

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON GENERAL WELFARE, JOINTLY WITH  
THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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January 19, 2017  
Start: 10:22 a.m.  
Recess: 1:46 p.m.

HELD AT: The Schermerhorn  
160 Schermerhorn Street  
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201

B E F O R E:  
STEPHEN T. LEVIN  
Chairperson  
JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS  
Co-Chairperson

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Vanessa L. Gibson  
Corey D. Johnson  
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Community Board 7

1 COMMITTEE ON GENERAL WELFARE, JOINTLY WITH THE  
2 COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

7

3 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Good morning  
4 everybody. [background comments] I am Council  
5 Member Stephen Levin, Chair of the Council's  
6 Committee on General Welfare. I want to thank  
7 Council Member Williams, who's going to be joining us  
8 in a moment, Chair of the Housing and Buildings  
9 Committee, for agreeing to hold this joint hearing  
10 today on supportive housing. And I want to open this  
11 morning's hearing by giving a special thank you to  
12 everybody here at The Schermerhorn that is Breaking  
13 Ground, our friends at the Actors Fund and everybody  
14 who is employed here, for agreeing to host the City  
15 Council hearing today at this wonderful, beautiful,  
16 supportive housing building. Thank you very much for  
17 working with us at the Council and I want to thank  
18 all of the Council staff who put this hearing  
19 together today. I want to thank you all for making  
20 this hearing possible, and so with that I'm going to  
21 turn it over to Claire Sheedy from Breaking Ground to  
22 give this morning's welcome.

23 CLAIR SHEEDY: Good morning everyone...  
24 [background comments] Hear me now?

25 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Yeah.

3 CLAUDE SHEEDY: Okay. Good morning, I'm  
4 Claire Sheedy, Vice President of Housing Operations  
5 and Programs at Breaking Ground and on behalf of our  
6 partners, the Actors Fund and the Center for Urban  
7 Community Services, we are very happy to welcome you  
8 to The Schermerhorn.

9 I don't know if you noticed the giant  
10 steel girders in the lobby on your way into this  
11 theater; in case you were wondering, those girders  
12 are integral to the building's structure. Directly  
13 below us is a vast network of subway lines; The  
14 Schermerhorn sits solidly above it in a remarkable  
15 feat of engineering. But substantially more  
16 remarkable is the tenancy within these four walls.  
17 The women and men who call this building home have  
18 faced incredibly difficult challenges.

19 Breaking Ground and our partners in  
20 supportive housing are the girders, the supports on  
21 which formerly homeless New Yorkers can build and  
22 restore their lives. We see the results of our work  
23 every day by offering consistent support that helps  
24 vulnerable New Yorkers to achieve lives of dignity.  
25 These results wouldn't be possible without the  
outstanding commitment of our elected officials to

3 supportive housing. The Schermerhorn's 217  
4 supportive apartments are part of 1,100 such units  
5 located here in Brooklyn Community Board 2 and more  
6 than 33,000 in New York City at large.

7 We're honored to host this hearing on a  
8 topic of the utmost importance for nothing less than  
9 the humanity and economic vitality of our great urban  
10 community. We're extremely appreciative of the  
11 City's ongoing commitment to our model through  
12 creating an additional 15,000 units of supportive  
13 housing that will improve neighborhoods and help the  
14 most vulnerable New Yorkers find their way home.  
15 Thank you again for all you do in support of  
16 supportive housing.

17 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you so much,  
18 Claire.

19 I'm very proud to be able to say that  
20 this residence is in my Council District; this  
21 building showcases how much supportive housing can  
22 bring to a community. Not only does this building  
23 create much-needed permanent housing for formerly  
24 homeless individuals, as Claire said; the remaining  
25 units serve as affordable housing for both community  
members and artists. This building also brought to

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2 the community the theater that we are in today, the  
3 Actors Fund Art Center.

4 I would like to thank my colleagues who  
5 are here this morning and have joined us, Council  
6 Member Mark Levine of the Housing and Buildings  
7 Committee, Council Member Barry Grodenchik of the  
8 General Welfare Committee and also Housing and  
9 Buildings Committee.. [interpose, background comment]  
10 alright. [laughter] I thank you both for coming out  
11 to Brooklyn, and we look forward to being joined by  
12 other members of the committees as this hearing  
13 progresses.

14 In November 2015, both committees here  
15 today held a joint hearing on supportive housing  
16 where we were presented with the de Blasio  
17 Administration's plan to create 15,000 units of  
18 supportive housing over 15 years. While not an  
19 overnight solution to the current homelessness crisis  
20 that gets a lot of attention here in New York City,  
21 the announcement presented a long-term plan to create  
22 new housing options as the final NY/NY III units were  
23 in development. At that hearing we also heard a  
24 resolution, No. 504, which I sponsored and was  
25 adopted by the Full Council in January 2016. That

2 resolution called on the State of New York to match  
3 the City of New York's commitment to create 15,000  
4 units of supportive housing over 15 years and for the  
5 State of New York and the City of New York to approve  
6 a fourth NY/NY agreement to create permanent  
7 supportive housing. Now, one year later, while the  
8 City is moving ahead with its 15,000 units, the  
9 State's plan for 20,000 units still remains unfunded.  
10 There has also been no progress on coming together  
11 between the City and the State to create a much-  
12 needed NY/NY IV agreement. That failure to establish  
13 a NY/NY IV agreement has been an unfortunate casualty  
14 of the politics between the City and the State.

15           There are now over 60,000 homeless  
16 individuals just the DHS shelter system. If you  
17 counted people under the McKinney-Vento definition of  
18 homeless, the number is much higher. If we consider  
19 the homeless youth in the DYCD system, the domestic  
20 violence survivors in the HRA domestic violence  
21 system and the HASA clients living in emergency  
22 housing; the unsheltered individuals living on the  
23 street, there are an additional thousands more  
24 individuals and families who are homeless and seeking

2 permanent housing. We truly cannot afford to wait  
3 any longer for these resources and this coordination.

4 NY/NY III reduced chronic homelessness  
5 among single adults by 47% over the first five years.  
6 Additionally, 86% of NY/NY III tenants remain stably  
7 housing after one year. We know we are facing a  
8 homelessness crisis; we also know supportive housing  
9 is one of the most effective tools to address it; now  
10 we just need the units.

11 We are here today holding this hearing  
12 not at City Hall, but at a supportive housing  
13 residence to highlight the many benefits supportive  
14 housing brings to a community, not only through  
15 moving our neighbors out of shelter and into  
16 permanent housing, but through creating affordable  
17 housing units and bringing resources, like this  
18 theater, into the community for everybody to enjoy.

19 I look forward to hearing from tenants  
20 here today about how this building has enriched their  
21 lives and from the Administration on what next steps  
22 are in their plan.

23 You know on just on a personal note here;  
24 you know this residence, as you saw, this is in the  
25 middle of a bustling, vibrant downtown; this is a

3 community resource; this is something that is a great  
4 benefit to this neighborhood and this community and I  
5 think that it's important to show all of us, the  
6 entire City of New York, what supportive housing is.  
7 This is supportive housing, this building, these  
8 resources, this coordination, this professionalism;  
9 this is what supportive housing looks like in the  
10 City of New York and this is something that we all  
11 must have as a point of discussion; we cannot allow  
12 for supportive housing to be the subject of Nimbyism,  
13 of unfortunate and unfair characterizations; we need  
14 to all step up and do our part and in doing so, we're  
15 going to be able to increase the resources in every  
16 community in New York City where supportive housing  
17 goes into and so I want to make sure that this is  
18 what we're seeing, so everybody that's watching  
19 online or on TV, we welcome you to come here to The  
20 Schermerhorn in downtown Brooklyn and see what they  
21 do here.

22 I'd like to thank the Council staff for  
23 their work today to prepare for today's hearing --  
24 Policy Analyst Tonya Cyrus, Counsel Andrea Vazquez,  
25 and Jennie Berger from our Community Engagement  
26 Division. I'd like to also thank the Sergeant at

2 Arms who have put together today's hearing as well  
3 and ensure that this is a safe and seamless hearing.  
4 I'd also like to thank my Legislative Director Julie  
5 Bero, Communications Director Ed Paulino, and Chief  
6 of Staff Jonathan Boucher.

7 I'd also like to thank members of the  
8 Administration who are here to testify -- Dan Tietz  
9 of HRA, Kristin Misner of HRA, Kristin Misner-  
10 Gutierrez of HRA, Jessica Katz, who's from New York  
11 City Housing Preservation and Development, Craig...  
12 sorry; last name? [background comment] Retchless of  
13 HRA, Mike Bosket of HRA, and I think there are other  
14 members who I've met before, but I don't have your  
15 names on the cards here, but if you're going to be  
16 testifying or answering questions, please identify  
17 yourself for the record. And we are expecting Chair  
18 Williams shortly, but we will begin with the  
19 Administration's testimony; I think Mr. Tietz will be  
20 testifying. Thank you very much for being here this  
21 morning. I want to thank all of you that are here  
22 today as well; we look forward to hearing from your  
23 testimony as well.

24 DANIEL TIETZ: Good morning... [crosstalk]

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2 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Sorry, Dan; I have to  
3 swear you in... [crosstalk]

4 DANIEL TIETZ: Sure. Alright, then.

5 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Do you affirm to tell  
6 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth  
7 in your testimony before this committee and to  
8 respond honestly to council members' questions?

9 DANIEL TIETZ: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you.

11 DANIEL TIETZ: Good morning. Thank you  
12 Chairman Levin and members of the General Welfare  
13 Committee, as well as in absentia, for the moment  
14 anyway, Chairman Williams and members of the  
15 Committee on Housing and Buildings for giving us this  
16 opportunity to testify today regarding supportive  
17 housing in New York City.

18 My name is Daniel Tietz and I am the  
19 Chief Special Services Officer of the New York City  
20 Human Resources Administration. I am joined today by  
21 Michael Bosket, Deputy Commissioner for HRA's  
22 Customized Assistance Services; Kristin Misner-  
23 Gutierrez, Deputy Commissioner for HRA's Supportive  
24 and Affordable Housing and Services; and Craig  
25 Retchless, Assistant Deputy Commissioner in HRA's

3 Customized Assistance Services. In addition, we are  
4 joined by Jessica Katz, Associate Commissioner for  
5 New Construction at Housing Preservation and  
6 Development; Myla Harrison, Assistant Commissioner  
7 for the Bureau of Mental Health at the Department of  
8 Health and Mental Hygiene; and Gail Wolsk, the Senior  
9 Director at DOHMH.

10 I also want to take this opportunity to  
11 thank The Schermerhorn for hosting us today as we  
12 discuss our progress with regards to supportive  
13 housing. The Schermerhorn is a great partner in  
14 working to end homelessness and addressing the  
15 barriers that prevent stable housing for vulnerable  
16 New Yorkers, such as those with mental illness,  
17 substance use disorders and other chronic conditions,  
18 as well as New Yorkers with HIV/AIDS, and young  
19 adults aging out of foster care. This housing,  
20 coupled with the on-site services provided by another  
21 great partner, the Center for Urban Community  
22 Services, provides supportive services to address the  
23 needs of vulnerable and high-need residents and at-  
24 risk populations for those housed in the 116 units of  
25 stable and affordable supportive housing units. The  
remaining affordable units are dedicated to low-

3 income working adults from the arts and entertainment  
4 industry. The supportive services include both  
5 mental and physical health care access as well as  
6 alcohol and substance use programs. Breaking Ground  
7 partners with CUCS and The Actors Fund to provide  
8 case management, recreational activities and self-  
9 sufficiency workshops to residents.

10 Supportive housing is a proven model and  
11 this Administration's landmark commitment made in  
12 November 2015 through NYC 15/15 builds on decades of  
13 experience implementing the model along with  
14 research, evaluation and lessons learned since the  
15 first units were created in the 1980s.

16 The Mayor's NYC 15/15 plan to create  
17 15,000 units of new supportive housing over the next  
18 15 years includes more units than the combined number  
19 of units from the three previous NY/NY supportive  
20 housing agreements and is more than any other  
21 supportive housing effort in the country. From  
22 decades of research, we know that this sweeping and  
23 comprehensive plan will benefit New Yorkers in need,  
24 including homeless veterans, domestic violence  
25 survivors and street homeless individuals.

3 This cost-effective approach to deliver  
4 stable and permanent housing to New Yorkers  
5 struggling with mental illness, homelessness, and  
6 substance use is worth every penny of investment.  
7 Supportive housing reduces our reliance on homeless  
8 shelters, hospitals, mental health institutions and  
9 incarceration.

10 Permanent supportive housing provides  
11 individuals and families transitioning from a period  
12 of homelessness with a continuum of care, integrated  
13 services and quality affordable housing options that  
14 address the immediate and long-term social, economic,  
15 emotional and physical needs of some of the most  
16 vulnerable New Yorkers. These residential apartment  
17 buildings are in communities spread across the five  
18 boroughs, are equipped with on-site case management  
19 and supportive services and adhere to safety and  
20 quality standards in accordance with local, state and  
21 federal laws and regulations.

22 The low-income tenants sign a standard  
23 lease and receive rental assistance payments to help  
24 defray the high-cost of New York City rent. The  
25 continuation of tenancy is not subject to any special  
rules or participation in any particular or

3 specialized services; and tenants pay 30% of any  
4 earned or unearned income toward rent.

5 The two primary types of supportive  
6 housing are:

7 Single-site, (also referred to as  
8 congregate), which is a designated building where  
9 each individual or family has private living and  
10 sleeping quarters and may share kitchens and/or  
11 common rooms, recreational rooms or other facilities;  
12 and

13 Scattered-site, which are units in  
14 apartment buildings spread throughout a neighborhood  
15 or community. These units are designated for  
16 specific populations and accompanied by supportive  
17 services.

18 The combination of affordable housing and  
19 comprehensive support services is rooted in best  
20 practices developed from evidence, data and outcomes  
21 and is designed to help families and individuals  
22 achieve stability and sustained recovery, as well as  
23 lower the incidence of shelter reentry, following  
24 periods of chronic homelessness, hospitalization,  
25 incarceration or, for youth, aging out of foster  
care.

3 Support services are voluntary, strength-  
4 based and customized to meet the individual needs of  
5 each resident. A care management team is responsible  
6 for implementing service plans and modalities,  
7 monitoring client progress and adherence to  
8 treatment, developing a person-centered assessment  
9 and connecting residents to comprehensive support  
10 services, including: case management; educational,  
11 vocational, and other recovery-oriented services;  
12 medication management and counseling; assistance in  
13 gaining access to government benefits, such as food  
14 stamps; referrals to medical services, mental health  
15 care and treatment for drug and alcohol use; and  
16 recommendations for other needed services, such as  
17 legal support.

18 Following the historic announcement of  
19 NYC 15/15, the Mayor assembled a 28-member expert  
20 task force who developed 23 specific recommendations  
21 on ways the plan could expand and improve upon  
22 previous NY/NY agreements. Starting in January 2016,  
23 task force co-chairs Steve Banks, the Commissioner of  
24 the Department of Social Services; Vicki Been, the  
25 Commissioner of Housing Preservation and Development;  
and Laura Mascuch, the Executive Director of the

3 Supportive Housing Network of New York, and their  
4 representatives, hosted meetings in which four  
5 working groups focused on the following topics: data  
6 review and target populations; the referral process;  
7 service models; and streamlining development.

8 The recommendations of the task force are  
9 the result of months of work carried out by leaders  
10 in delivering housing and services to vulnerable and  
11 homeless New Yorkers, including experts from City  
12 agencies, nonprofit organizations, social service  
13 practitioners, and clients. The task force's work  
14 and recommendations were announced in December 2016  
15 with the release of a public report. The results of  
16 this research and these meetings have the following  
17 recommendations:

18 From data and Evaluation: (1) target  
19 units to three broad populations -- adults, families  
20 and youth -- and incorporate a vulnerability index to  
21 target housing to those most in need; (2) expand  
22 access to the current application for supportive  
23 housing (the HRA 2010e) to include a broad range of  
24 referral sources, in addition to the Department of  
25 Homeless Services; (3) proactively identify  
applicants using data analytics to identify homeless

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3 individuals and families using multiple systems of  
4 care; (4) create a City Oversight Committee to  
5 monitor NYC 15/15 implementation; and (5) develop a  
6 cross-agency plan to evaluate the outcomes of NYC  
7 15/15.

8 The referral process: (1) allow  
9 additional professionals, such as licensed clinical  
10 social workers and psychologists, to complete the  
11 required mental health evaluations for the HRA 2010e  
12 supportive housing application; (2) modify the  
13 project-based Section 8 voucher approval process to  
14 expedite placements of homeless clients; (3) align  
15 public assistance and the housing process so that  
16 individuals and families are not waiting in the  
17 shelter system; (4) streamline the HRA 2010e  
18 application to include automatic uploads of  
19 supporting documents, such as the client's social  
20 security card and income documentation; (5) create a  
21 referral process to match homeless clients who do not  
22 fit a NY/NY designation to appropriate housing that  
23 has some support services, called general population  
24 units; (6) align definitions of chronic homelessness  
25 developed the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban  
Development and New York City; (7) create a

3 standardized assessment tool that matches tenants to  
4 appropriate housing options; and (8) pre-populate an  
5 existing HRA 2010e application using data from  
6 various City agencies.

7 Service models: (1) utilize evidence-  
8 based and evidence-informed practices and support  
9 ongoing staff development across supportive housing  
10 providers; (2) implement a holistic family approach  
11 to delivery comprehensive services to the entire  
12 family; (3) create supportive housing options for  
13 youth that are not time limited and use the "Moving  
14 On" model to help young adults transition to  
15 independent housing; (4) develop a better assessment  
16 tool to assist workers in determining which clients  
17 will be most successful in scattered-site housing  
18 programs; and (5) provide greater flexibility to  
19 account for major life changes; standardize the  
20 process for clients to transfer to other supportive  
21 housing programs that may be better suited to their  
22 current needs, for example, between family and single  
23 supportive housing.

24 Streamlining development: (1) review  
25 landlord incentives for scattered-site supportive  
housing; (2) address issues in the rent stabilization

3 law and enforcement that affect scattered-site  
4 supportive housing programs; (3) create a dedicated  
5 and nimble pool of capital to use for down payments  
6 on sites to develop supportive housing buildings;  
7 (4) separate the rent from the services subsidy, with  
8 HPD managing the rental subsidy at Fair Market Rent.  
9 Increase the term of the rental subsidy to match the  
10 15-year term for Low Income Housing Tax Credit, a  
11 common tool to build affordable housing; (5) build-in  
12 regular increases to the rental subsidy over the  
13 course of 15 years; and (6) improve community  
14 engagement for new supportive housing projects.

15 The role of DSS and HRA:

16 The New York City Human Resources  
17 Administration, Department of Social Services is  
18 dedicated to fighting poverty and income inequality  
19 by providing New Yorkers in need with essential  
20 benefits such as food assistance and emergency rental  
21 assistance. As the largest local social services  
22 agency in the country, HRA helps over three million  
23 New Yorkers through the administration in more than  
24 12 public assistance programs, with more than 14,000  
25 employees and an operating budget of \$9.7 billion.

3 HRA also plays a critical role in preventing  
4 homelessness and in rehousing those who are homeless.

5 In order to prevent homelessness, the  
6 work of HRA is focused on providing supports to those  
7 who are working but with income insufficient to  
8 support a family. By providing temporary assistance  
9 and training to those in search of work and providing  
10 a safety net for those unable to work, HRA strives to  
11 ensure that clients do not find themselves facing  
12 homelessness. The agency now oversees Homebase,  
13 which was formerly under the Department of Homeless  
14 Services, thereby expanding our comprehensive  
15 prevention services. Additionally, since the  
16 beginning of this Administration, we have invested  
17 over \$60 million in tenant legal services (targeting  
18 eviction and landlord harassment) and the total City  
19 commitment to fund civil legal services will exceed  
20 \$100 million, the largest of any municipality in the  
21 country.

22 It is worth noting that increasing the  
23 availability of housing, and most critically,  
24 affordable housing, alone will not address the  
25 homelessness crisis the city is experiencing. Some  
New Yorkers face challenges in securing and

3 maintaining employment and stable housing due to  
4 psychosocial, intellectual, physical health, and/or  
5 other conditions. For these New Yorkers, HRA plays a  
6 vital role in connecting them to a continuum of care  
7 and support services. HRA's successes are not only  
8 moving these vulnerable New Yorkers into stable  
9 housing, but ultimately to assist them in  
10 transitioning to the workforce. However, this  
11 stability in housing, and for some, the opportunity  
12 to work, would be impossible without the cost-  
13 effective intervention of supportive housing.

14 For those coping with mental health  
15 challenges, substance use disorders, or other housing  
16 barriers, they are eligible for stable housing,  
17 accompanied as needed with an array of comprehensive  
18 services. These services can include connection to  
19 mental health and substance use treatment, employment  
20 and education. Through this powerful intervention,  
21 these vulnerable populations are able to address the  
22 multiple barriers they face when trying to obtain and  
23 maintain stable housing and to live with independence  
24 and dignity.

25 The City's 15,000-unit plan expects to  
create 7,500 newly-developed congregate units,

3 similar to that of The Schermerhorn's, and 7,500  
4 scattered-site units. Let me just note that if they  
5 were all similar to The Schermerhorn I'd be really  
6 happy with that. [background comments] The plan  
7 will cost \$2.6 billion in capital funds over the next  
8 15 years to develop the 7,500 congregate units. Of  
9 the total capital costs, approximately \$1 billion  
10 will be a City cost and all but \$380 million has  
11 already been budgeted through Housing New York. The  
12 remaining capital costs -- approximately \$1.6 billion  
13 -- will be offset with low-income tax credits and  
14 other private sources. There is also approximately  
15 \$96 million in net operating costs over the Financial  
16 Plan (through Fiscal Year 19) -- starting at \$8.8  
17 million annually in the first year and ramping up.  
18 HPD's testimony will provide further detail  
19 concerning the financing of this plan and supportive  
20 housing more generally.

21 As we've testified in the past, a  
22 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene study showed  
23 that NY/NY III clients who were placed in supportive  
24 housing used public benefits, Medicaid, psychiatric  
25 institutions, jails, and shelters less than clients

3 not residing in supportive housing, resulting in net-  
4 cost savings.

5 The City agencies before you today work  
6 in close partnership to address housing insecurity  
7 and homelessness, as well as to provide housing  
8 options for vulnerable clients who are eligible for  
9 supportive housing through this and other housing  
10 initiatives.

