilateral action to prevent its implementation.

The defenders submitted the brief in support of the Council's and Public Advocate's efforts to invalidate this unlawful, unprecedented, and undemocratic abuse of executive authority that no previous New York City mayor has ever attempted. In the brief, the defenders emphasize that the people they represent—and all other people incarcerated in the city's jails—continue to experience the serious trauma caused by the abusive DOC practices LL42 was meant to eradicate. The brief recounts the stories of clients who continue to suffer under the horrific and cruel conditions and practices of solitary confinement on Rikers Island.

### **The five defender offices state in the brief:**

"The City Council rightly concluded that the practices LL42 bans not only do not prevent violence, but in fact are inhumane, inflict needless suffering and further destabilize DOC's already chaotic and violent jails. Indeed, the City Council heard harrowing stories from people presently or formerly incarcerated in the city's jails that place a human face on the cost of these practices. Joining them were public defenders, doctors, scholars, corrections experts, and

human rights advocates who urged New York City to reject torture and abolish solitary confinement.”

“LL42 is needed now more than ever because, as firsthand accounts from *amicus*’s clients demonstrate, DOC continues to use the same violent practices that LL42 bans. It is no answer, as the EEOs claim, to say that these practices are necessary to address violence in the city’s jails; the City Council—the arm of our city’s government tasked with making that assessment—expressly concluded otherwise.”

The five defender offices are represented on this amicus brief by Corey Stoughton and Drake Reed of the law firm Selendy Gay PLLC.

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