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

NYIFUP STATEMENT ON BERGEN COUNTY'S EXIT FROM ICE DETENTION CONTRACT

*Attorneys Call for Immediate Release of Detained Immigrants and Demand End to
Transfers, As NJ Local Governments End All Contracts with ICE*

(New York, NY) – In response to [reports](#) that Bergen County will be ending its contract with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to detain immigrants in Bergen County Jail, **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)** – called on ICE to release all immigrants detained at Bergen County Jail rather than transfer them to other facilities. NYIFUP released the following joint statement:

“For years, the people we represent who have been incarcerated at Bergen County Jail reported deplorable and inhumane conditions, from solitary confinement, inadequate medical treatment, and lack of basic sanitation to freezing temperatures and the dangers of COVID-19. ICE put many, many lives at risk by jailing people at Bergen simply because of where they were born. ICE enforcement and detention tears families apart, inflicts lifelong trauma, deprives people of basic human rights and needs, and it kills. We welcome Bergen County's exit from its contract with ICE, thus ending all of New Jersey local governments' contracts with the agency and representing another important step in ending ICE detention nationwide. We urge that ICE use its discretion to release all immigrants detained at Bergen County Jail to their families and homes, rather than transfer them to yet another dangerous ICE facility elsewhere in the country. Additionally, we renew our call that ICE immediately release all remaining immigrants incarcerated at Hudson County Correctional Facility.”

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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 Varick Street Immigration.