11 The role of DOHMH:

12 The New York City Department of Health  
13 and Mental Hygiene provides a lead role in  
14 contracting, oversight and evaluation of services for  
15 individuals in many of the City's supportive housing  
16 units, including 3,850 of the total 9,000 NY/NY III  
17 units and an additional 4,500 supportive housing  
18 units developed over the course of the past 30 years.

19 To date, DOHMH has awarded provider  
20 contracts to 99% of the 3,850 NY/NY III sites for  
21 which we have responsibility. Some of these  
22 contracts have been awarded in advance of completion  
23 of the buildings. In terms of occupancy, 3,098 of  
24 the 3,850 sites are now filled. The remaining 752  
25 units are either currently being built or are

3 recently completed and are now accepting  
4 applications.

5 In addition to overseeing services,  
6 DOHMH's work includes a thorough evaluation of the  
7 City's supportive housing services. As part of this  
8 evaluation, DOHMH coordinates with other City and  
9 State agencies to capture a broad range of  
10 quantitative and qualitative data. DOHMH gathers  
11 health, social service and the financial impact data  
12 in addition to surveying providers and tenants on  
13 their experience with the program. The NY/NY III  
14 interim evaluation report showed a net savings to the  
15 system of more than \$10,000 per year for housed  
16 single adults.

17 DOHMH is also working in coordination  
18 with HRA and the Mayor's task force on supportive  
19 housing to develop the NYC 15/15 units. HRA will  
20 procure the units and ensure the task force  
21 recommendations are implemented while DOHMH will help  
22 provide technical assistance and contract management  
23 to programs to ensure that residents receive services  
24 that are evidence-based and focused upon the recovery  
25 of the family and the individual.

2 Since announcing a commitment to fund  
3 15,000 units over the next 15 years, City agencies  
4 quickly implemented a number of initiatives to keep  
5 the pipeline going. First, we added 525 units to the  
6 DOHMH open-ended congregate request for proposals so  
7 that providers could continue to apply for and  
8 receive services awards for congregate units. We  
9 also added over 150 units to the HRA HIV/AIDS  
10 Services Administration RFP.

11 Next HRA released an RFP for scattered-  
12 site units. We reviewed and rewarded 550 units to 11  
13 organizations in record time and are in the process  
14 of negotiating those contracts and getting them  
15 registered.

16 The City is also in the process of  
17 implementing the aforementioned recommendations from  
18 the task force.

19 Reforms to HRA's supportive housing  
20 application eligibility process:

21 HRA supportive housing system permits  
22 referring agencies to electronically submit the HRA  
23 2010e through HRA's Office of Health and Mental  
24 Health Services Placement Assessment and Client  
25 Tracking Unit. In order to apply for supportive

3 housing, the HRA 2010e must be submitted by a service  
4 provider who has been trained by HRA's Customized  
5 Assistance Services program. Upon submission of the  
6 supportive housing application, the provider receives  
7 a username and password.

8           The HRA 2010e application packet is  
9 designed to gather a comprehensive clinical and  
10 housing history to determine if the individual  
11 applicant meets the criteria for any category of  
12 supportive housing. Relevant information submitted  
13 as part of the application includes demographic  
14 information, benefits history, current treatment and  
15 service providers, history of hospitalizations,  
16 housing and homelessness, health and treatment  
17 history, an assessment of day to day functional  
18 challenges, applicant housing preferences, and  
19 recommendations for the level of housing support  
20 needed. Additionally, the packet requires a current  
21 comprehensive psychiatric evaluation completed by a  
22 licensed psychiatrist or a psychiatric nurse  
23 practitioner and a psychosocial summary, each of  
24 which is to be completed within the last six months.  
25 Service providers have the option to utilize the  
comprehensive mental health report in lieu of a

3 separate psychosocial summary and psychiatric  
4 evaluation. Supportive housing applications are  
5 mostly prepared by a mental health professional from  
6 a variety of referral sources, such as hospitals,  
7 correctional facilities, homeless shelters,  
8 outpatient programs, care coordinators, and  
9 community-based organizations. Other individuals,  
10 including family members, are also able to assist  
11 with the application process.

12 One of the recommendations from the task  
13 force was to streamline the HRA 2010e application  
14 process to include automatic uploads for supporting  
15 materials, such as an applicant's social security  
16 card and income documentation. I am pleased to  
17 report this enhancement has already been completed  
18 and it should make the process easier for the clients  
19 and providers. Additionally, the recommendation to  
20 allow licensed clinical social workers and  
21 psychologists to complete the required mental health  
22 evaluations for the HRA 2010e will be implemented by  
23 April.

24 The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban  
25 Development is urging localities to develop a  
coordinated assessment and placement system to

3 streamline access to homeless services and prioritize  
4 assistance based on an individual's assessed  
5 vulnerability and the severity of service needs. New  
6 York City has many and complex housing resources; 56  
7 funding sources are available for capital, operating  
8 and services for various types of supportive housing  
9 and multiple rental assistance programs, from city,  
10 state and federal resources.

11 Each adds a layer of complexity to the  
12 process of placing homeless individuals and families  
13 into permanent housing. Working with the New York  
14 City Continuum of Care CAPS Steering Committee, HRA  
15 has begun development of the coordinated assessment  
16 survey which is the universal tool to assist case  
17 managers and housing specialists working with  
18 individuals and families in understanding the  
19 different types of supportive housing and rental  
20 subsidies for which their clients may be potentially  
21 eligible.

22 The Coordinated Assessment Survey will be  
23 the entry point to begin the process of assisting  
24 homeless individuals and families to determine the  
25 best fit in permanent housing. Survey results will  
be used to inform the client's housing plan,

2 determine the best option for placement, and provide  
3 guidance for pursuing the type of housing placement  
4 chosen.

5 The survey will be accessed in the HRA  
6 supportive housing system along with the HRA 2010e  
7 application, which is available City-wide to 10,000  
8 users, 3,000 programs, and 1,000 organizations. This  
9 system is currently being piloted in seven homeless  
10 shelter programs for individuals and families and the  
11 feedback has been very encouraging.

12 HRA is also working with the CAP Steering  
13 Committee to develop and implement a vulnerability  
14 index in order to prioritize the highest need  
15 individuals and families approved for supportive  
16 housing.

17 Supportive Housing Utilization:

18 The largest challenge with supportive  
19 housing in the City is that there simply is not  
20 enough of it, which is why the Mayor made the  
21 unprecedented commitment to provide 15,000 additional  
22 units.

23 Based on HRA's data, in FY16, 23,629  
24 supportive housing applications were submitted with  
25 14,648 or 62% approved. There are currently

3 approximately 32,000 supportive housing beds in New  
4 York City.

5 As of December 2016, HRA's HASA program  
6 has a contracted supportive housing portfolio of  
7 5,683 units of which 5,387 units are occupied. HASA  
8 spends about \$135.7 million annually for these units;  
9 2,672 scattered-site units, including NY/NY III and  
10 non-NY/NY III, of which 94% (2,506) are occupied.  
11 The average annual cost per unit is \$24,115. HASA  
12 anticipates that this cost will increase due to  
13 increasing rents; 2,181 permanent congregate units,  
14 including both NY/NY III and non-NY/NY III, of which  
15 96% are occupied. The average annual cost per unit  
16 is \$22,620; and 830 transitional units, 95% of which  
17 are occupied. The average annual cost per unit is  
18 \$26,489.

19 In addition to supporting housing units,  
20 HASA is expecting to spend about \$44,105,074 in this  
21 year for clients residing in emergency housing. As  
22 of December 2016, of the 2,614 units available, HASA  
23 clients occupied 2,526 units, an occupancy rate of  
24 97%.

25 We know that stable housing like  
supportive housing is integral to improving health

3 outcomes, reducing re-incarceration among returning  
4 offenders, and lowering costs for high-needs, high-  
5 cost Medicaid recipients with serious behavioral  
6 health and/or other disabling conditions. Moreover,  
7 supportive housing can help avert preventable events  
8 and health crises, such as arrest, incarceration,  
9 relapse and hospitalizations, thereby additionally  
10 reducing costs.

11 It took many years to reach this level of  
12 homelessness and it will take time to reduce it. But  
13 we can already point to several concrete successes  
14 with our rental assistance programs with increasing  
15 placements in affordable housing.

16 Since the beginning of the Administration  
17 through the end of the last fiscal year, over 25,000  
18 low-income households have received eviction and  
19 anti-harassment legal assistance, including working  
20 heads of households, and this level of prevention  
21 services will increase to almost 33,000 households  
22 per year, including well over 113,000 people.

23 We have also helped more people with  
24 emergency rent assistance, keeping thousands of New  
25 Yorkers in their homes. In FY15, HRA provided rent  
arrears to 53,000 households at a cost of \$180

3 million. Comparatively, in FY16, HRA provided rent  
4 arrears to nearly 57,000 households at a cost of \$206  
5 million. The 14% increase in spending was due to  
6 4,000 more households being found eligible as well as  
7 rising rents. Another major driver was the increase  
8 in Homebase and legal services enrollments to prevent  
9 eviction and homelessness where clients are also  
referred for assistance with rent arrears.

10 As a result of these prevention efforts,  
11 evictions by Marshals have decreased by 24% since  
12 2013.

13 I also want to reemphasize that these  
14 programs are cost-effective. In FY16, the average  
15 cost emergency rent assistance was \$3,608 per case,  
16 and the average cost of a legal services case was  
17 \$2,000. These investments were much less than the  
18 average cost of almost \$41,000 per year for a family  
19 in a homeless shelter.

20 No price can be put on the human and  
21 social costs of homelessness. We know that an ounce  
22 of prevention is worth a pound of cure and we are  
23 diligently working to ensure that the tools of  
24 government that can prevent and alleviate  
25 homelessness are accessible and readily available to

3 those who are in need. We also know that investment  
4 in these preventive and restorative services is money  
5 well spent.

6 Moreover, the Mayor's historic  
7 announcement of NYC 15/15 and its swift  
8 implementation will provide permanent and stable  
9 housing and essential social services for literally  
10 thousands of eligible New Yorkers.

11 We have accomplished a great deal, but we  
12 know that we have much more work to do and look  
13 forward to partnering with you during the coming  
14 year.

15 Thank you and I am happy to answer your  
16 questions.

17 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much  
18 Mr. Tietz. We're going to turn it over to Chair  
19 Jumaane Williams.

20 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you  
21 Council Member, Mr. Tietz and everyone who's here;  
22 sorry for being late; I did let my co-chair know  
23 prior that I had an engagement and I would try to get  
24 here right after, so thank you for that. I'm just  
25 going to read my opening remark and then turn it back  
over.

3 Again, thank you Council Member Levin and  
4 good morning everyone; thank you all for coming. My  
5 name is Jumaane D. Williams; I chair the Committee on  
6 Housing and Buildings; today, as Council Member Levin  
7 mentioned, and as we heard in the testimony, we're  
8 here in a supportive development to hold an oversight  
9 hearing on supportive housing; honored to be here.  
10 Supportive developments such as this one house some  
11 of the city's most vulnerable individuals and help to  
12 end and prevent homelessness among such individuals.

13 Through the NY/NY agreement, the State  
14 and City have worked together to provide affordable  
15 supportive housing to thousands of its residents; now  
16 that the NY/NY III agreement has expired, we are  
17 interested in exploring what the future of supportive  
18 housing in New York City looks like.

19 At this point there has been no work on a  
20 NY/NY IV agreement between the City and State, but  
21 both the Mayor and the Governor have announced  
22 funding for additional supportive housing units; of  
23 course, I'm not sure what's going on with the  
24 Governor, but that's another conversation.

25 Last year the Mayor also announced the  
establishment of the Supportive Housing Task Force

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3 which was created to advise the City on implementing  
4 its supportive housing plan. I'm interested in  
5 hearing updates from the task force and in learning  
6 more about the Mayor's supportive housing plan  
7 generally.

8 I would like to thank my staff for the  
9 work they did to assemble this hearing, including  
10 Nick Smith, my Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative  
11 Director; Megan Chen, Counsel to the Committee;  
12 Guillermo Patino and Jose Conde, Policy Analysts to  
13 the Committee; and Sarah Gastelum, the Committee's  
14 Finance Analyst. Thank you.

15 [background comments]

16 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much,  
17 Chair Williams. Do any other members of the  
18 Administration have testimony?

19 JESSICA KATZ: Hello. Chairman Levin,  
20 Chairman Williams and members of the General Welfare  
21 and Housing and Buildings Committees, thank you for  
22 the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the New  
23 York City Department of Housing Preservation and  
24 Development on our efforts to create and preserve  
25 supportive housing.

2 My name is Jessica Katz and I am the  
3 Associate Commissioner for New Construction at HPD.

4 [interpose]

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: I'm sorry; did  
6 you hand in testimony?

7 JESSICA KATZ: Yes. I believe so.

8 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay.

9 [background comment]

10 JESSICA KATZ: Do you have it?

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Try to locate it, but  
12 you can continue.

13 JESSICA KATZ: I would like to begin with  
14 my sincerest thanks to the Council for your ongoing  
15 support, your leadership is critical for expanding  
16 supportive housing which in turn will reduce  
17 homelessness in the neighborhoods you serve.

18 Supportive housing is a cost-effective  
19 solution to homelessness for disabled New Yorkers, it  
20 is permanent, affordable housing combined with on-  
21 site social services; it is a proven solution for  
22 people with long histories of homelessness and other  
23 challenges, including mental illness, addiction and  
24 HIV/AIDS. Peer-reviewed research on supportive  
25 housing found that for every unit of supportive

2 housing we build taxpayers save more than \$10,000 per  
3 year in public resources, such as shelters, emergency  
4 rooms, jails, and psychiatric facilities. In fact,  
5 research has even shown that contrary to population  
6 belief, supportive housing increases property values  
7 in the surrounding area.

8           The projects themselves provide  
9 amenities, such as community spaces and computer  
10 rooms, the theater we're sitting here in today, and  
11 all while incorporating innovative design elements,  
12 making these buildings vibrant places to live. Most  
13 importantly, supportive housing provides its tenants  
14 with rent-stabilized leases and all the same rights  
15 and responsibilities as any other tenant in a rental  
16 apartment in New York City.

17           Anyone who has visited one of our  
18 supportive housing projects can hear personal stories  
19 of tenants who have previously lived in shelter,  
20 often for many years, but who are now reconnecting  
21 with family, addressing their health needs and  
22 finding employment. There are many reasons why we  
23 see such successful outcomes in supportive housing,  
24 including the dedication of staff and their social  
25 services delivery, but at its core, the model is

3 successful because the home is affordable and  
4 provides the services that the tenant needs.

5 Supportive housing projects are almost  
6 always a mix of supportive units and other affordable  
7 apartments. A typical supporting housing project  
8 includes a 60/40 split between supportive housing  
9 units and other affordable housing units available to  
10 any household that income qualifies. Typically,  
11 incomes for a single-person household applying to  
12 live in one of the general affordable units would be  
13 capped at 60% of AMI or \$38,100 a year, an income  
14 which encompasses a broad range of City residents in  
15 entry-level or part-time jobs.

16 Supportive housing is the solution to  
17 homelessness and the Council is a critical partner in  
18 helping us build more of it. HPD is extremely  
19 grateful to the Council Members here today for  
20 helping us educate New Yorkers about the benefits of  
21 supportive housing and for welcoming a number of  
22 wonderful supportive housing developments throughout  
23 the neighborhoods you represent.

24 When proposing a new supportive housing  
25 project we often hear unfounded assumptions about how  
the supportive housing project will impact the

3 surrounding neighborhood or questions about how we  
4 chose a specific site and whether we are building  
5 supportive housing exclusively in low-income  
6 neighborhoods or communities of color. We need your  
7 help to address these neighborhood concerns and  
8 shatter any myths that supportive housing is bad for  
9 communities or concentrated in certain neighborhoods.  
10 Today I would like to highlight a few of the  
11 supportive housing projects developed by HPD and our  
12 nonprofit partners.

13 For example, today we are in Cobble Hill,  
14 Brooklyn, in Chairperson Levin's district. The  
15 building we are sitting in is a 217-unit supportive  
16 housing project in the heart of Brownstone, Brooklyn  
17 that opened in 2009. The building was created when  
18 the developer of the luxury townhouses on this same  
19 site approached Breaking Ground about a partnership.  
20 The building blends into the neighborhood and is a  
21 community asset. I was actually walking by this  
22 building last summer with my new baby and my mother  
23 and when I peeked into the lobby, my mom thought that  
24 I was looking to buy a condo here [laughter] for my  
25 growing family. As you may know, Breaking Ground is  
the developer of The Schermerhorn; Breaking Ground is

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3 internationally recognized as a leader and innovator  
4 in the supportive housing field, so its supportive  
5 housing portfolio in New York City accounts for over  
6 2,500 units across three boroughs.

7 All of their supportive housing buildings  
8 contain a mix of supportive and general affordable  
9 units and many of them are located in Committee  
10 Members' districts, including The Lee, which is a  
11 262-unit supportive housing project in the Lower East  
12 Side, in Council Member Mendez' district, on the site  
13 of a former boys' club.

14 The Prince George is a 416-unit  
15 supportive housing project in Gramercy, also in  
16 Council Member Mendez' district, that opened in 1999.  
17 The building includes a rooftop garden, art studio  
18 and computer lab and event space housed in the  
19 restored Prince George ballroom. The ballroom on-  
20 site has hosted events, including New York Fashion  
21 Week and even a Real Housewives Reunion special.

22 [laughter] I won't tell you how I know that.

23 [laughter]

24 And the Times Square Hotel is in Council  
25 Member Johnson's district; it's a 652-unit supportive  
housing project that opened in 1991. The building is

3 listed on the National Register of Historic Places,  
4 and if you've ever grabbed an ice cream cone at the  
5 Ben & Jerry's in Times Square, you did so in the  
6 largest supportive housing project in the country.

7 The Christopher is a 207-unit supportive  
8 housing project in Chelsea. The building is on the  
9 site of the original McBurney Y, the inspiration for  
10 The Village People song that generations have danced  
11 to. The project dedicates 40 of its units to the  
12 Foyer Program, which serves young adults aging out of  
13 the foster care system or who are formerly homeless.

14 We are proud to work with a range of  
15 skilled development teams across the city with deep  
16 roots, serving a range of different communities with  
17 critical needs. Our development partners include  
18 Community Development Corporation, serving local  
19 neighborhoods; faith-based groups; veteran  
20 organizations; and organizations serving LGBTQ youth.

21 In 2015, the Mayor announced a major  
22 commitment of \$1 billion in City capital over the  
23 next 15 years that will fund 15,000 units of  
24 supportive housing; approximately half these units  
25 will be new construction supported through HPD  
financing.

3 The Administration is committed to  
4 including supportive housing as an integral part of  
5 our housing stock and fully embraces supportive  
6 housing. This increased funding has allowed us to  
7 ensure that a wide range of people who need  
8 supportive housing will have access to it.

9 HPD's Supportive Housing Loan Program has  
10 long been the primary financing tool for the City's  
11 supportive housing production. Last week the Mayor  
12 announced our recent achievements with respect to  
13 housing development and I am proud to say that since  
14 the beginning of Housing New York in January of 2014,  
15 we have financed the construction or preservation of  
16 approximately 2,430 supportive housing units.

17 While a typical affordable housing deal  
18 depends on multiple sources of funding, supportive  
19 housing deals often rely on even more sources; it's  
20 not unusual to see five, six or more sources of  
21 capital financing listed for just one project. Most  
22 deals include a combination of City capital through  
23 HPD's Supportive Housing Loan Program, low-income tax  
24 credits and private debt. Rental assistance is  
25 typically funded through HUD Section 8 Shelter Plus  
Care or HUD-VASH vouchers.

3 I would like to reiterate our  
4 appreciation for the Council for today's hearing and  
5 for the ongoing attention to this important topic.  
6 Supportive housing serves a critical need in New York  
7 City and Council Members are critical partners in  
8 bringing together all the pieces necessary to make  
9 this housing a reality. I would be happy to answer  
10 any questions that you may have.

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much  
12 Ms. Katz for your testimony. I also want to note  
13 that in this building Brooklyn Ballet has 2,000  
14 square feet, so any student of Brooklyn Ballet who  
15 come from all over Brooklyn are in this building as  
16 well and their studio's right there on Schermerhorn  
17 Street.

18 I also want to welcome my colleagues  
19 Helen Rosenthal and Rafael Espinal as well to the  
20 hearing today. And I'll start off with some  
21 questions.

22 First off, I wanted to ask just about  
23 kind of structurally, so supportive housing for the  
24 last 25 years or so has been under a NY/NY framework  
25 where the City and the State have participated and  
jointly come up with an agreement on how supportive

3 housing units are going to be funded and financed.

4 Obviously that's not happening right now, and without

5 getting too much into kind of why that is -- I think

6 we kind of all understand tensions between the City

7 and the State -- what are the challenges that the

8 City is facing -- in other words, how is the

9 financing different; what is different from the NY/NY

10 III units, which we are just finishing building right

11 now, with the new either scatter-site or congregate

12 supportive housing facilities? What are the

13 challenges and how is the City kind of working to

14 address that in light of the fact that there's not

15 that partnership as we speak? And either of you can...

16 JESSICA KATZ: So for the congregate

17 housing, the financing fundamentally hasn't changed

18 much; most of these projects still incorporate a

19 combination of city and state financing sources.

20 What it does mean is that the social services and the

21 rental subsidy is... the City ends up having to pick up

22 the tab entirely for those projects. I think on the

23 staff level the supportive housing community is very

24 tight-knit and all of us who have worked in this

25 business for a long time continue to have very good

relationships with the staff level, so I think we

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2 continue to do our best coordinating with our state  
3 partners.

4 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: So what was the  
5 arrangement in terms of the social services and  
6 rental subsidy under NY/NY III? And then just  
7 specifically how is it different under the new  
8 arrangement?

9 JESSICA KATZ: Sure. Under NY/NY III,  
10 the mental health units, which was the bulk of the  
11 units under the 9,000-unit agreement, were paid for  
12 entirely by the State and the other populations, such  
13 as young adults aging out of foster care and HIV/AIDS  
14 and substance abuse was a split between city and  
15 state funding, so there was a substantial state  
16 investment in the ongoing operations in social  
17 services of the building that does not exist under  
18 the current 15/15 plan.

19 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And what is that, in  
20 terms of annual expense dollars, under say NY/NY III,  
21 how much is the state paying for NY/NY III annually?

22 DANIEL TIETZ: Yeah, I'm afraid that I  
23 don't have that with us; we can get it for you; we  
24 can give you their portion of I, II and III, and then  
25

3 obviously, for NYC 15/15 it's all our cost...

