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

As Immigrants Hunger Strike in Orange County Correctional Facility, NYC Public Defenders Call for ICE to Release All Immigrants in Detention

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society, Brooklyn Defender Services, and The Bronx Defenders – New York City’s defender organizations providing free legal representation to detained immigrants through the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project (NYIFUP) – today released the following statement following reports that immigrants in Orange County Correctional Facility began a hunger strike on February 16, 2022:

“The people we represent who are incarcerated in ICE detention at Orange County Correctional Facility have long reported inhumane conditions, racist and abusive treatment, and the denial of adequate medical care. We are in solidarity with immigrants detained at Orange County Correctional Facility who have now put their bodies on the line in protest of these horrifying conditions. Jail officials and ICE have time and time again shown a disregard for the health and safety of people in their custody, putting their lives at risk simply because of where they were born. We call for ICE to yield to the strikers’ demands and release all those in their custody immediately.”

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The New York Family Immigrant Unity Project (NYIFUP) is the nation’s first public defender system for immigrants facing deportation—defined as those in removal proceedings before an immigration judge. Funded by the New York City Council since July 2014, the program provides a free attorney to almost all detained indigent immigrants facing deportation at the Varick Street Immigration Court in New York City.