



April 14, 2023

Contact: Daniel Ball, dball@bds.org

*****For Immediate Release*****

Brooklyn Defenders Urges New York State Legislature to Continue to Reject Changes to New York's Bail Laws

(BROOKLYN, NY) – Brooklyn Defender Services released the following statement urging Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, and other state legislators to reject Governor Hochul's proposal to change New York's bail laws:

"Pretrial detention tears families apart, takes people away from their homes, jobs, and healthcare, and subjects people to dangerous jail conditions. In the last two years alone, Rikers Island has taken the lives of 36 New Yorkers, the highest death rate in over 25 years. Yet, Governor Hochul has held up New York State's budget in an effort to force through a change to New York's bail laws that would condemn even more people to deadly jails pretrial.

The governor's proposal would erase the long-standing principles behind New York's bail laws and erode judicial accountability, causing confusion and allowing more racial bias to pervade pretrial decision-making, which will result in the incarceration of more Black, Latine, and low-income people.

We know—and the data proves—bail reform is working. It allows New Yorkers to go to work, go to school, care for their children, maintain their liberty, and not languish in deadly jails.

We urge legislative leaders to continue to hold strong against the expansion of pretrial incarceration and reject Governor Hochul's attempt to upend New York's bail laws."

###

Brooklyn Defender Services is a public defense office whose mission is to provide outstanding representation and advocacy free of cost to people facing loss of freedom, family separation and other serious legal harms by the government. We believe in a client-centered approach and work, in and out of court, to uphold the rights, freedom and dignity of people threatened by unjust, racist and harmful legal systems. www.bds.org