4 [crosstalk]

5 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Uh-huh.

6 DANIEL TIETZ: but I can... we don't have  
7 the number on NY/NY III with us.

8 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And it would be good  
9 to know what it is in terms of real dollar amounts in  
10 addition to what the percentages are, just so that we  
11 as a -- you know obviously, we as a legislative  
12 branch that approves the budget, it's important to  
13 know what the budgetary impact is to the City of New  
14 York vis-à-vis the State. And then do you have  
15 insight into then how... [crosstalk]

16 DANIEL TIETZ: Just to... Just to make care  
17 clear though, Council Member, the State is continuing  
18 to own its portion of... [crosstalk]

19 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right, yeah.

20 DANIEL TIETZ: their previous agreement,  
21 so going forward we fully expect that they're going  
22 to pay for the services costs, so their contribution  
23 continues.

24 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Oh on the NY/NY III,  
25 NY/NY II... [crosstalk]

DANIEL TIETZ: Exactly.

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2 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: NY/NY I...

3 DANIEL TIETZ: It... it... they don't have a  
4 contribution, apart from what Jessica said, with  
5 regards to capital for the NYC 15/15, the Mayor's  
6 plan, but they will continue with their previous  
7 obligations.

8 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And they are  
9 proposing to do another several thousand units of  
10 State-funded; I mean do you have any insight to how,  
11 in terms of the social service provision and the  
12 rental subsidies; does that mean in those units the  
13 State is going to be picking up 100% percent of the  
14 cost?

15 DANIEL TIETZ: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: So there's going to  
17 be, essentially, two separate systems that look  
18 similar but are going to be one entirely funded by  
19 the State and one entirely funded by the City?

20 DANIEL TIETZ: To some degree that's  
21 right; however, I think our expectation, and I may  
22 have to have my colleagues at DOHMH weigh in, but our  
23 expectation I think generally is that they'll still  
24 ask City agencies to have some role in this --

25

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3 notably DOHMH -- with regard to OMH units, so we'll  
4 see... [crosstalk]

5 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right, 'cause DOHMH  
6 is the local service provider... [crosstalk]

7 DANIEL TIETZ: Right, and in the previous  
8 agreements they didn't, how shall we say, do their  
9 own work in this regard.. [crosstalk]

10 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Sure... right, OMH  
11 doesn't have the staff to be a service provider in  
12 New York City...

13 DANIEL TIETZ: Right.

14 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: it's just the  
15 locality's responsibility. Okay, so we're in January  
16 of 2017; we had a hearing in late 2015 on this  
17 matter; has there been any additional developments in  
18 terms of discussions between the City and the State?  
19 In other words, I mean is there... essentially, the  
20 longer that we go on with two parallel tracks of  
21 supportive housing, does that over time eliminate the  
22 possibility of folding them into a new NY/NY  
23 agreement or is there still a potential if there's a  
24 rapprochement [laughter] for there to be greater  
25 **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

3 DANIEL TIETZ: This isn't a cold war,  
4 Council Member. [laughter] So... [crosstalk]

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: So says you.  
6 [laughter]

7 DANIEL TIETZ: That's right, Council  
8 Member, so says me. So I would say this; that we  
9 are... you know we continue to speak with them with  
10 great regularity, so at the staff level, there's a  
11 lot of cooperation every day on serving New Yorkers  
12 in need and that's true with regards to supportive  
13 housing as well; I'd expect it to be true going  
14 forward. I think nothing is off the table with  
15 regard to how this could look going forward. We  
16 fully expect that the City will have some role with  
17 regards to the State's units, so I think all things  
18 are open here. The good news would be that both City  
19 and State are investing significant resources in  
20 supportive housing in New York City, and that's a  
21 good thing for all of us.

22 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: We've heard from some  
23 advocates a concern that there are a number of  
24 applicants for supportive housing that are being  
25 turned away; that essentially once... the providers are  
required or asked to accept one-third of the

3 applicants and two out of every three are not being  
4 accepted into supportive housing programs; I don't  
5 know if that's accurate, but the concern is that  
6 those that are being turned away are being turned  
7 away because either they are not showing up to their  
8 appointments on time, they're not showing an adequate  
9 understanding of their own mental illness perhaps or  
10 they're not, you know, showing the kind of  
11 wherewithal to go through the rigors of an  
12 applications process and that is concerning obviously  
13 because those that might need the help the most may  
14 have the most challenges with going through the  
15 rigorous process of an application. So can you speak  
16 to that; is that happening; is... how do you ensure...  
17 how do you track what is going on with those that are  
18 not actually accepted into supportive housing units,  
19 and is there any way to track whether those same  
20 people are being rejected over and over and over  
21 again, and are you tracking the reasons why people  
22 are being rejected?

23 JESSICA KATZ: So I'll just start by  
24 saying that from the houser [sic] side, the purpose  
25 of supportive housing is that it's a voluntary  
program and our nonprofits are landlords that are

3 going to have a long-term relationship with these  
4 tenants, so we've tried to find a balance and the  
5 balance that we struck is sending three choices,  
6 essentially, so that the landlord can find the right  
7 match between the three. The three that we send all  
8 need supportive housing very badly and so by  
9 definition, there are going to be some folks who are  
10 not selected of the one, two three, but we really do  
11 want to maintain some amount of choice for the  
12 provider and some amount of choice for the tenant as  
13 well. So all three that we send very badly need  
14 supportive housing and we do want to maintain some  
15 amount of choice on both sides of the equation  
16 because this is a long-term relationship and it's a  
17 voluntary one. So I think that ratio of being able  
18 to select a tenant does have... you know, it's  
19 important to keep some aspect of that.

20 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And that's been the  
21 case through the previous iterations of NY/NY?

22 JESSICA KATZ: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay, so that's  
24 standard with supportive housing in New York City.  
25 And now how do you track what happens to the two out

3 of three that are not accepted into that particular  
4 unit?

5 DANIEL TIETZ: I'll explain.

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And I mean is that a  
7 concern that you have that it may be the ones most in  
8 need that are the ones that are rejected because they  
9 may not show a clear understanding of their mental  
10 illness; they may not, you know, dress appropriately  
11 for the interview; they might not show up on time;  
12 they might miss appointments, you know they may be  
13 afflicted with mental illness that they, you know, is  
14 a major hurdle to overcome?

15 DANIEL TIETZ: Alright, so I would  
16 probably characterize it somewhat differently than  
17 you did, which is that yes; it is one in three, but  
18 it's one in three who are similarly situated, so it's  
19 folks with significant needs; on paper there isn't a  
20 distinct difference among them. Folks need benefits  
21 in place, some need greater assistance than others;  
22 certainly there's an effort to match people to  
23 provider type and unit type, so this is an effort to  
24 look at what do folks need and then what programs  
25 would they fit in, so they're not approved, if you  
will, in general for all things. In the previous

3 agreements there were categories, as I think you may  
4 know, and so you might be approved for a category or  
5 two categories; there may be more limited  
6 availability of units in some of those categories  
7 than some other categories. An effort is made to  
8 make an appropriate match both category-wise and  
9 provider-wise, as well as unit type best [sic]  
10 between congregate and scattered-site. Almost by  
11 definition folks in scattered-site arguable can self-  
12 manage a bit more if they're in units that are in  
13 apartment buildings in the community with fewer on-  
14 site services than something like The Schermerhorn  
15 where it's a congregate setting where the services  
16 are right here, so there's an effort to place folks'  
17 greater needs in congregate units versus scattered-  
18 site units. I think I may let Mike Bosket add more  
19 to that.

19 MIKE BOSKET: Yes, just to build on Dan's  
20 point that the referrals of the three individuals  
21 that are made to open units, we would argue based on  
22 the clinical criteria to make the determination which  
23 types of units they've been determined eligible for;  
24 they have similar presentation in terms of their  
25 needs, but we also think going forward the

3 implementation of the coordinated assessment that Dan  
4 spoke of in his testimony and the vulnerability index  
5 that we're developing will help us better identify  
6 and prioritize those clients who have greater needs  
7 for placement in supportive housing based on criteria  
8 on the vulnerability index.

9 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: So that's going to be  
10 tracking client by client, so everybody's going.. or  
11 applicant by applicant, so everybody's going to have  
12 a profile of sorts on the..

13 MIKE BOSKET: As we develop it, all  
14 clients who go through the supportive housing  
15 application process will have a coordinated  
16 assessment and all clients will have a vulnerability  
17 index. We're building that now; the hope is to have  
18 it implemented by the end of this year, but that will  
19 allow us to better identify those clients who are in  
20 highest need.

21 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And is there going to  
22 be a space within that index to show whether somebody  
23 has had repeated applications and not been accepted  
24 into a supportive housing unit?  
25

2 MIKE BOSKET: We are developing the tool  
3 now and have some ideas as to what's onto [sic] the  
4 tool... [crosstalk]

5 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Uh-huh.

6 MIKE BOSKET: I can't say if that will be  
7 one of the questions or not.

8 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay, I encourage you  
9 to look at that issue. Again, I'm not... you know,  
10 this wasn't generated from, you know, my assumptions  
11 on the matter; this was reported to me by advocates,  
12 so it's something that I think certainly I would  
13 encourage you to look at and also work with the  
14 provider and advocate community as something to flag  
15 as you kind of move forward with developing that  
16 criteria and implementing it.

17 JESSICA KATZ: I also think that the lack  
18 of units themselves and the lack of a sufficient  
19 number is the primary limiting factor here; I think  
20 we've done a pretty job prioritizing and coordinated  
21 assessment will help us target even deeper, but we  
22 still don't have enough apartments for everybody who  
23 needs it, so that's got to be our primary..

24 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right and that's the  
25 context by which... and that might give rise to a

3 particular situation because of the scarcity of the  
4 units, but I think that it's important to kind of  
5 keep an eye out for that particular condition,  
6 because we're not... you know, this is in fact a  
7 uniquely vulnerable population to issues of that sort  
8 in terms of -- because there's mental illness often  
9 involved that there's... you know keeping... the issue of  
10 keeping of appointments, showing up to appointments  
11 out of sorts or disheveled or something like that is  
12 something that we want to make sure is not  
13 perpetually inhibiting people from getting into  
14 apartments.

15 I want to ask I guess one more question  
16 here and then I'll turn it over to my colleagues and  
17 I'll probably come back for some.

18 With the previous NY/NY agreements it was  
19 very prescribed how many units were going to be for  
20 different categories of supporting housing in terms  
21 of conditions that are being met; the 15/15 plan is  
22 not as prescriptive; is that something that was done  
23 by design and is that to allow more flexibility, and  
24 how then do you make sure or ensure on an ongoing  
25 basis that there's enough units being provided for  
particular categories that may be more difficult to

3 achieve and so you know, what's in place to prevent  
4 the City from just developing the easiest units to  
5 develop?

6 JESSICA KATZ: So as you pointed out, the  
7 recommendations from the task force was to target  
8 towards three broad populations, so to get away from  
9 these multiple, very prescribed units, which we're  
10 finding, at the end of the NY/NY III, it's hard to  
11 necessarily fill when you have just a couple here; a  
12 couple there; at the moment it's not necessarily  
13 meeting where the demand is. So I think there is a  
14 lot of work and a lot of thought that went into  
15 really figuring out what is the best road to go  
16 moving forward; there was a lot of data analytics, we  
17 really looked at what the need is; as you mentioned  
18 earlier, the number of people in shelter has  
19 increased significantly, and so I think the good news  
20 is; there is a lot of overlapping need, right, and so  
21 if you just take the three broad populations that  
22 were recommended, right -- it's single adults and  
23 adult families, families with children, and youth --  
24 and within those populations there's a ton of need  
25 and as Deputy Commissioner Mike Bosket mentioned  
earlier, the City is moving towards finding a way to

3 create a coordinated assessment and a vulnerability  
4 index, and so it's in our best interest, as I think  
5 it's also in the client's best interest to really  
6 target these resources -- they're scarce resources --  
7 to those who are most in need, and so we'll be able  
8 to figure out, you know on some kind of scale or  
9 within a spectrum who are those people that could not  
10 live in the community by themselves without having  
11 supportive housing resource, and those are the people  
12 we really want to make sure are going to be targeted  
13 for these units. And so by creating a broader  
14 flexibility and not making it as prescribed, that's  
15 going to allow us to really implement that kind of  
16 thoughtful, targeted approach as we look at those who  
17 are in shelter at any given period of time.

18 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Now that means though  
19 -- I mean how are we going to ensure then that  
20 medical family, substance abuse in recovery,  
21 substance abuse active, that the people are fitting  
22 those criteria, that we're still meeting the minimum  
23 number of objective units without setting forward...  
24 [crosstalk]

25 JESSICA KATZ: So all of those folks  
would fall, right, within... so if they're single

3 adults and they're me... you know, substance user,  
4 right, active substance users who are single adults,  
5 they would fall within the category of people  
6 eligible for the single-adult units. And so if they  
7 are more vulnerable than somebody else, they would  
8 obviously be prioritized.

9 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: So they would be  
10 prioritized as being more vulnerable because of a  
11 substance abuse issue?

12 JESSICA KATZ: Well because we're going  
13 to create this vulnerability index, so we're going to  
14 create a tool that's going to help guide us towards  
15 understanding within that spectrum of people who need  
16 these units who is going to need it the most.

17 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: So somebody with a  
18 greater vulnerability will receive a higher priority  
19 **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

20 JESSICA KATZ: Yeah, that's the direction  
21 and the intent. It's not easy to do; it's not  
22 something that's going to happen very quickly, but a  
23 lot of the feedback we heard from the community; a  
24 lot of the feedback that we've heard from providers  
25 and clients and everyone trying to re-house, and it's

3 also within the City's interest to really try to make  
4 sure that we are serving the highest-need.

5 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: I see.

6 DANIEL TIETZ: Yeah, if I could just add  
7 -- the previous categories were genuine categories,  
8 and I think as we each recognize people don't tend to  
9 live in those small boxes... [interpose]

10 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right. Yeah.

11 DANIEL TIETZ: so you know, if you only  
12 had this thing apparently that you needed addressed,  
13 then that's the only category for which you can get  
14 approved and if we ran out of units, then you are  
15 plum out of luck. And in this instance, taking a  
16 whole host of vulnerability factors into account and  
17 essentially assigning -- if you think about this as a  
18 score to those -- then those with the greatest needs  
19 would have the greatest access, because many people  
20 don't have just one challenge in life; they have more  
21 than one challenge and they have greater needs than  
22 some others, and so that's the effort here.

23 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: So then... sorry; then  
24 going back to the situation where if you have three  
25 applicants that you're choosing from, under that  
framework do you still have then the discretion to

3 choose somebody with a lower score on the  
4 vulnerability index [background comments] or does the  
5 person with the higher score on the vulnerability  
6 index be the de facto choice for that provider?

7 JESSICA KATZ: So you would send the  
8 three most vulnerable people on the list, right...  
9 [crosstalk]

10 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: [inaudible]

11 JESSICA KATZ: the provider would pick  
12 one... [crosstalk]

13 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Right.

14 JESSICA KATZ: and then the next two, the  
15 next available unit, you would take those two and  
16 then a third one, so we would work our way down the  
17 list.

18 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. Okay, I'm  
19 going to turn it over to my co-chair and then we'll  
20 be hearing from Council Members Rosenthal [sic] and  
21 Grodenchik and then probably come back for some more  
22 questions.

23 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you very  
24 much. Just want to make something... point that I  
25 think Mr. Tietz said, which is -- I just want to make  
clear that I believe that most of the staff -- city

3 and state -- actually are trying their best to help  
4 the constituents of both, we normally say there's a  
5 feud in city and state; there is a feud between the  
6 Mayor and the Governor and that is what is causing  
7 much of this problem; this is one instance where it's  
8 having a direct effect, I believe, on the people who  
9 need help the most and I would have to say, from what  
10 I see, it is really on the Governor to put up what he  
11 needs to do, because the Mayor has done so and is  
12 providing a plan; the Governor has given no real  
13 excuse as to why the \$2 billion is being locked up  
14 and people need these [sic] services, so I think it's  
15 on him at this point. But we often say city/state; I  
16 want to make it clear; it's two people; it is the  
17 Mayor and the Governor and it's very frustrating  
18 'cause there are real lives being affected and in  
19 this case it is the Governor who needs to put up,  
20 because we have done so.

21 But thank you very much for your  
22 testimony. I have some questions on -- Ms. Katz --  
23 Every unit of supportive housing taxpayers save more  
24 than \$10,000 per year in public resources, such as  
25 shelters, emergency, jails, and psychiatric  
facilities. I was confused about psychiatric

3 facilities; wouldn't someone need the services  
4 anyway; where is the money being saved there?

5 JESSICA KATZ: So these are folks who  
6 were living permanently in psychiatric hospitals but  
7 really didn't need to be there and could thrive in  
8 supportive housing, but a... [crosstalk]

9 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Oh I see.

10 JESSICA KATZ: psychiatric facility costs  
11 so much more per night, per year [background comment]  
12 than supportive housing does.

13 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: And so we're  
14 freeing up that space for someone who actually needs  
15 those services. Can you describe how supportive  
16 housing increases property values **[inaudible]**?

17 JESSICA KATZ: Sure. So the NYU Fuhrman  
18 Center did a study, must have been six or seven years  
19 ago now; we gave them our data on where all the  
20 supportive housing projects that we've sited and what  
21 year they opened and they took a look at the  
22 surrounding census tracts and figured out whether, if  
23 you were in a very small, of a 500 or a 1,000-square-  
24 foot radius versus other properties that were in the  
25 census tract but not immediately adjacent to  
supportive housing, and it turned out that the

3 property values increased at a faster rate if you  
4 were immediately adjacent. Part of that we think is;  
5 many of our buildings have on-site security, so  
6 there's some good eyes on the street, that kind of  
7 helps the surrounding property values and the block  
8 be safer; a building like this, as you've seen, is  
9 gorgeous and so we try to always be the most  
10 attractive property on the block, which also helps  
11 the surrounding properties, and many times we're  
12 replacing a blated [sic] project with something  
13 gorgeous like this; this was a vacant lot for many  
14 years prior to this building being built, so that  
15 also has a great impact on property value.

16 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you. And  
17 I appreciate you mentioning that; appreciate the  
18 report; I do know that the vast majority of people in  
19 the city **[inaudible]** still refuse to believe that and  
20 with do everything they can to fight supportive  
21 housing in spite of the facts, but I've learned in  
22 the past two years that facts don't matter sometimes,  
23 [laughter] but my hope is that if we can keep [sic]  
24 at least... [crosstalk]

25 DANIEL TIETZ: I'm not sure what you're  
referring to... [crosstalk]

3 JESSICA KATZ: **[inaudible]**, Councilman...

4 [crosstalk]

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: You have no  
6 idea, do you? We're about to make America great  
7 again in about a day. [laughter] But hopefully we  
8 just keep pushing that information out there and  
9 maybe it'll start to seep in.

10 Another part of testimony -- supportive  
11 housing is a solution to homelessness. I was just  
12 wondering if that is true; I think it is the solution  
13 for a subset -- I just want to be clear, because I  
14 know that another [sic] solutions are making sure  
15 that people have legal representation, making sure  
16 that people have assistance in paying for rent, so  
17 not everybody needs supportive housing, so I wanted  
18 to make sure we were clear...

19 DANIEL TIETZ: Right; that's exactly  
20 right. So in my testimony I sort of listed the  
21 things that HRA does and among them, which you just  
22 mentioned with regard to legal services, rental  
23 assistance; all the other things we do, there many,  
24 many folks in shelter, for example, who work, they  
25 just don't have enough to make the rent, and they  
don't need supportive housing. So supportive housing

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2 is an answer, particularly I think for those who are  
3 chronically homeless and have significant health,  
4 mental health, substance use and other needs; for  
5 them to make it in the community, this is a good  
6 answer; for others, they don't need this.

7 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you. And  
8 just to follow up on something that that the Co-Chair  
9 said; I'm not sure if I got a full answer, but there  
10 was testimony in one of the answers about funding  
11 that was shared between city and state with the  
12 partnerships; do we have a number of how much money  
13 we're losing with the partnership?

14 DANIEL TIETZ: Right. So just be clear,  
15 in the existing NY/NY agreements, the City/State  
16 agreements, the State's contribution continues -- or  
17 so we're counting on... [interpose]

18 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Do you know how  
19 much that is?

20 DANIEL TIETZ: No, and that's the number  
21 we're going to get for you... [crosstalk]

22 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Okay.

23 DANIEL TIETZ: so that continues. In the  
24 City's, you know the Mayor's 15,000 you know NYC  
25 15/15, those costs, apart from some that Jessica

3 mentioned with regards to capital are the City, so  
4 the operating costs, the service costs are City  
5 costs. In that, of course, we save on shelter, we  
6 save on, you know, jail time, we save on Medicaid, we  
7 save in a variety of ways, but there are.. frankly,  
8 given the City's investment, there are also savings  
9 to the State, so for example maybe most notably,  
10 there are Medicaid savings for the State. If you are  
11 serving folks well in supportive housing, then by  
12 definition they will have fewer Medicaid costs at the  
13 state. But the investment in NYC 15/15 is largely a  
14 City investment.

15 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: And I guess  
16 it's safe to say that **[inaudible]** the number that  
17 you're going to get for us would narrow what we're  
18 losing if **[inaudible]**?

19 JESSICA KATZ: Yeah, so I think what we  
20 can do is; if we were to assume the exact same rules  
21 of NY/NY III funding applied going forward, we could  
22 figure out what that number would be. I think we..  
23 you know we would also be hopeful that if there was a  
24 NY/NY IV that maybe it would be more favorable to the  
25 City, but we can kind of model it on what the current  
NY/NY III arrangements are.

2 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: And for  
3 clarity, our preference is to have a NY/NY agreement;  
4 we're going forward with this because the Governor  
5 has not told us what he's doing with the \$2 billion.

6 DANIEL TIETZ: No, not exactly. We're  
7 going forward with this because the Mayor heard  
8 Council Members and communities and advocates say  
9 that supportive housing is a key answer to ending  
10 homelessness for thousands of New Yorkers with  
11 significant health, mental health and substance use  
12 and other needs. So we heard that and the Mayor said  
13 with our without an agreement with the State, we need  
14 to act. So I think as Commissioner Banks testified  
15 last year, we thought it was important to go forward  
16 even in the absence of a new agreement.

17 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Sure, and I  
18 appreciate what you phrased; as the Chair of Housing,  
19 I'm going to say I think we would've preferred that  
20 the NY/NY agreement went forward; I'm happy that the  
21 Mayor stepped up with his part... [crosstalk]

22 DANIEL TIETZ: We're always happy when  
23 they're willing to pay...

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Sure. And so I  
25 think we would've expected that the Governor would've

3 acted then and at least would've acted by now --  
4 those are my words -- so I just want to make sure  
5 that that's on the record. Just have a couple more  
6 questions; then I'll turn it back to the Chair, who I  
7 think is going to have colleagues ask questions.

8 In a December 2015 hearing on supportive  
9 housing, the Administration testified that the first  
10 scattered-site units will be available in 2017 and  
11 the first congregate units will be in Fiscal Year  
12 2018. In December 2016 the Administration announced  
13 that contracts were awarded for the first 550  
14 scattered-site units for chronically homeless adults  
15 and adult families with a serious mental illness or  
16 substance use disorder. Contracts have been awarded  
17 for the first 550 scattered-site units; when do you  
18 expect tenants to move into those apartments?

19 JESSICA KATZ: So we are in the process  
20 now of negotiating with the nonprofit providers; we  
21 are hopeful that we will be able to locate and secure  
22 apartments and finalize contracts by the end of this  
23 fiscal year, so we're targeting a July date.

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Will all of  
25 these tenants be coming from the DHS system?

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2 JESSICA KATZ: The tenants will, yes, be  
3 coming from the DHS system and they will be filtered  
4 through the 2010e process.

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: What is the  
6 plan for the next phase of the implementation?

7 JESSICA KATZ: The next phase is putting  
8 out an RFP for congregate units and then putting out  
9 the RFP for the remaining scatter-site units.

10 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Are you still  
11 on track to develop the first congregate units in  
12 Fiscal Year 2018?

13 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: **[inaudible]** for the  
14 record.

15 JESSICA KATZ: Yes.

16 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you very  
17 much.

18 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay, we're going to  
19 turn it over to our colleagues; first up is Council  
20 Member Helen Rosenthal.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you,  
22 thank you so much. Thank you for holding this  
23 hearing, to my colleagues, and thank you so much for  
24 this helpful information. I work with two out of the  
25 four of you and I find you to be very responsive,

3 very helpful in my district and I really want to  
4 thank you publicly for that, because I know how  
5 intractable these problems are.

6 I actually want to ask just very few  
7 questions around, Dan, your testimony on page nine.  
8 You know, it's interesting what you just said about  
9 adding in the information about Legal Aid and sort of  
10 one -- I still call them one-shots -- and whether or  
11 not that has to do with supportive housing; I think  
12 it very much has to do with supportive housing  
13 because some of the clients who are being helped by  
14 those services probably could use supportive housing  
15 instead of being in their rent-regulated home, and I  
16 think there's a client in particular that we've been  
17 working with who I think would qualify for that, so  
18 I'm glad you kept that information in here.

19 I'd be interested in knowing about the...  
20 or going forward, how you're tracking or how you're  
21 thinking about the success rate of using more Legal  
22 Aid lawyers and giving -- is it still called one-  
23 shots, you know where you... [interpose, background  
24 comment] one-shots to assist with the cost of rentals  
25 -- over a long period of time; in other words, are  
26 people who were helping with lawyers -- yes, the

3 success rate, obviously; if they have a lawyer in the  
4 courtroom, more likely than not they're going to win.  
5 But I'm wondering over a long period of time whether  
6 or not you track the individuals who you're helping  
7 in both those regards to see if there's overlap and  
8 to see if over time they're coming back and back  
9 again. The reason I'm curious is because as I think  
10 about my constituents who need that help, there are  
11 different categories; one category, and the category  
12 I'm most concerned about, are the ones who get the  
13 help mostly with Legal Aid attorneys because the  
14 building owner is actively harassing them out; they  
15 see an apartment that they think they could monetize  
16 and so they're just going to keep harassing them till  
17 they're out, and it's those individuals that, you  
18 know I really want to be helping because the right  
19 thing to do is to keep them in their apartment.

20 DANIEL TIETZ: Yeah, so with regard to  
21 the emergency assistance, it's tracked, we can see in  
22 our system who we've given the emergency assistance  
23 to, when and for what, and you know, over what period  
24 of time and the same is true with regards to  
25 referrals to legal services. So if that's the same  
person, and it often is, so we referred you to legal

2 services; the legal services lawyer helped you in  
3 housing court; you know the deal is that you have to  
4 pay some amount of arrears and we're the ones who  
5 will pay it. So we can see all of that in our files.  
6 I would say that part of the advantage of or  
7 usefulness of having these legal services contracts  
8 is that, of course, the lawyers that we're assigning  
9 these cases to will say to us the very thing you just  
10 described; this is a landlord who's chasing all the  
11 rent-regulated tenants.. [crosstalk]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Yes.

13 DANIEL TIETZ: out of the building and  
14 they all need lawyers and can you do something about  
15 this. And there too I think there's a back and  
16 forth, which maybe Jessica knows better than I do,  
17 with regards to our state friends and what landlords  
18 in rent-regulated properties, or properties that  
19 should be rent regulated, are doing with their  
20 tenants.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Exactly. And  
22 then do you track, maybe in working in tandem with  
23 Jessica, buildings that you might consider  
24 opportunity for the City to take over in some way?  
25 You know, in other words, what do you do with the

3 information that you get back? You know, I could  
4 list three building owners that, you know, we're  
5 working with to try to, you know, keep people in  
6 their homes. How do you think about the next steps  
7 once you start to see patterns of buildings that are  
8 being systematically, you know, emptied out...?

9 [crosstalk]

10 DANIEL TIETZ: Yes, I think there's... I'll  
11 start and then I'll let Jessica. So I think there's  
12 some of what we each do, so I just mentioned refer  
13 [sic] out to legal services for the individual  
14 tenants; there are opportunities here, so speaking of  
15 supportive housing, so there are opportunities for  
16 owners with properties, of course, to speak to not-  
17 for-profit partners, as some developer did for this  
18 very project here, so there are other opportunities  
19 for folks to, you know contemplate other affordable  
20 housing uses for their property, but I think what  
21 you're referring to in terms of harassment, I'm going  
22 to let Jessica handle.

23 [background comment]

24 JESSICA KATZ: Thanks, Council Member  
25 Rosenthal. So HRA has a very robust system of legal  
aid for individual tenants, but HPD, as you know,

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3 also has a litigation unit where as we can bring  
4 suits on behalf of the City of New York against  
5 landlords, which we do frequently, so if there's  
6 particular buildings in your district, we'd be happy  
7 to get back to you on those in particular.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Well for sure,  
9 but I guess I'm wondering if internally at HRA you  
10 could... you know, I'm not asking you to do it today  
11 or... but that you have your go to list of, you know,  
12 these are the building owners who are systematically  
13 doing this and who we're pursuing and do you  
14 regularly add to that list; could you tell me off the  
15 top of your head how many buildings; how many  
16 building owners; do you have enough resources to be  
17 doing that work, because in my mind's eye, if we  
18 could solve that issue, that's... you know, there are  
19 500 units a year in my district where there's no  
20 question that the building owners are simply  
21 harassing and evicting out the tenants, and you know  
22 we did that analysis using the Department of Finance  
23 website, their information, and literally, over the  
24 last five years, we've been tracking this since I've  
25 been in office and two years prior, 500 units a year;  
I mean that's 2,500 units that you could have tropped

3 [sic] up to preservation and I'm wondering, you know  
4 how you're taking advantage of that information and  
5 stemming the tide.

6 JESSICA KATZ: So I'd love to, you know,  
7 bring you in and have you sit down with our  
8 litigation unit to make sure that the strategy that  
9 that team is putting forth is meeting the needs of  
10 those buildings in your district.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay. Great,  
12 thank you very much; I'll take you up on that.

13 DANIEL TIETZ: Yeah, I'll also just note  
14 that there's a lot of back and forth between the two  
15 agencies' staff, so if we're seeing something, then  
16 we're pretty promptly in touch with HPD about this  
17 landlord, this building, what do you know; we're  
18 seeing this happen with our clients, we're seeing  
19 people come to us all from this address.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay. And do  
21 we then -- sorry, Chairs -- [background comment] do  
22 you bring in Department of Buildings as well and is  
23 there... the sense I get is that you can track a  
24 building between DOB, HRA, HPD, and Department of  
25 Finance, that there's a code so that you can see... for  
example, if you put a violation on a building owner

3 you could, hypothetically, see whether or not they  
4 ever pay; it goes through OATH and then -- do you  
5 track that kind of information?

6 DANIEL TIETZ: Yeah, we can see...

7 [interpose]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I asked you  
9 two questions, I guess about DOB and then tracking.

10 DANIEL TIETZ: Yeah, we can see much of  
11 that information and if.. again, if we ever have  
12 concerns, if we're seeing a pattern, then we reach  
13 out to our other City colleagues with regard to those  
14 properties.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay. And do  
16 you track it through the Department of Finance and  
17 whether or not violations are paid?

18 JESSICA KATZ: That's o... [interpose]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I know we're  
20 way off topic now.

21 JESSICA KATZ: That's often what the  
22 litigation unit is doing is litigating to get those,  
23 you know, to get some of those fines paid.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Right, but..  
25 Okay, so we'll talk more offline. I mean the point  
isn't so much as getting them paid; it's that it's an

3 indicator that this is a bad dude and we need to  
4 perhaps step it up and I don't know if you use that  
5 as an indicator; I don't see that happening. Okay,  
6 thank you very much. Thank you chairs.

7 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you Council  
8 Member Rosenthal. Council Member Grodenchik.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you  
10 Chair, thank you chair... [crosstalk]

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And we've also been  
12 joined by Council Member Ulrich.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Good morning;  
14 it's almost good afternoon, but good morning. The  
15 numbers for supportive housing that you presented  
16 this morning, are those just the City numbers;  
17 they're not inclusive of anything that the State is  
18 doing in the City of New York?

19 DANIEL TIETZ: These are the... some of  
20 these are units from the previous NY/NY agreements  
21 and then the units, the sort of new ones we were  
22 mentioning are all the NYC 15/15 units; they are not  
23 the Governor's new initiative.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Okay. Thank  
25 you. I just want to ask you quickly, on the HRA  
2010e, it sounds like a federal tax form, but

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3 [laughter] how long is that form? It must go on for  
4 about a month.

5 MIKE BOSKET: It's about nine pages in  
6 length, I mean clearly it's a psychosocial and a  
7 psychiatric evaluation and some other components.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Okay. And  
9 this would be done by a hospital perhaps or by..

10 MIKE BOSKET: It would be done by housing  
11 specialist, hospitals.. [interpose]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Nursing  
13 homes, perhaps [sic]..

14 MIKE BOSKET: not usually a nursing home,  
15 Rikers completes them, various institutions and  
16 community-based providers.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: And do you  
18 provide training sessions, you know because we hold  
19 at the Council... it's very.. these forms can be very  
20 complicated, so there are training sessions and..

21 MIKE BOSKET: We absolutely for new users  
22 have an orientation and training sessions.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Okay. And  
24 could it theoretically be done by an individual or do  
25 you need to have a sign-off by some kind of  
professional?

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3 MIKE BOSKET: No, it has to be done by a  
4 housing specialist or some other person like that.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Okay. And  
6 just to educate me a little; on supportive housing in  
7 general, what's a typical stay, is it many years, is  
8 it... it's a long time?

9 MIKE BOSKET: Uhm-hm.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: You know I... I  
11 mean my family moved into a NYCHA development in '56  
12 and 50 years later we finally had enough of it and we  
13 were gone, but I'm sure that's a long time.

14 DANIEL TIETZ: Yeah, I would say that... I  
15 can get you an average length of stay if we maybe  
16 even looked at it by category, if possible, but it's  
17 a long time, it's usually years. I mean there is  
18 certainly some turnover; I would say in some  
19 categories more turnover than others. So for  
20 example, you could see some turnover in some of the  
21 HIV/AIDS units because people's health improved and  
22 they wished to have more independence and they would  
23 be fine with that; in other instances, youth, for  
24 example, would move on, potentially, from those  
25 units. So there is some turnover; I would say that  
most though, it's years in length.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: That makes  
4 sense to me; I mean it's just obviously,  
5 unfortunately, the need for services sometimes  
6 increases; it doesn't usually diminish, but I have  
7 met individuals when I've toured transitional  
8 services facilities in my district; one gentleman had  
9 been living on the Creedmoor campus for over 50 years  
10 and it just, it struck me, but he's doing well, so  
11 that's what we want and it's a good outcome.

12 Mr. Chairs, thank you very much and thank  
13 you for being here this morning and for being on  
14 time.

15 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you, Council  
16 Member Grodenchik. Council Member Ritchie Torres.

17 [background comments]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Good afternoon...  
19 is it afternoon? [background comments] Good to see  
20 you again; congratulations on your promotion,  
21 Commissioner Katz.

22 JESSICA KATZ: Thank you.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I have a  
24 question; do we have an exact number on the gap  
25 between the demand for supportive housing and the  
supply? What's the demand and what's the supply?

2 DANIEL TIETZ: I think I gave last year's  
3 number, but I don't recall it offhand. [background  
4 comment] Yeah, I think it's essentially four people  
5 waiting for every one person who gets a unit, which  
6 is a way to look at it.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: So what are the  
8 number of supportive housing units we have in the  
9 city?

10 [background comments]

11 DANIEL TIETZ: You're asking me the  
12 total... the total the City..

13 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Yes, our total  
14 supply of supportive housing units.

15 DANIEL TIETZ: [background comments] It's  
16 32,000.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: And how many  
18 people are on the waiting list and how many people  
19 are thought to need supportive housing?

20 DANIEL TIETZ: I'm not sure about the  
21 waiting list; I think in my testimony I gave last  
22 year's applicants versus approved; I'm not sure that  
23 I actually gave the number that have entered  
24 supportive housing last year, but it's thousands,  
25 thousands; I want to say about 23,000 applied last

2 year and about maybe 14,000 were approved, which is  
3 far more than we have available units.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: But we have no  
5 aggregate number of people who require?

6 DANIEL TIETZ: I can... who require?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Yeah, supportive  
8 housing.

9 DANIEL TIETZ: So we have estimates, just  
10 based on the folks we have in shelter and what we  
11 know is folks, for example, that we have in shelter,  
12 just looking at shelter alone as opposed to any  
13 others, we can come with estimates; otherwise, the  
14 data we have is the numbers of folks for whom a 2010e  
15 application has been submitted and has been approved.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I have a question  
17 regarding the \$2 billion, although I'm not sure if  
18 you would know the answer to this question, but do we  
19 know what share of those dollars are going towards  
20 supportive housing in New York City and the number of  
21 units that would emerge as a result?

22 DANIEL TIETZ: So I don't know that the  
23 MOU is done, so I don't think that that... [interpose]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: No, once signed,  
25 once signed.

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2 DANIEL TIETZ: Yeah, so I... I... [background  
3 comments] I don't know the number.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Okay. And under  
5 NY/NY III, my understanding was that the City and the  
6 State would split the capital costs, but the State  
7 would absorb the full operating costs. Is that a  
8 correct characterization of...

9 JESSICA KATZ: The State absorbed the  
10 operating costs for all the mental health units,  
11 which were... [crosstalk]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Okay.

13 JESSICA KATZ: the vast majority; it was  
14 probably two-quarters of it, and then the young  
15 adults aging out of foster care, HIV/AIDS and  
16 substance abuse the City and State split the cost of  
17 the operating as well.

18 [background comment]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: And so under the  
20 new framework, which is the City unilaterally taking  
21 on supportive housing developments; we're absorbing a  
22 100% of both the operating and the capital costs?

23 [background comment]

24 JESSICA KATZ: A 100% percent of the  
25 operating and the social services; the capital is

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2 still a mix of sources, so on the ground any given  
3 project gets financed with a mix of city and state  
4 sources either way.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: And so we're  
6 striving to create 15,000 units?

7 JESSICA KATZ: Fifteen thousand units,  
8 half of which are scattered-site and the other half  
9 are congregate, so the congregate ones are where you  
10 need the capital dollars and the tax credit.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Okay. And once  
12 the 15,000 units are in place, what's the operating  
13 cost, the annual operating cost of operating 15,000  
14 units of supportive housing?

15 DANIEL TIETZ: Yeah, I think our estimate  
16 in my testimony is, at the end, \$96 million a year.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: \$96 million for  
18 15,000 units?

19 DANIEL TIETZ: Yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: And the plan is...  
21 [crosstalk]

22 DANIEL TIETZ: Oh... no, 19... I think in  
23 [background comment] 1919... I think... I'm sorry, 2019  
24 it's estimated to be \$96 million, so that's I guess  
25

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2 what, four years in, but the cost will ramp up from  
3 there once... [interpose]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Well the plan is  
5 set to be complete... the Mayor announced... [crosstalk]

6 DANIEL TIETZ: Fifteen years.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: the 2015/15, so  
8 2030?

9 DANIEL TIETZ: Yeah. So I think the  
10 number that I have in my estimate [sic]... [crosstalk]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: So by 2030, what  
12 is the operating cost?

13 DANIEL TIETZ: I don't have that, but the  
14 operating... [crosstalk]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: That's the number  
16 I would want though; I'd be curious to know what's  
17 the operating cost by 2030, if... [interpose]

18 DANIEL TIETZ: Yeah, we could certainly  
19 chat with OMB and see if we can get you a number that  
20 would be reasonably accurate.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I guess how do we  
22 ensure the completion of a plan nine years after the  
23 Mayor has left office? That's something I've never  
24 quite understood. The Mayor is leaving in 2021, if  
25 re-elected; this plan extends until 2030; how do you

3 lock in the commitment to 15,000 units nine years  
4 after he's ended his term?

5 JESSICA KATZ: So I think as we've talked  
6 about, the supportive housing community on the ground  
7 has been working on this, you know, an administration  
8 after administration, so even the NY/NY agreement  
9 spanned a variety of mayors and governors, some of  
10 whom got along better than others, but the social  
11 service providers and the agencies on the ground and  
12 some of the advocates here in the room today were  
13 committed to making sure that happened and so they  
14 persisted across administrations.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: But NY/NY was  
16 something of a contract between the City and State,  
17 so that has more security, whereas the latest  
18 iteration -- **[inaudible]** of creating the 15,000 units  
19 is based on one mayor and what's to stop the next  
20 mayor from reversing it by **[inaudible]**?

21 JESSICA KATZ: So I would just again say  
22 that the NY/NY I, II and III spanned a variety of  
23 different mayors and governors across the ideological  
24 spectrum and each one renewed a commitment to  
25 building supportive housing in some way, shape or  
form, so **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

3 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I don't think  
4 we're understanding each other; this is not NY/NY,  
5 but this is the Mayor's plan, right...

6 JESSICA KATZ: Correct.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: so it's not an  
8 agreement with the State, which strikes me as much  
9 more secure; it's the executive action of one mayor,  
10 so what's to stop the subsequent mayor from going in  
11 a different direction, right; there is nothing to  
12 stop the subsequent mayor from going... it's a yes or  
13 no question; I don't know.

14 JESSICA KATZ: I mean I would... the cost-  
15 savings impact of doing that I think would give  
16 anybody pause in the future.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: How has the  
18 community reaction to supportive housing evolved over  
19 time? 'Cause you know, when community boards are  
20 first introduced to a supportive housing development  
21 **[inaudible]** apocalyptic fears about declining quality  
22 of life, which never come true, and it turns out that  
23 the supportive housing development is the most  
24 beautiful development on block and removes blight;  
25 have you seen an evolution in the community response;  
has it become more receptive, more supportive over

3 time, except for the occasional assemblyperson? That  
4 is a joke that Commissioner Katz, she know what I'm  
5 talking about.

6 [background comment]

7 JESSICA KATZ: Yeah, so you know, there  
8 is two of us up on dais today who have spent time  
9 living in a supportive housing project -- I won't  
10 name either of our names today -- and I do think  
11 there has been an evolution where now we hear, you  
12 know, can it be this kind of unit; can it be that  
13 kind of unit; can we vet the service provider, so I  
14 think it is a more nuanced discussion, but there is  
15 still, especially in this homelessness crisis, you  
16 know, we do tend to see quite a bit of opposition. I  
17 will say what hasn't changed is that all of that  
18 discussion and all of that fear happens before the  
19 building ever opens; I think what's been true across  
20 the board, you know in the 15 years that I've been  
21 doing this, is that when the building opens it's  
22 quite; we don't hear much about it after that.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: And I worry that...

24 I guess our approach to creating housing is something  
25 of a binary; that we either have housing with  
intensive services, as in supportive housing, or

3 housing with no services at all, whereas there is a  
4 spectrum in-between of residents who have service  
5 needs that might not justify supportive housing, but  
6 might justify some level of service intervention;  
7 what do we do with that population, that gray area  
8 in-between?

9 JESSICA KATZ: That's a great question;  
10 it's something that we've spent a lot of time  
11 thinking about as we work to place more homeless  
12 families who are not in a supportive housing category  
13 in apartment buildings throughout the Housing New  
14 York plan. One strategy that's been effective so far  
15 under Housing New York is we've created additional  
16 strategies that allow us to do mixed use buildings  
17 and so if you have a building that has a daycare  
18 center in the first floor, a community center in the  
19 first floor, those aren't services that are, you  
20 know, on-site, integrated into the fabric of the  
21 apartment building itself the way supportive housing  
22 is, but having it so closely knit in the building  
23 provides the tenants with a lot of the support that  
24 they may need.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: And I just have  
one more final [sic] question about the interaction

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3 between supportive housing and DSRIP. I know the  
4 core objective of DSRIP is to reduce preventable  
5 hospitalization, which is something that supportive  
6 housing could achieve, right; housing is health, and  
7 so are there DSRIP dollars flowing into supportive  
8 housing development in New York City?

9 JESSICA KATZ: I don't think there are  
10 DSRIP dollars specifically flowing into supportive  
11 housing... [crosstalk]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I've heard about  
13 the use of Medicaid Redesign dollars for housing and...

14 JESSICA KATZ: Right, so...

15 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I'm curious to  
16 know if we've seen that here in New York City so.

17 JESSICA KATZ: So Medicaid Redesign  
18 dollars have been used in supportive housing.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Okay, but not  
20 district dollars...? [sic] [crosstalk]

21 JESSICA KATZ: not... not Medicaid; that's  
22 not Medicaid dollars themselves, so. And what also  
23 has happened with the Medicaid Redesign program is a  
24 lot more tracking of specifically the Medicaid costs  
25 of those particular tenants, and so as we see over  
time what the savings are and where our best bang for

3 our buck is, we'll be able to better refine the  
4 targeting for who needs supportive housing and who  
5 provides the biggest cost-savings.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I mean do we know  
7 now -- I don't know if there's been a study done  
8 about the impact of supportive housing in reducing  
9 Medicaid costs; I imagine it does, but.

10 JESSICA KATZ: It's too early for that,  
11 but it's being tracked through MRT; the first MRT  
12 units came along a couple years ago, so that's an  
13 ongoing data collection effort that's taking place.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: That's the extent  
15 of my questioning. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much,  
17 Council Member Torres. Let's see; a few more  
18 questions and then we'll move on to public testimony.  
19 It's now noon and we do have to leave the room by one  
20 o'clock, so we have about 15 people or so lined up to  
21 testify, so I'll ask another question or two and then  
22 I'll turn it over to my co-chair.

23 Do you have -- and you may have spoken to  
24 this a little bit, but within the current 15/15 plan  
25 you have specifically identified units that will be  
developed for young people in general, other than

2 youth that have aged out of foster care, but more of  
3 a general population youth; is that part of the plan?  
4 You know that youth that have aged out of foster care  
5 is identified in the NY/NY III as is serious or  
6 persistent mental illness youth as well, so are there  
7 going to be set-asides for that?

8 JESSICA KATZ: So there will be  
9 categories for youth and then within the youth  
10 population one of the recommendations was really  
11 expanding the categories to include other systems, so  
12 not just youth aging out of foster care, but also  
13 youth in the DYCD system and the runaway homeless  
14 youth. So the expectation is to include more youth  
15 and then be able to understand what are the needs of  
16 the youth.

17 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay, so that's been  
18 identified and that will be in scatter-site... is that  
19 part of the initial 500 **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

20 JESSICA KATZ: So the 550 were only for  
21 single adults and adult couples and so it will be  
22 reflected in the next RFP for the scatter-site and  
23 for the congregate.

24 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And for the  
25 congregate?

3 JESSICA KATZ: Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. But you don't  
5 know what percentage or how many units at this point?

6 JESSICA KATZ: I am not at liberty to  
7 discuss it prior to the release of any RFPs.

8 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. But it will be  
9 in the RFPs?

10 JESSICA KATZ: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. In terms of  
12 the recommendations from the task force, so do you  
13 have like an overall timeline in terms of when they  
14 will all -- I'm assuming they'll all be implemented;  
15 if Commissioner Banks and Commissioner Been were the  
16 co-chairs of the task force, I'm assuming then that  
17 the Administration has fully endorsed all the  
18 recommendations and has kind of a timeframe in terms  
19 of implementation...? [crosstalk]

20 JESSICA KATZ: So the good news is, we've  
21 implemented recommendation number four already, which  
22 was creating a City Oversight Committee to monitor  
23 the implementation... [crosstalk]

24 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Uhm-hm.

25 JESSICA KATZ: and so we have a lot of  
work going on to create project plans to implement

2 each one of these, and as you can imagine, they each  
3 have different timelines, and so I think it would be  
4 unfair to kind of give the longest timeline, 'cause  
5 some of these are really data systems and so..

6 [crosstalk]

7 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Uhm-hm.

8 JESSICA KATZ: as you know, like creating  
9 new data systems, like we're speaking about the  
10 vulnerability index, those are really long and  
11 complicated and there are other ones that really can  
12 be done -- as we mentioned in the testimony, there's  
13 a couple that have already been done, including the  
14 Oversight Committee, including the licensed  
15 clinicians being able to review, including the upload  
16 of the HRA documents, so a lot has already happened,  
17 and then there's a couple on there that are probably  
18 going to take, you know a year or more, but we think  
19 the bulk of them will be done within a year.

20 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. Okay. And  
21 then there may be some outliers that may take long  
22 than a year...? [crosstalk]

23 JESSICA KATZ: Yes.

24

25

2 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: But you expect that  
3 within, maximum, two years or so that all of them  
4 will be implemented...? [crosstalk]

5 JESSICA KATZ: Yeah and I think the big...  
6 the big... [crosstalk]

7 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Steps are being taken  
8 to imp... sorry; steps are being taken to implement all  
9 of them?

10 JESSICA KATZ: Absolutely. And the  
11 biggest emphasis I think is... all of this work, in  
12 general, the biggest emphasis really is on  
13 flexibility, so we want to be able to learn from what  
14 we're doing... [crosstalk]

15 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Uhm-hm.

16 JESSICA KATZ: and I think continually  
17 improve upon it, so you know we may find halfway  
18 through that something isn't working and then we want  
19 to be able to change it, right, so I think there will  
20 be kind of continuing process improvements as we go.

21 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And the Oversight  
22 Committee; what's... I'm sorry; what's the... who is the  
23 Oversight Committee?

24 JESSICA KATZ: It's basically all the  
25 City agencies that are involved in implementing this

2 work, so as you can imagine, it's everything from  
3 HPD, DOHMH, HRA, DHS, OMB, Criminal Justice Office;  
4 anyone that is involved in any of these  
5 recommendations.

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Now what role does  
7 like Supportive Housing Network of New York then play  
8 in an ongoing oversight role or ongoing partnership  
9 role that their Executive Director Laura Mascuch is a  
10 co-chair of the task force; what's role are they  
11 going to then have -- just so that if -- there are  
12 things that are coming up -- you know oftentimes  
13 things percolate through providers, through the  
14 advocacy or, you know, umbrella organizations and  
15 then get over to you guys and so... and to us; how...  
16 what's... [crosstalk]

17 JESSICA KATZ: So in this...

18 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: what's the strategy  
19 for making sure that concerns are being raised in the  
20 appropriate time?

21 JESSICA KATZ: Well besides their --  
22 SHNNY is great at holding our feet to the fire and  
23 making sure that we are moving forward, so in  
24 addition to the constant informal communications, I  
25 think the expectation really is that we would

3 continue to report out to the task force on some  
4 routine basis to let them know how implementation is  
5 going.

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. You don't need  
7 help with like enabling legislation for that, do you?

8 [laughter]

9 JESSICA KATZ: No... not at that moment,  
10 but we'll let you know.

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Alright, well we'll  
12 review it on our end as well.

13 And then just as a... honestly, this is a  
14 bit of a curve ball, so I don't mean to throw this  
15 out there, but it's come up -- and since I have Dan  
16 here, I thought I'd ask -- with RHY, it's been raised  
17 to me that there's no link subsidy for RHY and that's  
18 kind of a concern; is there... how are you guys  
19 approaching that particular issue?

20 DANIEL TIETZ: We're working on it.

21 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay.

22 DANIEL TIETZ: So we're having a very  
23 active discussion with our friends at DYCD on  
24 bringing subsidies to youth in their system.

25 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. So we'll be  
following up on that and continue to talk about that;

3 I think through the budget process might be the  
4 [background comment] most appropriate way that we can  
5 engage that... [crosstalk]

6 DANIEL TIETZ: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. I'll turn it  
8 over to my colleague, Jumaane Williams.

9 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you very  
10 much. I don't have questions; just a comment.

11 Obviously this stuff is very hard; it's also  
12 expensive, so I'm glad that we're putting the funding  
13 behind it and making sure that money's not more  
14 important than the people we're serving and I think  
15 some of our contractors and developers have to have  
16 the same mindset as well, and we have to use all the  
17 tools that we have; I don't believe we're doing that  
18 and I'm concerned about what the Governor is doing  
19 with this revamped [sic] 421-a; I'm concerned about  
20 sometimes what this body does in terms of rezonings  
21 and the types of AMIs that are in those rezonings, so  
22 we all need to do all that we can, and of course,  
23 supportive housing is a critical, important piece of  
24 that.

25 Lastly, I too want to say congratulations  
to Ms. Katz for her promotion, and please, I think at

3 the time I have another hearing that HPD is primary  
4 on; we'll have a new commissioner, so I just wanted  
5 to reiterate what I mentioned at the Stated  
6 yesterday, that we wish the commissioner being well  
7 on her new job; it was a pleasure working with her; I  
8 found her to be always forthcoming, willing to  
9 compromise the best way we can in the best interests  
10 of the City, even when we disagreed I found it to be  
11 part of the job and very amenable, so I just wanted  
12 to say that on the record on behalf of the Committee  
13 and please pass that along to her. Thank you..

14 [crosstalk]

15 JESSICA KATZ: I will. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you all very  
17 much for your testimony and for answering our  
18 questions today; we look forward to continuing to  
19 work with you in an ongoing fashion to make sure that  
20 we are as aggressive as possible in developing  
21 supportive housing for New Yorkers that need it.  
22 Thank you.

23 So first panel -- Claire Sheedy from  
24 Breaking Ground; Rebecca Sauer from Supportive  
25 Housing Network of New York; Tony Hannigan, Center

2 for Urban Community Services; and Jennifer Garris  
3 [sp?], from 160 Schermerhorn Street.

4 [background comments]

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Hello everyone.

6 My co-chair is not here; he's actually the lead  
7 committee, so I'm going to follow his rules when we  
8 normally do these hearings; mine is a little  
9 different; I understand he doesn't normally put folks  
10 on the clock and he doesn't swear people in, so you  
11 can begin at the order of your preference.

12 CLAIRE SHEEDY: Thank you. Hi, my name  
13 is Claire Sheedy; I will be reading the testimony of  
14 Brenda Rosen, who's the CEO of Breaking Ground, who  
15 couldn't be here today.

16 Brenda Rosen is the President and CEO of  
17 Breaking Ground, New York City's largest supportive  
18 housing developer and operator, serving low-income  
19 and chronically homeless New Yorkers. We operate 19  
20 buildings, over 3,500 units of permanent and  
21 transitional housing in Manhattan, Brooklyn, the  
22 Bronx, and Queens. We have another 1,000 in  
23 development over the next five years. [background  
24 comment]

3 We also provide street outreach in  
4 Brooklyn, Queens and about a third of Manhattan. Our  
5 Street to Home program connects the most entrenched  
6 long-term homeless individuals with housing and other  
7 critical support services. Over the last 25 years  
8 we've helped over 12,000 people escape or avoid  
9 homelessness, including veterans, seniors, artists,  
10 youth aging out of foster care, those living with  
11 addiction and chronic illnesses, and many more.

12 For the clinical homeless we create safe,  
13 secure housing, essential on-site support services to  
14 help address the psychosocial, mental and physical  
15 health problems that are obstacles to independent  
16 living.

17 For low-income folks who find themselves  
18 at the edge of homelessness, our affordable housing  
19 provides an all-important safety net; 99% of our  
20 residents remain stably housed; our eviction rate  
21 across our portfolio is less than 1%. Strengthening  
22 communities is core to Breaking Ground's mission.

23 We create neighborhood assets that  
24 promote social inclusion; our buildings preserve  
25 historic landmarks, transform neglected properties  
and introduce new resources and opportunities to

3 surrounding communities. Breaking Ground frequently  
4 partners with nationally-recognized architects to  
5 design and create beautiful buildings, like this one,  
6 that make tenants and neighbors in these communities  
7 feel proud. Whenever possible we include community  
8 uses in our buildings. Here at The Schermerhorn we  
9 have 217 units of supportive housing; the building is  
10 home to the Brooklyn Ballet; this gorgeous theater,  
11 operated by The Actors Fund, is used by the Brooklyn  
12 Ballet, as well as tenants who live here, and local  
13 arts groups seeking affordable rehearsal and  
14 performance space.

15           The Hegeman, one of two buildings  
16 Breaking Ground has in Brownsville, Brooklyn has 161  
17 units of supportive housing; there we have an  
18 enclosed garden for building residents. In the  
19 adjacent lot we developed a community garden,  
20 offering programming to all neighborhood residents.

21           The safety of our residents and neighbors  
22 is of highest importance. Our buildings feature 24/7  
23 security, outdoor cameras and exterior lights, all of  
24 which have proved to deter crime; we work closely  
25 with NYPD, FDNY; EMS. It is notable that studies  
done of supportive housing's impact on crime actually

3 show a positive reduction in crime, as I think was  
4 mentioned earlier.

5 Breaking Ground works with our local  
6 community boards, block associations and elected  
7 officials; we regularly host and participate in  
8 events and meetings formulized by these stakeholders;  
9 we work hard to be seen as a community partner and  
10 asset while also enhancing awareness of our work in  
11 the communities we are.

12 Support from local organizations and  
13 elected officials helps our reputation and  
14 facilitates entry into neighborhoods that don't know  
15 our work and may fear with supportive housing may  
16 bring. Without the support of South Bronx Churches,  
17 an affiliate of East Brooklyn Congregation, Breaking  
18 Ground would not have secured sufficient support to  
19 move forward with The Brook, our first building in  
20 the South Bronx. Local groups like South Bronx  
21 Churches help us market apartments as well as the  
22 jobs that these projects bring to the communities we  
23 build in. At The Hegeman, working with Brooklyn  
24 Community Board 16, more than half of the staff live  
25 in Brownsville or in the immediate nearby area.

2 Supportive housing has proven to be both  
3 a positive and stabilizing force in communities and  
4 an effective solution to addressing chronic  
5 homelessness. The City needs more of this type of  
6 housing and the Mayor's 15/15 initiative is an  
7 important component in addressing the City's homeless  
8 crisis.

9 On behalf of Breaking Ground, thank you  
10 for this opportunity to testify, your interest and  
11 deep commitment to this critical issue is greatly  
12 appreciated.

13 REBECCA SAUER: Okay. [background  
14 comments] Yeah, I won't break it. Can you hear me?  
15 Okay.

16 Thank you to Council Members Levin and  
17 Williams and to Breaking Ground and The Actors Fund  
18 for hosting us here. My name is Rebecca Sauer; I'm  
19 the Director of Policy and Planning at the Supportive  
20 Housing Network of New York. The Network is a  
21 membership organization representing approximately  
22 200 nonprofit developers and operators of supportive  
23 housing statewide. Supportive housing is permanent  
24 affordable housing with embedded social services for  
25 vulnerable individuals and families, people who are

3 homeless and living with disabilities or other  
4 barriers to maintaining stable housing.

5 New York City is the proud birthplace of  
6 supportive housing; a model which has been replicated  
7 across the country and the world. It is both humane  
8 and cost-effective. It thrives on public-private  
9 partnerships. As you will hear in other testimony  
10 today, it provides people the platform to positively  
11 transform their lives and achieve their potential --  
12 it really works.

13 Supportive housing was created by  
14 innovative New Yorkers in the late 70s and 80s as  
15 single-room occupancy (SRO) hotels disappeared.  
16 Decades later, what started as the conversion of a  
17 few buildings has become a robust and agile community  
18 serving individuals and families, youth aging out of  
19 foster care, veterans, and seniors. Today there are  
20 32,000 units in New York City; of those, 12,000 are  
21 scattered-site and 20,000 are in purpose-built  
22 supportive housing, which today is integrated with  
23 affordable housing for low-income New Yorkers.

24 Everyone in this room is deeply aware of  
25 the magnitude of the homelessness crisis we're  
facing. Of course not all of the 60,000 plus people

3 in the homeless system need supportive housing; some  
4 merely need access to housing they can afford.

5 However, there are thousands who would not be able to  
6 maintain stable housing on their own and without  
7 supportive housing the alternatives are costly --  
8 homeless shelters, hospitals, psychiatric  
9 institutions, jails, or prison.

10 As was mentioned in earlier testimony, a  
11 2013 study done by DOHMH showed that public costs for  
12 NY/NY III tenants were \$10,100 less than those for  
13 unplaced individuals. Eighty-seven percent of  
14 tenants in NY/NY III housing remained housed after  
15 one year and of those who moved out, only 6% returned  
16 to shelter and .5% to the street.

17 Despite the staggering need for  
18 supportive housing and the evidence of its  
19 effectiveness, many people are apprehensive about it  
20 being built in their neighborhood; that's  
21 understandable; most of these people have not had the  
22 opportunity to visit a residence like The  
23 Schermerhorn. Community residents also can be  
24 comforted by research that shows that supportive  
25 housing buildings have neutral or positive effect on

3 property values, such as the Fuhrman Center report,  
4 which was also mentioned earlier.

5 These findings were the result of a  
6 rigorous study done of 7,500 units of supportive  
7 housing built over a 20-year period and the sales  
8 prices of nearby properties. Studies done in  
9 Columbus, Philadelphia, Fort Worth, Toronto, and in  
10 six Connecticut communities show similar results.

11 The Network applauds the City's for its  
12 bold leadership in introducing the NYC 15/15  
13 initiative. Building on the past and transforming  
14 all of these ideas into reality will require true  
15 partnership across many sectors. One of the biggest  
16 obstacles to developing new supportive housing is  
17 finding adequate, attainable sites.

18 We invite all members of the Council to  
19 partner with us and with your communities to help our  
20 city meet this critical need and we know many members  
21 of the Council and their staff have toured supportive  
22 housing buildings and have been champions of it in  
23 their community and we thank we. If any other  
24 members of the Council or the public want a tour of  
25 supportive housing or have a meeting, we are always  
happy to facilitate that.

3 Thanks for the opportunity to testify and  
4 I look forward to future partnership.

5 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much.

6 I just want, as a short follow-up on that. So I  
7 encourage anybody, [cough] excuse me, to do a Willow  
8 search of the surrounding blocks around here in  
9 downtown Brooklyn just to see what the property value  
10 is around this supportive housing development.

11 [laughter] Pretty high.

12 [laughter, background comments]

13 TONY HANNIGAN: Good afternoon, my name  
14 is Tony Hannigan; just want to start by -- I'm the  
15 CEO and President of the Center for Urban Community  
16 Services (CUCS), a nonprofit organization, and our  
17 mission is to provide housing and help rebuild the  
18 lives of homeless and low-income families and  
19 individuals.

20 I've been CUCS for since 1981 and I am  
21 one of the originators of supportive housing. CUCS  
22 is widely recognized for having a particular  
23 expertise in providing supportive services to people  
24 who have a persistent major mental illness, such as  
25 schizophrenia and serious depressive disorder, and I  
would like to talk about supportive housing services

3 that are provided in supportive housing. In fact,  
4 CUCS is the on-site service provider here at The  
5 Schermerhorn. Before getting into that in any  
6 detail, I want to put this into some context.

7           When I started working in homelessness in  
8 1981, homelessness was beginning to become an  
9 increasingly visible problem in the City. Much of  
10 this had to do with the ongoing elimination of  
11 privately owned SRO hotels, or welfare hotels, as  
12 they were commonly called, where many people were  
13 discharged en masse during deinstitutionalization  
14 from in-patient psychiatric facilities where they had  
15 lived. It also had to do with the community mental  
16 health system not keeping pace with the rate of  
17 discharges.

18           At its peak in 1955, there were 94,000  
19 people living in New York State psychiatric  
20 facilities; in 1984 that number was at 34,000; today  
21 it is under 4,000. The people who are and had been  
22 in State facilities represent only a fraction of  
23 those who depend upon the public mental health  
24 system, but the staggering decline in the number of  
25 those on in-patient wards is telltale of the needs

3 for residential options for people who live with  
4 serious psychiatric and other medical problems.

5 Supportive housing is a critical  
6 component of New York's community mental health  
7 system; supportive housing is where people have a  
8 lease, can live permanently and receive needed mental  
9 health and other services on-site. As the housing is  
10 integrated with individuals who are not living with  
11 mental illness is progressive, and being only a small  
12 fraction of the cost of hospitalization, it is highly  
13 cost-effective.

14 CUCS provides supportive services to  
15 approximately 2,000 apartments; our on-site service  
16 staff includes psychiatrists, licensed social  
17 workers, nurse practitioners, job coaches, primary  
18 care physicians, and paraprofessional case management  
19 staff who assist tenants when necessary with various  
20 activities of daily living, such as shopping for food  
21 or doing laundry.

22 When individuals first move into  
23 supportive housing, it is typically after years of  
24 being homeless; they have minimal, if any, social  
25 contacts, are cut off from family, have medical  
issues in addition to mental illness, and if a woman,

3 likely suffering from trauma, having been victim of  
4 domestic violence and other physical abuse. Most all  
5 the individuals have not had any consistent medical  
6 or mental health treatment services for years on end.

7 Our services include individual  
8 counseling and supportive services that are tailored  
9 to the needs of the individual. Unlike clinics and  
10 hospital-based services where individuals are not  
11 uncommonly lost to care, each tenant is assigned to a  
12 team of social workers and case managers with a  
13 caseload of 25 tenants. In addition, the tenant  
14 would be able to see the same psychiatrist and  
15 medical staff without the constant turnover often  
16 experienced in other mental health settings.

17 Supportive housing provides the  
18 opportunity to work with people over time, addressing  
19 not just mental health and medical concerns, but also  
20 quality of life issues, such as reuniting with  
21 family, rejoining the community and for many, getting  
22 a job. CUCS' career network, which specializes in  
23 job and career opportunities for people with mental  
24 illnesses, helped 180 people living in supportive  
25 housing get jobs in 2016 with an average wage of  
full-time employment of \$12.00 an hour.

3 In conclusion, I would just like to  
4 emphasize and try to debunk a little bit the myths  
5 about people with mental illness and emphasize that  
6 violent and aberrant behaviors are exceedingly rare  
7 among supportive housing tenants, and this is the  
8 fear that often communities have, and it just ain't  
9 [sic] so. Instead, supportive housing providers are  
10 addressing years of isolation, poverty, loss, and the  
11 incalculable hardships of having been homeless.

12 Thank you, and thanks to the Council for  
13 holding this; we really appreciate it.

14 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you, thank you  
15 very much and thank you for the work that you've been  
16 doing.

17 JENNIFER GARRIS: Good morning and  
18 welcome everybody; I'm a tenant here at the  
19 Schermerhorn. My name is Jennifer Rose Garris; I was  
20 born in Coney Island and have lived in New York my  
21 whole life.

22 I moved into The Schermerhorn in 2009,  
23 the first year that it opened. Before that, my  
24 husband of 35 years and I had lived in Fort Greene  
25 for 17 years, but when he passed I didn't want to and  
I didn't know how to go on. I struggled with

3 depression and drinking and eventually lost and left  
4 my apartment. Sometimes I stayed with other people  
5 in their apartments, but I would often sleep in the  
6 hallways of apartment buildings or even outside. I  
7 had always worked and provided for myself, but I  
8 didn't want anyone to know that I was homeless; I was  
9 too proud. I didn't even tell my family.

10 This could happen to anyone. I have a  
11 master's in education, I taught special ed. for 24  
12 years; this doesn't happen to just "those people,"  
13 because you're poor; don't want to live inside;  
14 things happen, it can happen to anyone.

15 I was homeless for a year before a  
16 Breaking Ground outreach worker brought me to the Y  
17 on Norwood Avenue while I waited for The Schermerhorn  
18 to open. Once I moved in, we took trips to the  
19 grocery stores to learn how to make our dollars go  
20 further, we learned how to pay our rent on time and  
21 to budget.

22 Since I've been here I've met tenants  
23 that had been in the street 10, 20 years; they didn't  
24 know how to go in the grocery store and buy food to  
25 stretch for the month with the food stamps that  
they're given. Breaking Ground caseworkers took us

2 to grocery stores, we go on trips, we... they teach you  
3 how to live again. Excuse me. I work with my CUCS  
4 caseworker on reaching goals, like quitting smoking.  
5 I'm stable; my life is stable now.

6 How I live my life -- I volunteer at soup  
7 kitchens or work in pantries, go to church;  
8 participate in all sorts of activities in the  
9 building. Living here is living with my family;  
10 these people are my peeps; every Sunday I call people  
11 from the 11th floor and work my way down to the 3rd,  
12 just calling them to see how they feel; not everybody  
13 has family; not everybody has friends. So many  
14 people don't have the opportunity for somebody to  
15 listen to them sometimes, and that's our job, we have  
16 to give back; look what we've been given.

17 The main thing is to keep giving back and  
18 getting to know other people; sometimes all people  
19 need is someone to listen to them. I thank Breaking  
20 Ground... I thank Breaking Ground for the impact it has  
21 had on my life and so many others. Breaking Ground  
22 is a god thanks [sic] and I thank you very much.

23 Thank you.

24 [applause]

2 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you all  
3 for your testimony. Thank you in particular for  
4 taking the courage to share your testimony; I think  
5 it's important for people to understand. One of the  
6 most poignant things was; it's not "those people" and  
7 many folks have problems understanding that until  
8 they are those people, so it's important that we  
9 always put faces and real stories behind the human  
10 beings who are being served here. So I just want to  
11 say thank you so much; obviously your testimony was  
12 very moving and touching and the type that we need to  
13 keep these services going forward. So God bless you  
14 and thank you for giving back; I wish everyone had  
15 your spirit; I do want to know how you're doing on  
16 your smoking.

17 [laughter]

18 JENNIFER GARRIS: Well I'm down from a  
19 pack to three a day **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

20 [laughter]

21 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Oh that's  
22 progress, that's progress, congrats.

23 JENNIFER GARRIS: Yeah, that's good  
24 progress [sic].

2 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: It's always a  
3 challenge. I want to thank you as well... [crosstalk]

4 JENNIFER GARRIS: Thank you; you're  
5 welcome.

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: for your testimony,  
7 for sharing your story... [crosstalk]

8 JENNIFER GARRIS: You're welcome.

9 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: and for being an  
10 inspiration to your neighbors and for looking out for  
11 your neighbors; that's a wonderful thing to do, and  
12 making sure that everybody has the benefit of  
13 friendship [background comments] and I want to thank  
14 you all very much for your testimony and for having  
15 us here today; this is such a wonderful opportunity  
16 for our committees, for the Council to be here at The  
17 Schermerhorn and be part of this wonderful facility.  
18 Thank you.

19 Next panel -- Joseph Rosenberg, Catholic  
20 Charities, Catholic Community Relations Council; Jeff  
21 Nemetsky, Brooklyn Community HSS [sic] and Services;  
22 and Josh Goldfein and Giselle Routhier of Legal Aid  
23 and Coalition for the Homeless. [background comment]  
24 And Catherine Trapani from Homeless Services United.

3                   JOE ROSENBERG: Good afternoon Chair  
4 Levin and Chair Williams; I'm Joe Rosenberg, the  
5 Executive Director of the Catholic Community  
6 Relations Council, representing the Archdiocese of  
7 New York and the Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens on  
8 local legislative and policy issues.

9                   Housing advocates, governmental entities  
10 and not-for-profits and faith-based organizations all  
11 agree that supportive housing is a successful and  
12 cost-effective model; it serves not only homeless  
13 families and homeless singles, but also victims of  
14 domestic violence, veterans, youth aging out of  
15 foster care, and the elderly individuals receiving  
16 nursing home care who can make the transition to  
17 independent living. It is absolutely crucial that  
18 existing programs serving its populations be  
19 preserved and expanded and that new programs be  
20 created to meet this pressing and growing need.  
21 Sheltering the homeless and helping the needy have  
22 always been among the primary missions of the  
23 Catholic Church; consistent with that principle, the  
24 Archdiocese of New York and the Diocese of Brooklyn,  
25 through Catholic Charities, parishes and affiliates,  
have constructed and preserved thousands of

3 apartments for the poor and the homeless throughout  
4 our city; this commitment continues to this day, with  
5 the Catholic Church being the largest faith-based  
6 provider of low-income senior citizen housing in New  
7 York City and working with our governmental partners  
8 to construct and preserve thousands of units of  
9 affordable and supportive housing.

10 The supportive housing development  
11 selected last January by Mayor de Blasio to announce  
12 his plan to develop and preserve 15,000 supportive  
13 housing units over the next 15 years is the Bishop  
14 Joseph Sullivan residence. This Bedford-Stuyvesant  
15 development is owned and operated by Catholic  
16 Charities of the Diocese of Brooklyn; with [sic]  
17 receipt of over \$21 million of state funding and the  
18 assistance of financing from the feds and city  
19 agencies this rehab project preserves 76 apartments  
20 for the formerly homeless and created 22 units  
21 designed specifically for formerly homeless veterans,  
22 one of the most vulnerable groups of New Yorkers  
23 amongst us.

24 And Morrisania Catholic Charities of the  
25 Archdiocese of New York is developing 112 units of  
low-income housing, with 35 units of supportive

3 housing at the St. Augustine Apartments. The special  
4 need units target individuals with chronic mental  
5 illness and will be supported through on-site  
6 services provided by Beacon of Hope House, which  
7 serves close to 300 individuals in its supportive  
8 housing programs through New York City.

9           These developments are only two examples  
10 of how creative and long-term commitment leads to the  
11 construction and preservation of successful  
12 supportive housing. There is much more to be done to  
13 provide housing to our fellow New Yorkers who are  
14 most at risk in falling through the cracks, ending up  
15 on our streets and in our shelters.

16           Last year, for example, the State  
17 Legislature and the Governor agreed upon a budget  
18 that appropriated over \$2 billion for the development  
19 and preservation of supportive and affordable housing  
20 in New York State; that money, however, remains  
21 unavailable, through the inability of the State  
22 Legislature and the Governor to finalize and sign a  
23 memorandum of understanding that would release the  
24 funds to support the creation of 6,000 supportive  
25 housing units over the next five years, as well as  
finance the production and preservation of 94,000

2 affordable housing units. We urge that all parties  
3 negotiate a final MOU as soon as possible so the  
4 money can be used to provide housing for the most  
5 vulnerable in our society, as the State Legislature  
6 and the Governor clearly intended.

7 I also want to point out that the City  
8 Council recently introduced a very significant bill,  
9 Int. 214-A, the right to counsel for low-income  
10 individuals facing eviction in Housing Court; over 42  
11 members are on this bill; it is very important that  
12 although certainly the Mayor is strongly in support  
13 of expanding the program to finance families facing  
14 eviction that a bill of this nature be passed  
15 hopefully sooner rather than later.

16 In summary, there are many economic and  
17 social challenges that must be surmounted to address  
18 the homeless crisis in New York; the support and  
19 expansion of this housing model is one clear humane,  
20 cost-effective and proven means of confronting this  
21 challenge; in short, it saves and rebuilds lives.

22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much,  
24 Mr. Rosenberg.

3 JEFF NEMETSKY: Thank you. Good  
4 afternoon. [background comment] My name is Jeff  
5 Nemetsky and I'm the Executive Director for Brooklyn  
6 Community Housing and Services, a not-for-profit  
7 supportive housing agency located nearby in Fort  
8 Greene. I'd like to thank the General Welfare and  
9 Housing Committees for organizing this important  
10 hearing today and I would really like to thank the  
11 members of these committees for being such robust  
12 advocates for supportive housing in recent year; it  
13 has been tremendously helpful to all us in the field.

14 My organization, BACH'S, was founded in  
15 1978 by a group of local clergy from Downtown  
16 Brooklyn, many from nearby parishes and churches, and  
17 is committed to ending homelessness in Brooklyn. We  
18 now serve nearly 1,000 formerly homeless and at-risk  
19 residents a year, through a range of short-term,  
20 transitional and permanent supportive housing and  
21 provide a continuum of related services.

22 This past Saturday, a family from Fort  
23 Greene reserved the community room at our Brooklyn  
24 Gardens supporting housing building to celebrate  
25 their daughter's Quinceanera. The proud family and  
their friends danced to festive music and brought in

3 delicious home-cooked delicacies. A week before, the  
4 community room was reserved by a family who had just  
5 lost a beloved uncle and held a large repast and  
6 memorial service in his honor. On Friday night,  
7 Saturdays and Sundays throughout the year, this  
8 community room is used by Fort Greene residents for  
9 baby showers and birthday parties, family reunions  
10 and graduation celebrations and even from time to  
11 time a wedding. During the week this community room  
12 plays host to regular AA meetings that are attended  
13 by people from throughout the area, including  
14 residents from nearby NYCHA public housing, teachers  
15 and construction workers, as well as bankers, lawyers  
16 and finance professionals who live in the beautiful  
17 brownstones located on the other side of Myrtle  
18 Avenue.

19 I highlight these few examples because I  
20 think they illustrate that supportive housing is not  
21 just sited at a location; it is an integral part of  
22 the fabric of a community, both helping to strengthen  
23 that community as well as being strengthened by it.

24 BCBS has a good neighbor policy that we  
25 adhere to at all our locations; we have 24/7 security  
and our buildings are well-lit, ensuring that the

3 blocks they are on remain safe, comfortable walkways  
4 for pedestrians. We make sure that our buildings are  
5 clean, calm and stable, that music is never too loud  
6 in the evenings and that groups of people do not  
7 congregate or loiter outside. We participate in  
8 forums with other local businesses and civic groups  
9 discussing neighborhood issues and supporting efforts  
10 to help local business owners and other local  
11 institutions. And like many supportive housing  
12 buildings, our structures are also architecturally  
13 sophisticated and enhance and beautify the  
14 streetscape. Most importantly, our buildings are  
15 staffed by highly qualified social service  
16 professionals who are also available 24/7, enabling  
17 residents to have a positive experience. Indeed,  
18 even though the majority if BCHS' supportive housing  
19 residents had been homeless for a long time before  
20 they came to us, more than 95% either maintain their  
21 housing with BCHS or move on to even greater  
22 independence each year.

23 In 1991, our Brooklyn Gardens housing  
24 facility opened its doors at a time when Fort Greene  
25 was being hit hard by the crack epidemic, which had  
fueled a great deal of crime and dislocation. Our

3 presence was seen by community members as an  
4 important step in helping to improve public safety  
5 and stabilize that area.

6 In 2012, we helped open the Navy Green  
7 Supportive Housing building right outside the  
8 Brooklyn Navy Yard and is part of the larger mixed-  
9 use Navy Green development. Our presence once more  
10 helped a neighborhood that had been dotted by  
11 abandoned buildings, vacant lots and empty  
12 storefronts to experience a new range of  
13 opportunities and new vitality.

14 What we've seen in both instances is that  
15 well designed, well maintained and well run  
16 supportive housing not only helps formerly homeless  
17 individuals achieve stability and independence, but  
18 marks the blocks in neighborhoods where they are  
19 present as attractive and desirable places to work  
20 and live.

21 Thank you once more to the Committees for  
22 both holding this hearing, and again, thank you for  
23 your support for supportive housing.

24 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much.

25 GISELLE ROUTHIER: Thanks. My name is  
Giselle Routhier; I'm the Policy Director at the

3 Coalition for the Homeless. I'm going to keep this  
4 short and sweet; we submitted testimony; I'm just  
5 going to summarize it here; we submitted joint  
6 testimony with Legal Aid Society.

7 With respect to the need for supportive  
8 housing in New York City, right now we can't move  
9 quickly enough. As NY/NY III winds down, the number  
10 of single adults specifically that have been placed  
11 in supportive housing has reached the lowest rate as  
12 a portion of the number of single adults in shelter  
13 in a decade, so right now we're facing record  
14 homelessness in New York City, so we have almost  
15 15,000 single adults in shelter, and total, 62,840  
16 individuals sleeping each night in shelter. So we  
17 are pleased to hear about the progress that the City  
18 is making at this hearing, specifically, moving  
19 forward on the 550 scatter-site units that will be  
20 opened before the end of this fiscal year or begin to  
21 be opened before the end of this fiscal year, but we  
22 are still facing challenges at the state level; it's  
23 now the one-year anniversary of the commitment that  
24 the Governor made to build 20,000 units of supportive  
25 housing statewide, and we have nearly \$2 billion that  
is still sitting idle, subject to a memorandum of

3 understanding. We like to say that it's true, that  
4 last year's budget is law and this year's Fiscal Year  
5 18 budget is a proposal, so we can still move forward  
6 on that MOU and we've been pushing the Governor and  
7 the legislative leaders to come together and release  
8 that money as soon as possible so that we can move  
9 forward on the State's commitment and really begin to  
10 meet the vast need that exists out there. Thank you  
11 very much.

12 JOSHUA GOLDFEIN: I'm Joshua Goldfein  
13 from The Legal Aid Society, just to add to, and as  
14 Giselle said, we submitted joint testimony, but just  
15 to add a few quick comments in response to Council  
16 Member Torres' question about, how do we ensure that  
17 the agreements that are made now continue on into  
18 subsequent administrations. The answer, and  
19 certainly it's good public policy and it saves the  
20 City money and it's a better outcome for the  
21 residents, but we also have the right to shelter in  
22 New York City and without a robust program to  
23 preserve affordable housing and ensure that people in  
24 shelter can move somewhere, the shelter system can't  
25 be managed, so the fact that we have a right to  
shelter also serves as a significant driver for

3 ensuring that the City generates some kind of  
4 permanent housing for people to go to.

5 I just also want to add that we at Legal  
6 Aid agree with HPD, and are glad to hear them say,  
7 that it's important that as we develop new scatter-  
8 site affordable housing units as part of these new  
9 programs that we preserve the rights of the tenants  
10 who are going to get those units. We have seen, just  
11 in the last year, hundreds of cases brought, just in  
12 Brooklyn alone, against residents of supportive  
13 housing, or brought in Housing Court against -- seek  
14 the eviction of residents of supportive housing, and  
15 I phrase it that way because in many of the cases the  
16 cases were brought without naming the tenant, and HPD  
17 is committed to making sure that as we develop these  
18 units and give people leases to move into them that  
19 the leases are in their names, that we secure their  
20 rights and that we ensure that those will be stable,  
21 long-term placements; that we don't end up with  
22 situations where people can be evicted without even  
23 knowing that something is happening. So we're going  
24 to look forward helping roll out these new units in a  
25 way that preserves everybody's rights; that it's in a  
way that is a benefit to the whole community and also

3 make sure that we don't compromise the rent-stab  
4 [sic] rights of the residents and other people who  
5 live in those buildings already. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Just one up on that  
7 [sic]; what... I meant to ask this of the  
8 Administration; what is the relationship between  
9 supportive housing scatter-site units and rent-  
10 stabilization? If a unit is previously rent  
11 stabilized, how does that work within the supportive  
12 housing contract and then what happens to that unit  
13 in the long-term?

14 JOSHUA GOLDFEIN: The short answer is,  
15 that's a complicated and controversial legal question  
16 right now that we are litigating at a number of  
17 places; I would say a slightly longer answer is that  
18 for many years there has been a mistaken assumption  
19 on the part of a lot of people that the rent-stab  
20 loss somehow doesn't apply any time that a not-for-  
21 profit organization is involved in the relationship,  
22 and that's actually not what the law says, and we've  
23 been able to, I think, advance the correct position  
24 through a number of cases and I think that people  
25 will understand that rent-stab... we can't... these units  
that are in buildings that are already rent-stab will

3 remain rent-stab and we shouldn't lose more units  
4 from the affordable housing stock because we're  
5 expanding a different kind of program to preserve  
6 tenancies for vulnerable people, and the landlords  
7 have tried in many cases to take advantage of what  
8 they have advanced as a loophole that doesn't really  
9 exist in the law, but the purpose of the rent  
10 regulation is to preserve the rights of tenants to  
11 stay in their housing; a program like this is not..  
12 the purpose of the law doesn't contemplate that a  
13 program to help more people would undercut that  
14 bedrock principle of landlord-tenant law.

14 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Has DHCR, do they  
15 have a legal opinion on the matter; I mean they've  
16 issued like a statement... [crosstalk]

17 JOSHUA GOLDFEIN: Not that I'm aware of,  
18 but...

19 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: But ultimately  
20 they're the agency that has jurisdiction over rent  
21 stabilization and are they..

22 JOSHUA GOLDFEIN: They have access to --  
23 what has become important in a lot of these cases --  
24 this is something that's played out also as we reduce  
25 the number of cluster sites that DHS is using, and we

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2 are asserting the rights of the tenants in those  
3 buildings, including the former shelter residents who  
4 are now in a unit that is no longer a shelter unit  
5 but is a rent-regulated unit...

6 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Sure.

7 JOSHUA GOLDFEIN: what should the rent be  
8 for that unit, and so in those cases it becomes very  
9 important to look at what rents have been registered  
10 over the history of the use of the unit...

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Uhm-hm.

12 JOSHUA GOLDFEIN: and DHCR gets involved  
13 in those cases in that way and... [crosstalk]

14 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: But they're not  
15 proactive, essentially; they're not proactively  
16 enforcing the rent stabilization rights of tenants?

17 JOSHUA GOLDFEIN: Certainly they could..  
18 [crosstalk]

19 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: as an agency [sic].

20 JOSHUA GOLDFEIN: they could certainly be  
21 doing more, but...

22 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Yeah.

23 JOSHUA GOLDFEIN: they could be doing  
24 more for tenants across the board there.

25

3 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: And I'm sorry, and  
4 again I should've asked this of HPD when they were  
5 here, but have they... do they have a legal written  
6 memo on this matter?

7 JOSHUA GOLDFEIN: Does HPD?

8 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Yeah.

9 JOSHUA GOLDFEIN: HPD is coming at it  
10 from the point of view that going forward, as we roll  
11 out these new scattered-site units, which we have to  
12 do to meet these numbers, right; I mean it's just not  
13 possible to build 15,000 units in the next 15 years;  
14 a lot of them are going to have to be in existing  
15 buildings and some number of... most of those are going  
16 to be apartments that are otherwise in the market, so  
17 there is this tension of competing with other  
18 affordable uses of the building, and their concern is  
19 that they want people to have a lease in their own  
20 name to secure their rights and that's their position  
21 of how this should work and we agree with them, and  
22 it's going to take I think a lot of effort on the  
23 part of all parts of the City and the communities  
24 involved and the stakeholders to ensure that we  
25 create a system that secures people's rights and  
doesn't put them at risk.

3 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Okay. Thank you.  
4 Catherine.

5 CATHERINE TRAPANI: Thanks very much for  
6 the opportunity to testify. My name is Catherine  
7 Trapani and I'm the Executive Director of Homeless  
8 Services United, which is a coalition of over 50  
9 nonprofit agencies serving homeless and at-risk  
10 adults and families in New York City. We provide  
11 advocacy, information and training to member agencies  
12 to expand their capacity to delivery high-quality  
13 services. We advocate for the expansion of  
14 affordable housing and prevention services and for  
15 immediate access to safe, decent emergency and  
16 transitional housing, outreach, and drop-in services  
17 for homeless New Yorkers.

18 A lot of what I wanted to say this  
19 morning has been covered by previous testimony, so I  
20 just want to say that supportive housing has been an  
21 infinitely effectively model to ending homelessness  
22 for particularly chronically homeless single adults  
23 with multiple and complex needs, and so what we're  
24 really looking to to improve upon the model is  
25 increased flexibility with serving families, victims  
of domestic violence, youth, and not just those aging

3 out of foster care, but those using the RHY [sic]  
4 system, and we heard a little bit about that today.  
5 We also want to see reductions and burdens for  
6 applicants; we think that... I've heard from our drop-  
7 in centers that assist street homeless clients and  
8 our street outreach teams and those that are working  
9 with the most vulnerable people that the application  
10 procedures are so onerous with all the documentation  
11 that sometimes the sickest people are the hardest to  
12 serve; they're sort of branded as noncompliant and  
13 it's hardest to get them into the units even though  
14 they may be the ones that need it the most, and  
15 that's driven by the culture of scarcity that we've  
16 talked about this morning, so it's not blaming and  
17 sometimes it's even the HUD regulation that says that  
18 you have to prove you've been homeless for this many  
19 days and you can't have any gaps, but all of that  
20 documentation I think really makes supportive housing  
21 hard to access, which is a shame, 'cause as you can  
22 see, it is fantastic and really transformative and  
23 life-changing. So I'm really encouraged by the work  
24 of the CAPS Committee that HSU was a part of to  
25 reduce some of those application burdens and to  
streamline and make it easier for applicants to get

3 through, so I'm looking forward to the implementation  
4 of that, as well as the crafting of the vulnerability  
5 index, which is crafted to ensure that the most  
6 vulnerable clients are actually matched to the  
7 available units. There is a problem and a perception  
8 amount some providers that... for the supportive  
9 housing providers that work with street homeless that  
10 do outreach, people like Breaking Ground, people like  
11 Urban Pathways, they get it; it's a low barrier model  
12 where you meet people where they're at, you take them  
13 into the housing and it works really well.

14 Unfortunately, there are some other providers where  
15 my members have had the experience where even though  
16 as HRA testified, everybody that is in a category  
17 that's sort of branded as eligible for supportive  
18 housing, within that there is always going to be  
19 shades of grey, and so as the Committee questioned,  
20 when they are referring three applicants and the  
21 supportive housing provider is taking one of those  
22 three, there isn't, to my knowledge, and I didn't  
23 hear it in the answers today, a systematic tracking  
24 of what happens to the other two, and so while we're  
25 building in these protections, like the vulnerability  
index and improved and streamlined applications

3 procedures, I would love to see a tracking of what  
4 happens to those two so that we know that very  
5 vulnerable people are being well-served, and again, I  
6 understand that it's driven by the culture of  
7 scarcity and there's simply not enough units to go  
8 around, but I think it's still an important thing to  
9 really track. And so HSU really supports reducing  
10 application burdens -- just to summarize -- taking  
11 into account not just mental illness and sort of  
12 traditional things of the vulnerability index, but  
13 medical frailty, this General Welfare Committee did a  
14 hearing on medical services in shelter and we learned  
15 that there is a great many people that are too well  
16 for nursing homes, too sick for shelter, but without  
17 a qualifying mental health disorder so far haven't  
18 really been able to access supportive housing. So  
19 there's groups that I think we need to fold in, so  
20 really looking at vulnerability in a very broad sense  
21 is important to us and making sure that the housing  
22 models are flexible and appropriately funded so that  
23 these new people that we haven't really been working  
24 with before can be adequately served once they're in  
25 the housing, so really making sure that this sector  
is getting what it needs to rise to that challenge.

3 Supportive housing is an incredibly important tool, a  
4 piece of the puzzle in ending homelessness, and so we  
5 just thank you for your commitment to the issue and  
6 your colleagues on the Council and our members,  
7 Breaking Ground for hosting us today, and all of my  
8 colleagues here. Thanks very much.

9 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much  
10 to this panel; we really appreciate the great work  
11 that all of your organizations are doing and  
12 continuing to hold government accountable on these  
13 very important issues, and we look forward to working  
14 with you. And I just want to encourage all of you  
15 that as this move forward, I mean we obviously a  
16 receptive City Administration and we have a receptive  
17 State Administration; we want to make sure that this  
18 is all happening in the most responsible way and so  
19 you know I want to encourage all of you where there  
20 are issues that arise, please let this committee know  
21 in addition to letting HPD and City Hall and the  
22 State know about these implementation issues as they  
23 arise, so thank you. [background comments]

24 Next panel -- Nicole Bramstedt, Urban  
25 Pathways; Moshe [sp?] Sugar [sp?], Urban Pathways;  
Tabatha Renz, Manhattan Community Board 3; Chloe

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2 Holzman, MFY Legal Services; Kristin Miller, CSH; and  
3 then we'll have one more panel after that.

4 [background comments] And I want to thank everybody  
5 for their patience. Okay, whoever wants to begin.

6 CHLOE HOLZMAN: I've been nominated.

7 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: If you could speak  
8 close to the mic so we get you on... on record.

9 CHLOE HOLZMAN: Can you all hear me? Hi,  
10 my name is Chloe Holzman; I'm a staff attorney in the  
11 Mental Health Law Project at MFY Legal Services. My  
12 full statement on behalf of MFY can be found in the  
13 written testimony, but there are a few points that  
14 I'd like to highlight.

15 As has been discussed in-depth already  
16 this morning, people with mental illness continue to  
17 confront a severe lack of affordable housing in New  
18 York City and expansion of supportive housing is  
19 cost-effective, it reduces hospitalizations,  
20 incarcerations, and unnecessary institutionalization.

21 As MFY has previously testified before  
22 these committees, two other common alternatives to  
23 supportive housing -- adult homes and three-quarter  
24 houses -- are not conducive to recovery and my  
25 written testimony includes a discussion of some of

3 the reasons why. But in contrast, expansion of  
4 supportive housing would allow more New Yorkers to  
5 afford safe, stable housing in the community while  
6 ultimately saving taxpayer money.

7 My written testimony lays out several  
8 suggested improvements to the supportive housing  
9 program and among these, as has been echoed already  
10 by many other people testifying today, is expanding  
11 access to supportive housing by making the HRA 2010e  
12 application process more accessible for people with  
13 disabilities, including allowing mental health  
14 treatment providers besides just psychiatrists to  
15 submit mental health evaluations, as well as allowing  
16 more flexibility regarding required documentation and  
17 expired documentation in the HRA 2010e application.  
18 We also believe in expanding the targeted priority  
19 populations to include people with mental illness  
20 facing imminent eviction as well as people with  
21 criminal justice histories.

22 MFY supports the Mayor's Task Force on  
23 Supportive Housing proposal to create a vulnerability  
24 index to target housing to those most in need, but  
25 again, in keeping with other testimony today, we  
would want to see that index of vulnerability have a

3 very broad consideration of vulnerability that would  
4 incorporate consideration of those in imminent need,  
5 like people facing eviction and people exiting  
6 hospitals and other institutions.

7 In addition, supportive housing providers  
8 must have the resources to ensure that the housing  
9 they maintain is stable and truly supportive.

10 Contract rates for supportive housing must be  
11 sufficient to allow supportive housing providers to  
12 access safe and habitable housing, train and retain  
13 staff, and provide appropriate wraparound services  
14 that are going to allow clients to succeed in their  
15 inherent to long-term success and cost-effectiveness  
16 of this kind of housing.

17 Finally, and echoing some of the comment  
18 earlier by Joshua Goldfein of Legal Aid, we believe  
19 that leases for scatter-site housing should be  
20 required to be in the name of the resident. Despite  
21 supportive housing guidelines that recommend that  
22 leases be in the resident's name, in our experience  
23 it is often the supportive housing provider who is  
24 named on the lease and when that happened, as was  
25 discussed earlier, the landlord may consider that the  
rental unit is not covered by rent stabilization laws

2 that otherwise apply and in turn the landlord can  
3 then refuse to renew a lease with the supportive  
4 housing provider, which allows the unit to turn over  
5 more quickly, rents to rise more quickly and denies  
6 mental health consumers the same kind of protections  
7 that other tenants would otherwise enjoy.

8           So again, more details about this are in  
9 my written testimony, including about MFY's work  
10 generally, but I want to thank you for holding this  
11 hearing and for your commitment supporting these  
12 expanding housing options for vulnerable New Yorkers.

13           CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you.

14           TABATHA RENZ: Good afternoon. I am  
15 Tabatha Renz, Assistant District Manager of Manhattan  
16 Community Board 3.

17           Community Board 3 Manhattan encompasses  
18 the Lower East side and Chinatown and has roughly  
19 152,000 people. Our district ranks second highest in  
20 the city for a high diversity ratio between lower-  
21 income and higher-income residents and we are the  
22 third most gentrifying district.

23           Affordable housing has always been a  
24 priority in CB3. Traditionally, this meant  
25 affordable for low-income residents, although we are

3 now also concerned about loss of moderate- and  
4 middle-income housing. Affordable housing has also  
5 always included supportive housing as a priority for  
6 CB3 and the Board has consistent advocated for it.  
7 We made a quick list of supportive housing locations  
8 in CB3 and came up with at least 14; included in  
9 those is The Lee, which Ms. Katz spoke about earlier.  
10 We additionally have over 15 shelters and a few safe  
11 havens, also a priority for CB3.

12                   Supportive housing works well in our  
13 community. The Supportive Housing Task Force report  
14 included a recommendation to improve community  
15 engagement for new supportive housing projects and  
16 that's something that we do very well in CB3. All  
17 supportive housing projects in our district are  
18 sponsored or partnered with organizations that are  
19 well-known and established in the district. We work  
20 with the organizations to provide many services,  
21 including after school programs, senior services,  
22 arts, and other programs. We all know who they are  
23 and they part of our community. The CB has an  
24 ongoing dialogue with most of these organizations and  
25 we often work with them on task forces and other

3 issues important to the district; some of them even  
4 have members on our community board.

5 We think it is a very important factor  
6 that sponsoring organizations are established in the  
7 community; we know and we trust them; if there are  
8 issues that require attention there is already an  
9 ongoing dialogue. Some of these facilities provide  
10 meeting space to the community board, which has been  
11 mentioned in many testimonies about this really  
12 valuable community space, and that eliminates  
13 isolation of these facilities from the rest of the  
14 community. On the rare occasion that there is an  
15 unfortunate event, we can immediately meet with the  
16 community and our elected officials, who are always  
17 very supportive, and immediately give good  
18 information and keep concerns focused. There is  
19 always complete transparency. Organizations come to  
20 the community board and discuss projects at public  
21 meetings often from the earliest concept; the Board  
22 and the public are included from the beginning for  
23 any comments or feedback. In addition to providing  
24 meeting space, some facilities offer services for the  
25 community, such as medical and drug store services  
and workforce development.

3 One point that hasn't been mentioned  
4 often is the added benefit of stabilization of  
5 diversity of income levels in the community. We are  
6 grappling with rapid gentrification and losing  
7 middle- and moderate-income housing due to harassment  
8 and displacement while gaining market rate and luxury  
9 housing. We need a stable mix of middle- to low-  
10 income housing to ensure there will be services, such  
11 as affordable grocery stores and other necessities  
12 available to a diverse population.

13 Finally, to Council Member Torres' point;  
14 substantiated by Ms. Katz, the last time a number of  
15 community members organized against a supportive  
16 housing project in CB3 was in the early 1990s. In  
17 the last several years there have been a few comments  
18 at CB meetings against projects, but the sponsor  
19 partner [sic] organizations were long-time community-  
20 based organizations and fears were not picked up by  
21 the community. Now facilities have been open for a  
22 few years and like most supportive housing, do not  
23 have noticeable impact on the community that is  
24 different from any other housing. Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you. Just to  
follow up on that, so I've represented this district

2 now for seven years and two weeks and in that time  
3 I've gotten zero complaints about this building, so.

4 KRISTIN MILLER: Hi, good afternoon; I am  
5 Kristin Miller, Director of the New York program at  
6 Corporation for Supportive Housing. We are a  
7 national organization whose mission is to advance  
8 solutions that use housing as a platform to deliver  
9 services, improve lives and build healthy  
10 communities. With a 25-year track record here in New  
11 York City, since 1991 we have made over \$138 million  
12 in loans to supportive housing developers for the  
13 creation of over 15,000 permanent supportive housing  
14 and affordable housing units in New York City. We  
15 provide important acquisition financing, so  
16 particularly important to nonprofit organizations who  
17 need money to purchase sites.

18 We are deeply committed to sustaining and  
19 increasing access to permanent housing solutions in  
20 New York and we want to thank both you Chairs for  
21 holding this hearing today. We support Mayor de  
22 Blasio's commitment to establishing the New York City  
23 15/15 initiative and I'm grateful for the opportunity  
24 today to highlight the importance of a multi-year  
25 permanent supportive housing production initiative.

3 As we have heard today, New York City is  
4 experiencing record homelessness; we are at a  
5 critical moment to address this crisis and invest in  
6 the most cost-effective strategy proven to solve  
7 homelessness for those with greater needs, supportive  
8 housing, which pairs permanent affordable housing  
9 with supportive services and I can't stress the  
10 "permanent" enough; this is "permanent" housing.  
11 It's an evidence-based solution, combined with  
12 permanent affordable housing with social services,  
13 allows individuals and families to live stably in  
14 their communities just like any other New Yorker.

15 We know that supportive housing stops  
16 people from cycling between many crisis systems. For  
17 example, CSH's Keeping Families Together (KFT)  
18 Supportive Housing Program targeted homeless families  
19 who were also involved in the child welfare system.  
20 An evaluation of KFT demonstrated a 90% housing  
21 stability rate, the closing of the majority of child  
22 welfare cases and children attended 25 more days of  
23 school per year.

24 And Council Member Torres also mentioned  
25 housing is health care and we are part of a national  
demonstration project where four communities across

3 the country are providing supportive housing for high  
4 utilizers [sic] of Medicaid, and while we were doing  
5 that evaluation, which will be out shortly, with this  
6 and other New York State is going to be releasing  
7 **[inaudible]** it's preliminary analysis **[inaudible]**  
8 housing, so we have a growing body of evidence that  
9 is really speaking just to the high utilizers of  
10 Medicaid and other systems and how supportive housing  
11 is cost-effective, so stay tuned for more on that.

12 Supportive housing results in reductions  
13 in the shelter populations. In the first five years  
14 of the NY/NY III agreement, chronic homelessness  
15 among adults was reduced by 47%. Providing permanent  
16 affordable supportive housing options for people  
17 living in shelters will increase the positive exits  
18 from shelter and **[inaudible]** stick, given **[inaudible]**  
19 turnover or vacancy rates in supportive housing that  
20 we've been hearing about today.

21 Many people here today have talked about  
22 how it improves neighborhoods; it improves the block;  
23 it improves individual lives and provides a valuable  
24 resource in communities **[inaudible]** by community  
25 members. A question was asked earlier about the  
26 need; how do we know the need. In October of 2015

3 CSH released a statewide supportive housing needs  
4 assessment and it lifted data from five State  
5 agencies and using 2013 [sic] data showed that there  
6 was a need in New York City of almost 24,000 units of  
7 supportive housing, which is consistent, as we heard  
8 that HRA had 23,000 applications, so that is aligned.

9 We support this defecting [sic]  
10 intervention and put out money where our mouth is.  
11 Last year alone, CSH invested \$33 million in new  
12 supportive housing developments in New York, but the  
13 permanent supportive housing production pipeline is  
14 drying up. Supportive housing developers need a  
15 multi-year funding commitment that includes capital,  
16 operating and service funding that is required to  
17 build new supportive housing. We are asking you for  
18 your continued support in fully funding the Mayor's  
19 15/15 initiative, promoting the siting of new  
20 supportive housing buildings to give our most  
21 vulnerable New Yorkers a place to call home. Thank  
22 you.

23 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much.  
24 I just have a quick follow-up on that. So when... so  
25 you've been... your organization's been at it since  
1991 in New York City..

3 KRISTIN MILLER: Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: 1991, much different  
5 picture in terms of the amount of available land in  
6 New York City, so... [crosstalk]

7 KRISTIN MILLER: Yeah, sure.

8 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: as forces of  
9 gentrification go to every corner of the City of New  
10 York, how does an organization like yours work with  
11 developers and supportive housing providers to  
12 identify land and work on -- I mean it's so  
13 expensive, how do you even identify and acquire land  
14 to build supportive housing on?

15 KRISTIN MILLER: Yes, it's a fair  
16 question. We are finding that acquisition prices are  
17 skyrocketing, to your point, so we have internally  
18 adjusted our loan pool and loan qualification term  
19 sheets to try and meet the need for higher  
20 acquisition costs. I will say that we often perform  
21 as kind of a matchmaker, so a small perhaps nonprofit  
22 who has not done this before or has limited assets,  
23 we can help them joint venture in a variety of  
24 different ways with an affordable housing developer  
25 who would have a lot more resources available to  
them...

3 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Uhm-hm.

4 KRISTIN MILLER: to compete in this hot  
5 real estate market and that can be a lot of different  
6 flavors to what the joint ventureship looks like.

7 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Are you working at  
8 all with the JOE, the Joint Operating Entity of  
9 affordable housing developers that have all pulled  
10 resources together under HPD?

11 KRISTIN MILLER: Not directly, but around  
12 them, right. So we have our foot in all of the  
13 affordable housing work that is happening, and of  
14 course work very closely with HPD.

15 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Great, thank you.

16 NICOLE BRAMSTEDT: My testimony says good  
17 morning, but good afternoon. [laughter] Thought it  
18 was time for a good laugh.

19 My name is Nicole Bramstedt; I'm Policy  
20 Director at Urban Pathways. Thank you to both  
21 committees for having this hearing on supportive  
22 housing and the opportunity to testify. You have my  
23 full testimony that's been submitted; I will  
24 summarize parts of it.

25 Since 1975, Urban Pathways has worked to  
engage our most vulnerable, in particular,

3 chronically homeless individuals; also individuals  
4 discharged from state hospitals, and provide them  
5 with a way home. We have a continuum of program in  
6 four of the five boroughs and that includes eight  
7 supportive housing residences, as well as scattered-  
8 site supportive housing units in Brooklyn, Manhattan  
9 and the Bronx. Just to give you an idea, in Fiscal  
10 Year 16 we assisted over 500 individuals via  
11 supportive housing. In the first part of my  
12 testimony I addressed the issues we faced since  
13 opening our first supportive housing residence, Ivan  
14 Shapiro House in Midtown Manhattan in 1997. One  
15 issue I do want to speak on; it's been touched on; I  
16 think it needs to be touched on again, is that  
17 **[inaudible]** our community work and the extensive work  
18 we do with the communities. So since we opened Ivan  
19 Shapiro in 1997, we've worked really hard to engage  
20 communities. Just to give you an idea, you know we  
21 recognize our important role as a community member,  
22 as being a good neighbor; our vision is that our  
23 clients are self-sufficient, integrated members of  
24 the communities; we need communities to help our  
25 clients, and being engaged in community work and  
predevelopment, development operations of supportive

3 housing. Typically during predevelopment the  
4 community engagement we do is about a year and a  
5 half, it's very extensive, outreach to local  
6 electeds, including the City Council Member, the  
7 borough president; we engage also with the community  
8 board; we meet with them and present on the project,  
9 and with this regard, this is the role **[inaudible]** in  
10 deciding whether we need approval or we need  
11 notification. Typically we go in; we don't go in  
12 with specifics, we go in with an idea and some  
13 general feasibility; that's to give them a sense of  
14 shared ownership; we want them to be involved in  
15 this. We also offer them the opportunity to have a  
16 neighborhood advisory group so that community vendors  
17 can have input in terms of the development and  
18 operation of the residence. We also offer them  
19 opportunities to tour our existing residences, so we  
20 can, again, show them that we've done this before and  
21 we're very competent and such. And then we continue  
22 to engage with the community board during development  
23 and operation development; we offer a district  
24 manager a tour; we forward them job listings, as  
25 supporting as I know Breaking Ground testified. You  
know we ant people who are working in our buildings

3 to live them in the community, we want them to have a  
4 connection, it's very important to us, and we forward  
5 them the applications for low-income units in our  
6 mixed-use buildings so we can have individuals who  
7 are living in the community work there. And also,  
8 during operation, again, we strive to be a good  
9 neighbor, properly responding to community  
10 complaints; we have our program directors monthly  
11 attend community board meetings and we're involved in  
12 the local precinct community council. Despite this  
13 extensive engagement we still encounter resistance.  
14 I document some resistance we encountered when we  
15 opened our supportive housing residence in Astoria,  
16 Queens in 2011-2012, which I elaborate on in my  
17 written testimony. I'm really happy to report, and I  
18 know this has been brought up before, that there was  
19 **[inaudible]** Cove in Astoria, Queens; it'll be open  
20 its fifth year now, and as it enters its fifth year  
21 the concerns haven't materialized at all. Local  
22 residents confirm its low profile, the former Council  
23 Member reports no complaints during a site visit, the  
24 Queensborough President Office, staff commented it  
25 looked better than adjacent luxury apartments; the  
waterfront development that they feared wouldn't

3 happen is happening, and we also want to thank the  
4 current Council Member Constantinides for graciously  
5 awarding us a discretionary funds grant this past  
6 year. The residents there have a strong interest in  
7 arts, and so we've put together an arts group, with a  
8 real arts instructor and supplies, as opposed to a  
9 staff member doing it, and this is really enabling  
10 **[inaudible]** therapy to move forward. So it's these  
11 kind of partnerships that are important to us with  
12 the community.

13 As I elaborate in my testimony,  
14 resistance has detrimental consequences during  
15 predevelopment in particular and we have concerns  
16 going forward with the Mayor's 15,000 units that  
17 there might be a slowing in development of those  
18 units because of community resistance, which has  
19 happened in the past and the need right now -- you  
20 know we really have to ensure the development of  
21 these units are not delayed; we need to educate our  
22 communities in supportive housing; we need to get out  
23 in front of that potential community resistance. The  
24 City should conduct a community to [sic] education  
25 campaign generally, in terms of all New Yorkers, but  
also in communities with the local councilmember, the

3 community board; campaign should clarify what  
4 supportive housing is and isn't, specifically that  
5 it's not a shelter, and it should include an  
6 introduction to providers in residences; there needs  
7 to be dialogue continuing. Also, we need to address  
8 the role the community board plays in siting approval  
9 versus notification and we need to synchronize the  
10 City's policy with the State and the City could also  
11 ensure coordination of proposed projects to prevent  
12 multiple providers proposing sites at the same time  
13 in the same neighborhood.

14 We really appreciate having, again, this  
15 hearing and the support of the Council and the  
16 support of the City in utilizing this very cost-  
17 effective tool to addressing our homelessness crisis  
18 and we look forward to working with you going  
19 forward.

20 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much.

21 NICOLE BRAMSTEDT: Sure.

22 MOSHE SUGAR: Good afternoon. My name is  
23 Moshe Sugar. Thank you to both committees for having  
24 this hearing on supportive housing.

25 I have lived in Urban Pathways Ivan  
Shapiro House for close to four years now. Ivan

3 Shapiro House is a supportive housing residence in  
4 Midtown Manhattan. East resident has their own  
5 studio apartment with their own kitchen, bathroom and  
6 bedroom space. We also have an indoor and outdoor  
7 common space for groups, relaxing and events. Most  
8 importantly, we have 24-hour support; we have  
9 security always on-site. We also have case managers  
10 who make sure I take my medication, go to my program  
11 and keep my appointments. If I have a problem,  
12 there's always someone to talk with to nip it in the  
13 bud and take care of it before it overwhelms me.

14 Before Ivan Shapiro House, I was in and  
15 out of the hospital all my life. The last time I was  
16 there my doctor said let's try something different  
17 and would only discharge me to supportive housing; he  
18 would not let me out of the hospital otherwise. I  
19 did not want to go to supporting housing; I wanted to  
20 go home to my wife and kids, but he insisted that  
21 supportive housing was the only option. Now I'm very  
22 happy that the doctor suggested discharging me to  
23 supportive housing; it's been almost four years that  
24 I have been out of the hospital and not returned. If  
25 I would have not been in supportive housing, I would  
have been back in the hospital a long time ago.

3 With the help and support of Ivan Shapiro  
4 House I have changed for the better; before I entered  
5 Ivan Shapiro I did not regularly visit my doctors and  
6 when I did, I was not medication compliant, but now,  
7 with the help and support I regularly keep my  
8 appointments and take my medications as prescribed.  
9 Also, before Ivan Shapiro House I relied on drugs and  
10 alcohol to numb my pain, but now, with their help and  
11 support I am, thank god, sober and clean.

12 I am also working on anger management and  
13 how to reduce my anxiety and stress; this results in  
14 me making better, more rational decisions and less  
15 mistakes; I am also calmer. As a result, I am able  
16 to be employed part-time, editing Hebrew books. I  
17 also volunteer in the community, visiting individuals  
18 in the hospital.

19 To those who oppose a supportive housing,  
20 they should know that it is a building like any other  
21 on the block; in fact, on the outside it actually  
22 looks nicer. Sometimes when I am in front of Ivan  
23 Shapiro House people stop me and ask me how to get an  
24 apartment in the building.

25 I thank you for the opportunity to  
testify on supportive housing; it has been valuable

3 for me and it can be valuable for others going  
4 forward.

5 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you.

6 MOSHE SUGAR: You're welcome too. [sic]

7 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you very much,  
8 Sugar; that was very moving testimony and we greatly  
9 appreciate your willingness to be here to tell your  
10 story and show us, as the previous resident did as  
11 well on a previous panel, that supportive housing  
12 works for people and people that are in need of  
13 affordable housing, that it provides community,  
14 provides support, provides the helping hand that all  
15 of us need at some point. So I really greatly  
16 appreciate your willingness to come down here and  
17 testify. I want to thank this entire panel for your  
18 testimony and I think Council Member Williams wants  
19 to say something [sic].

20 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: I just want to  
21 reiterate that, particularly to Mr. Sugar for taking  
22 the time and the courage to come share your story.  
23 Again, as I said to the last resident, it's important  
24 that folks see and hear the real people behind to  
25 dismantle the preconceived notion they have of who's  
taking part in this and it's just regular people who

3 need assistance; anyone could be there. So thank you  
4 so much and hopefully you continue on your good path.  
5 Thank you.

6 MOSHE SUGAR: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Final panel -- Jaron  
8 Benjamin from Housing Works; is it... Rima Begum of  
9 Housing Works -- and I apologize if I mispronounce  
10 your name -- Chad Gholizadeh of Citizens' Community  
11 for Children -- apologize if I mispronounce your name  
12 -- Craig Hughes, Coalition for Homeless Youth; and  
13 Madge Rosenberg from CB7. Blanket apology if I  
14 mispronounce anybody...

15 JARON BENJAMIN: Thanks, Council Member  
16 Levin and Council Member Williams. I have to say,  
17 that's the first time that my name didn't get  
18 mispronounced and other people, so I really, I really  
19 appreciate that, so. I think there's a lot that's  
20 been said that I won't waste time saying again, but  
21 first of all, just thanks everybody for showing up.  
22 My name is Jaron Benjamin; I'm Vice President of  
23 Community Mobilization at Housing Works; we're here  
24 in a community with people living with and affected  
25 by HIV and AIDS and our mission is to end [inaudible]  
crisis of homelessness and AIDS, and currently our

3 biggest project is working on implementing the New  
4 York State blueprint for ending the AIDS epidemic by  
5 the year 2020 and the reason why we're here today is  
6 because expanding access to supportive housing is an  
7 integral part of that plan.

8 Just based on the previous NY/NY  
9 agreement, NY/NY III, we're expecting that up to 20%  
10 of the new units created through a robust NY/NY IV  
11 agreement could be targeted to homeless people living  
12 with HIV and co-recurring behavioral health issues.  
13 So that we're expecting could really make a dent in  
14 our efforts to end AIDS in New York State by the year  
15 2020.

16 Over the last decades Housing Works has  
17 relentlessly worked to provide homeless and unstably  
18 housed New Yorkers with stable housing and health  
19 care and we have long proven that housing is health  
20 care, and I'll talk a little bit more about some  
21 research on that in a minute. But expanding  
22 supportive housing would do more than just combat the  
23 homelessness crisis; I think a lot of people have  
24 done a great job talking about that, but it can also  
25 greatly improve public health and we've seen it time  
and time again when people have a place to take their

3 meds, a place to call home; then everything else  
4 seems to settle down. I have not had the misfortune  
5 of being homeless for an extended period of time, but  
6 was homeless -- and I won't get too political -- but  
7 was homeless during the government shutdown back in  
8 1995 or 1996, when I was a high school, and I can  
9 remember that during that time, during those months  
10 that we were away from our home, which an arsonist  
11 set fire to it, I don't remember taking any  
12 medication for anything and I have asthma and other  
13 chronic illnesses; I don't remember taking any daily  
14 regimen of anything; I don't remember doing my  
15 homework, and I can imagine, just that short period  
16 of destabilization, what kind of impact it must have  
17 on people that have much more than just homework,  
18 football practice and other things like that to worry  
19 about. And so we know that safe, stable housing go a  
20 long way towards reducing the number of new HIV  
21 infections from approximately, when the government  
22 made the commitment, 3,000 infections per year to 750  
23 new infections per year by the year 2020. And it's  
24 worth noting that as of 2017 we're already ahead of  
25 schedule, thanks in, I'm sure, no small part due to  
the City's commitment in expansion of HIV and AIDS

3 services, administration benefits to people without  
4 either **[inaudible]** infections or people with an AIDS  
5 diagnosis. Now for people who are HIV positive, that  
6 has gone a long way and we know that that's going to  
7 continue to remove people from the shelter system.

8 But just to kind of get to some of the  
9 things I alluded to earlier, we can't stress enough  
10 that housing is health care and a comprehensive study  
11 that was just recently published in the American  
12 Journal of Public Health -- Housing Status, Medical  
13 Care and Health Outcomes Among People Living with  
14 HIV/AIDS: A Systematic Review -- reviewed 152 peer  
15 review articles and the association between housing  
16 status, medical care and health outcomes among people  
17 living with HIV, and the findings reviewed provide  
18 overwhelming evidence that lack of stable, secure,  
19 adequate housing is a significant barrier and  
20 consistent and appropriate HIV medical care, access  
21 and **[inaudible]** medications sustain bowel  
22 suppression, which for people not well-versed, means  
23 that it's virtually impossible to pass the virus to  
24 anyone else, and transmission risk [sic] reduction.  
25 As the report also explains, housing compromises more  
than just physical shelter; where we live is our

3 personal, social and economic lives come together;  
4 people who lack stable, secure, adequate housing lack  
5 protected space to maintain physical and  
6 psychological wellbeing. This I know there's been a  
7 lot of talk about cost investment, but if people can  
8 just think back to the 30% rent cap bill that was  
9 passed at the state level and how much we were able  
10 to demonstrate cost savings in both medical care and  
11 shelter costs; we know from the testimony of people  
12 before and after me that this is definitely something  
13 that's going to save money and greatly improve public  
14 health. So a fourth NY/NY agreement would greatly  
15 decrease homelessness, support efforts to end the  
16 AIDS epidemic, save money for the city and state, and  
17 while I'm specifically talking about HIV and AIDS, I  
18 think it's the same with any other chronic illness,  
19 and that can't be overstated. And we stand ready to  
20 become the first jurisdiction in the world to end  
21 this AIDS epidemic, but in order to do that we must  
22 **[inaudible]** significant investments in housing  
23 supports. Again, we applaud the City's bold actions  
24 and continue to call on the Governor to complete a  
25 NY/NY IV agreement through which the City and State

3 can invest in housing, optimize health care and work  
4 towards an AIDS-free New York. Thank you.

5 RIMA BEGUM: Hello everyone, my name is  
6 Rima Begum; I am also working at Housing Works; I'm  
7 the Housing Coordinator, so I have more direct  
8 experience in doing some of those applications, the  
9 2010e application that HRA was talking about. And  
10 before I start my testimony, I just want to say; the  
11 only solution to homelessness is housing, period. No  
12 matter how you slice it; what conditions come with  
13 it; what life experiences, it's housing.

14 So I hope there are some HRA people here,  
15 but the application itself is approved for a six-  
16 month period, so one concern is that that's a very  
17 short amount of time to have an application approved  
18 for; it creates a little bit of strain on some of the  
19 providers who are having to redo applications and  
20 also psychiatric providers who have to redo  
21 evaluations on a six-month basis. So expanding it to  
22 a year would help tremendously, as evaluations are  
23 typically done on a yearly basis; most clients do see  
24 their providers on a monthly basis otherwise.

25 And then I know one population that we  
don't particularly talk about that I like to

3 emphasize is a really vulnerable population that we  
4 kind of often forget is sex offenders who kind of  
5 have no form of getting housing and oftentimes, when  
6 you were talking about the 1:3 ratio of who's getting  
7 picked, oftentimes sex offenders are not the first on  
8 the list to get picked and there's obviously other  
9 reasons around that, other policies that kind of  
10 contradict; whether there is a park or a school,  
11 those things, but I would like to see in the New York  
12 15/15 some policy around helping sex offenders.

13 CHAD GHOLIZADEH: Good afternoon. My  
14 name is Chad Gholizadeh and I'm the Senior Policy and  
15 Advocacy Associate for Economic and Housing Stability  
16 at the Citizens' Committee for Children (CCC).

17 CCC is a 73-year-old independent multi-  
18 issue child advocacy organization dedicated to  
19 ensuring every New York child is healthy, housed,  
20 educated, and safe. I'd like to thank Chairs Levin  
21 and Williams and the City Council for holding today's  
22 hearing on supportive housing and Breaking Ground and  
23 the residents of The Schermerhorn for hosting us  
24 today. And I'll just be summarizing my written  
25 testimony.

3 Supporting housing is a cost-effective  
4 need to reduce homelessness; placement in supportive  
5 housing reduces the use of costly emergency services  
6 and provides stability of families; residents have a  
7 lease, they receive necessary services and most  
8 importantly, their rent is affordable. While  
9 thousands of units of supportive housing have been  
10 created, homelessness in New York City has reached  
11 historic levels and the need for additional  
12 supportive housing units is dire. We're grateful for  
13 the Mayor and the City Council's longstanding support  
14 for supportive housing and the development of  
15 additional units of supportive housing to help New  
16 Yorkers, and we're particularly pleased for the  
17 commitment to create 15,000 affordable additional  
18 supportive housing units over the next 15 years. We  
19 hope this commitment is the start of a concerted  
20 effort in cooperation with the State to ensure that  
21 New York City and the State have supportive housing  
22 units needed, and CCC respectfully submits the  
23 following recommendation: that the State Legislature  
24 and the Governor must finalize and sign the MOU to  
25 release nearly \$2 billion in financing for funding

3 the creation of affordable and supportive housing as  
4 soon as possible.

5 We appreciate the City Council's efforts  
6 to date and urge you to continue to push your state  
7 counterparts to expedite the release of these funds  
8 and the start of housing development. We also wish  
9 to ensure that the City's supportive housing

10 commitment includes sufficient units for families  
11 with children and youth aging out of foster care.

12 The City's supportive housing recommendations include  
13 a call to create a vulnerability index to target  
14 housing applicants most in need of supportive  
15 housing; families with children are now 70% of the  
16 people living in DHS shelters.

17 In addition, youth aging out of foster  
18 care are struggling to maintain housing in the city.

19 First, CCC urges the City to ensure that the rollout  
20 of new units of supportive housing includes a

21 significant number of units for families and youth;  
22 second, CCC calls on the City to ensure that any

23 vulnerability index takes into account the barriers  
24 to housing that all members of the family face,

25 including the mental or developmental disabilities of  
a family's children and whether a family is involved

3 in the child welfare system in order to accurately  
4 assess their vulnerability. The coordinated  
5 assessment and placement system would offer an  
6 opportunity to identifying families who would benefit  
7 from supportive housing and this will ensure that the  
8 supply of affordable housing will be able to truly  
9 serve the families most in need.

10 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Thank you.

12 CRAIG HUGHES: Hi. Thank you, Chairs

13 Levin and Williams and members of the Committee for  
14 the opportunity to testify today. My name is Craig  
15 Hughes and I'm the Policy Analyst at the Coalition  
16 for Homeless Youth.

17 Coalition for Homeless Youth has  
18 advocated for the needs of homeless youth for nearly  
19 40 years; our coalition is comprised of 67 providers  
20 of services to homeless youth across New York State,  
21 including 29 members in New York City. We commend  
22 the City Council for scheduling a truly necessary  
23 oversight hearing on supportive housing. I'll also  
24 add into that that in a former life I spent about  
25 five years smotherly [sic] submitting supportive  
housing applications with homeless young people from

3 the street into a placement and from a provider  
4 perspective can certainly testify to the absolute  
5 importance of this intervention; it is a lifesaver,  
6 hands down. Then with that there are complications  
7 and it can be difficult, without falling into  
8 Nimbyism, to dive into that consensus and talk about  
9 some of the difficulties that are in the supportive  
10 housing process to make sure the most vulnerable  
11 people are able to access housing. So I'm going to  
12 -- I submitted written testimony, but I am going to  
13 just highlight some particular parts of it.

14 First, probably important to start with  
15 some context and Councilman Levin, I want to truly  
16 thank you for bringing up the question of rental  
17 subsidies for homeless youth. According to the most  
18 reasonable and comprehensive study on the matter,  
19 there are more than 3,800 homeless youth in New York  
20 City on any given night; currently, homeless youth  
21 are one of the only homeless subpopulations in New  
22 York City that has been left with virtually no option  
23 for permanent housing to exit homelessness. Youth  
24 relying on DYCD's homeless youth programs have no  
25 access to local housing subsidies like LINC; these  
young people do not receive any priority access to

3 New York City Housing Authority units or priority  
4 access to Section 8 subsidies. Youth eligible for  
5 supportive housing also face significant barriers in  
6 accessing the units.

7 As a result of the dearth of permanency  
8 options, many vulnerable youth continue to cycle in  
9 and out of homelessness. As an example of what I  
10 would consider a kind of systematic deprioritization  
11 in the City's Social Services Department of Homeless  
12 Youth, we see today that HRA testified that of the  
13 550 units coming online, they're only coming from  
14 DHS; not the DYCD system, and that Dan Tietz  
15 testified, when asked about whether LINC would be  
16 provided to homeless youth that "we are working on  
17 it." We're three years deep into an administration  
18 where homeless youth have been provided no out of  
19 shelter, no out and given that that's the case, three  
20 years is three years too long and that needs to  
21 happen.

22 City data shows that in FY16 less than 1%  
23 of those discharged from DYCD crisis beds moved into  
24 their own apartment, less than 1%. Only about 10% of  
25 those discharged from tilt transitional beds, longer-  
term transitional beds, moved into their own

3 apartment. For youth in crisis beds, nearly 30% of  
4 those discharged went directly back into crisis beds.

5 Supportive housing, which is an  
6 intervention available particularly for young people  
7 aging out of foster care and for those with mental  
8 health disabilities and other disabilities is  
9 decisive; however, homeless youth have had a  
10 particularly had time reaching that resource.

11 I'm going to bullet-point just a handful  
12 of difficulties that come up, and to be clear, I do  
13 this in a spirit of deep support of supportive  
14 housing, but also an acknowledgement of how  
15 marginalized homeless youth have been within the  
16 homeless services systems, including access to  
17 supportive housing.

18 First, there has to be an acknowledgement  
19 that New York City has a chronically homeless youth  
20 population and that many of these individuals would  
21 greatly benefit from supportive housing. Often when  
22 we speak of supportive housing for youth it solely  
23 relates to many young people as they relate to the  
24 foster care system, yet there's also a significant  
25 population of homeless young people who have been  
homeless for long periods of time, using DYCD

3 resources and many of them who don't. New York City  
4 provides only a handful of beds specifically for  
5 these young people and must provide more. As  
6 importantly, young adults should not be limited to  
7 age-specific units. Our providers have often found  
8 that young people in supportive housing buildings  
9 that are not in age-specific buildings do very well.

10 Secondly, and this gets to a more  
11 controversial issue, but I am nothing appreciative  
12 that it was approached, particularly by you, Council  
13 Member Levin, nor was it completely answered by the  
14 Administration, which is that creaming and cherry-  
15 picking, or what gets called creaming of applicants  
16 by providers is a pervasive issue that needs to be  
17 addressed. Sometimes young people are denied in  
18 supportive housing due to their age, although when  
19 you get written responses as to why that occurs it  
20 doesn't say that and sometimes you get verbal  
21 statement of that. But creaming or cherry-picking  
22 also occurs by screening out applicants through  
23 quick, highly subjective and surface-level claims of  
24 issues like lack of insight into mental illness, not  
25 being compliant with medication or because an  
applicant has a recent history of substance use or

3 because they are simply deemed too mentally ill. One  
4 way of looking at this is that many of those most in  
5 need may be the least likely to access the resource.  
6 The question -- uh well, answer that here actually.  
7 There is a need for oversight of denials and a  
8 mechanism to ensure that eligible applicants aren't  
9 being inappropriately screened out of permanent  
10 housing via questionable assessments; there's also  
11 need for some type of mechanism through which  
12 applicants can challenge denials of supportive  
13 housing. It's of note that supportive housing  
14 denials are not subject to fair hearings or any other  
15 administrative procedure for further review -- if you  
16 are denied, you are denied. Advocating for a client  
17 whose denial appears inappropriate -- and I can  
18 testify to this personally -- is typically an  
19 exercise in futility, including going up the City's  
20 chain of command.

21 Homeless young adults relying exclusively  
22 on DYCD resources appear to have a harder time  
23 getting referrals for interviews than young people in  
24 DHS beds; that is pretty clear today from what we've  
25 seen DHS prioritize within the supportive housing  
referral system.

3 Youth-specific units are often not  
4 subsidized with permanent housing subsidies that have  
5 the potential to become mobile and youth going into  
6 their mid 20s often find themselves being pushed to  
7 leave without a clear option in front of them. For  
8 future youth-specific units, if they are age limited  
9 -- and we would argue they should not be -- there  
10 needs to be access to an ongoing rental subsidy upon  
11 exit. The notion that was mentioned today of a  
12 culture moving on, from landlord-speak, that could  
13 also mean a culture of tenant harassment and I think  
14 that's something we need to be very weary of.

15 Finally, supportive housing providers are  
16 sometimes heavy-handed with tenants who suffer with  
17 disabilities that impact their daily functionality.  
18 For example, some supportive housing landlords are  
19 quick to move for evictions over issues where a more  
20 appropriate response is supportive and compassionate.  
21 Other supportive housing providers move much slower  
22 toward eviction and tend to focus on providing  
23 supports and assistance rather than a threatening  
24 warning letter or bringing someone to Housing Court.  
25 We would hope that the City, in its efforts to  
support the housing of vulnerable people, will

2 encourage best practices that emphasize the support  
3 in supportive housing rather than sick [sic].

4 To conclude, the Coalition for Homeless  
5 Youth is appreciative of the new supportive housing  
6 units planned to come online and very appreciative of  
7 this very needed hearing; we're in hopes that  
8 challenges mentioned above that I just went through  
9 will be taken into account in all forthcoming units  
10 and also that there will be continuing oversight and  
11 hearings as these units are developed. Thank you.

12 MADGE ROSENBERG: Hi, I'm Madge  
13 Rosenberg, Co-Chair of Community Board 7's Health and  
14 Human Services Committee and I'm going to speak about  
15 something on a very micro level and that's -- in our  
16 neighborhood we have several supportive housing  
17 units, many, and over the years there has been  
18 neighborhood opposition to some, especially since  
19 it's compacted into a small part of the neighborhood.  
20 But one particular building, which is Rustin House,  
21 which took ten years to finally be converted under  
22 NY/NY III, with a great deal of support from Gale  
23 Brewer, who had been our councilperson, and  
24 subsequently from our present Councilperson, Helen  
25 Rosenthal, that's really turned into a success story

3 and one of the best parts of it is that it was a very  
4 NIMBY situation early on. There was a large group,  
5 including a lot a lawyers in the neighborhood, well  
6 financed, who fought this; it took very long to be  
7 built because of all the opposition and it also wound  
8 up being a little smaller because of all the  
9 opposition, but now that opposition, it's not there  
10 anymore. Not only that, but the person who led that  
11 opposition is supportive of this unit and the latest  
12 unit, within a block of this, which is the Veterans'  
13 House, and this particular gentleman is now really  
14 involved with that and on the CAB. So that's been a  
15 great success story and it was under NY/NY III and I  
16 hope very much there will be NY/NY IV to bring more  
17 of this, because the neighborhood is very, and the  
18 Board, very encouraging of supportive housing and we  
19 welcome it. Thank you.

20 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you very  
21 much for your testimony. I want to figure out why is  
22 it concentrated in a certain part of the community?

23 MADGE ROSENBERG: Because there were a  
24 lot of illegal hotels and buildings in bad condition;  
25 the neighborhood's changed very, very much; it's been  
gentrified the years I've lived here enormously, so

3 that there were parts that still had either rent-  
4 controlled buildings or illegal hotels and the  
5 landlord saw a way to make money by doing this, so  
6 some of them have been turned into shelters, but the  
7 community really doesn't want shelters so much as we  
8 want supportive, permanent housing.

9 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Well thank you  
10 for all the work that you continue to do. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: I want to thank this  
12 panel as well for all the work that you do and for  
13 bringing up really important issues that we're going  
14 to continue to follow up on; I think that we've  
15 identified, through your testimony; through the  
16 public's testimony issues that need further  
17 clarification and further follow-up and so we look  
18 forward to working with you all as advocates and  
19 providers to follow up on those.

20 I want to acknowledge and welcome my  
21 colleagues, Council Member Robert Cornegy of Brooklyn  
22 and Vanessa Gibson of the Bronx who are here as  
23 members of the Housing and Buildings Committee and  
24 the General Welfare Committee. And I want to thank  
25 again all of you that came here to testify and for  
the good and important work that you continue to do.

3 I want to acknowledge, because this was an off-site  
4 hearing it was a little bit harder to produce than  
5 our regular City Hall hearings; I want to acknowledge  
6 our Sergeants at Arms, John Biondo and Mohamed  
7 Arshad; I want to acknowledge Tonya Cyrus and Andrea  
8 Vazquez of the General Welfare Committee; Guillermo  
9 Patino and Jose Conde of the Housing and Buildings  
10 Committee; Carlos Coreno [sp?] and Jenny Berger of  
11 The Speaker's staff. I want to acknowledge Breaking  
12 Ground, CUCS, Matthew Brookshire from The Actors Fund  
13 who's our like studio manager here, and let's see...  
14 and the camera operators who are here from NYCTV who  
15 are putting this broadcasting online and on the  
16 television. Jumaane, you have anything?

17 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Sorry, and you  
18 did ask me, but Sarah Gastelum was here also from the  
19 Committee.

20 I did just want to make one point,  
21 because I agree that permanent housing period is the  
22 answer to homelessness; I just want to be careful  
23 about some of the **[inaudible]** that comes with  
24 rejecting shelters as well, but we definitely prefer  
25 permanent housing, but there probably needs to be  
some place for people to stay until those housing

3 units come online and sometimes we see similar  
4 Nimbyism that we see in the past when it comes to  
5 shelters.

6 MADGE ROSENBERG: There is a shelter back  
7 to back with this building.

8 CO-CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Sure, no  
9 problem. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON LEVIN: Also acknowledging  
11 Ashley -- and I don't know her last name -- from  
12 Actors Fund and Julie Bero, my Legislative Director  
13 as well. Okay. Well with that, thank you all; this  
14 hearing is adjourned.

15 [gavel]

16 [background comments]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date January 31, 2017