



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS
TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS
MAY 14, 2024**

Good morning Chair Brannan, Chair Sanchez and members of the Committees on Finance and Housing and Buildings. I am Jimmy Oddo, Commissioner for the New York City Department of Buildings (“the Department”). I am joined today by several members of the Department’s leadership team. We are pleased to be here to discuss the Fiscal Year 2025 Executive Budget, as well as to provide an update on the Department’s performance and priority initiatives.

The Fiscal Year 2025 Executive Budget (“FY 25 Executive Budget”) allocates approximately \$211 million in expense funds to the Department. Of this funding, approximately \$157 million is for Personal Services, which supports 1,642 budgeted positions, and nearly \$54 million is for Other Than Personal Services, which primarily supports contractual services, equipment, and supplies. This funding is critical to supporting the Department’s mandates and priorities. The FY 25 Executive Budget allocates additional funding to the Department to support critical initiatives, including \$4.1 million to support the Department’s sustainability initiatives, including the ongoing implementation of Local Law 97 and the Climate Mobilization Act, \$1.7 million to support the Get Sheds Down initiative to redesign sidewalk sheds, and \$8.8 million to support the ongoing implementation of DOB NOW.

While reduced staffing and overtime has had an impact on the Department’s service levels, we continue to maintain strong service levels in all key areas, including development and enforcement. Regarding development, we are currently reviewing new building applications within 10 days, major alteration applications within 7 days, and minor alteration applications within 6 days. The wait time between a construction inspection request and an inspection, which occurs after a construction project is completed by a contractor, also continues to be short. While there has been

an uptick in the time it takes for a development inspection to be completed due to an increased demand for inspections and budgetary constraints, such inspections are being completed within five days of a request in most instances, which includes inspections involving general construction, electrical work, and plumbing work. We also continue to respond to complaints from members of the public expeditiously. We are responding to the most serious complaints, Priority “A” complaints, which are those complaints that relate to conditions that may present an immediate threat to the public, within hours. We are responding to Priority “B” complaints, which capture violating conditions that if occurring, while serious, do not present an immediate threat to the public, within twelve days. We will continue to work to find efficiencies to improve the services we offer to our customers and members of the public and will monitor our service levels to determine whether additional resources are needed to fulfill our mandate.

Last week was National Construction Safety Week, which the Department used as an opportunity to remind the construction industry that safety must always come first on construction sites by holding safety-focused events and connecting directly with workers and contractors at construction sites in all five boroughs. Last week, the Department also released its annual New York City Construction Safety Report, which provides a comprehensive analysis of building construction safety trends in 2023. This year’s report indicates that despite conducting more total inspections than ever, Department personnel have issued fewer summonses and Stop Work Orders than the past several years, a strong indicator of increased compliance from construction industry professionals. Additionally, building construction-related fatalities in the five boroughs are at the lowest number in nearly a decade, with seven deaths in 2023 as compared to a high of 14 in 2019. While fatalities are down, the report also shows that the total number of building construction-related worksite injuries continues to rise for a third consecutive year, a concerning trend that the Department is closely monitoring. The Department will continue to conduct proactive, unannounced inspections of larger construction sites to ensure that safety regulations are being complied with. This year, we are also implementing local laws that reduce the number of construction jobs a Construction Superintendent can be responsible for and that bolster site safety requirements at larger construction sites, including requiring more site safety supervision and the submission of site safety plans to the Department.

The Department also continues to fulfill its obligation to address greenhouse gas emissions coming from buildings and help the City achieve its climate goals. The additional resources allocated to the Department as part of the FY 25 Executive Budget will support our implementation of Local Law 97, which requires the city's largest buildings to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over several compliance periods through 2050. The Department has released rules and guidance to inform property owners about how to comply with the law, and owners must start reporting their progress to the Department on May 1, 2025. We will continue to engage in rulemaking and on the ground implementation this year.

As I mentioned during our Preliminary Budget Hearing in March, we are also taking significant steps to improve quality of life for New Yorkers and to improve building safety. Last summer, the Mayor announced the "Get Sheds Down" plan, a multifaceted approach to removing sidewalk sheds more quickly, while reimagining the sidewalk sheds that are needed to protect the public and in connection with construction work. This builds upon the work of the Department to address longstanding sidewalk sheds, including performing regular inspections and taking legal action to hold building owners accountable for maintaining their buildings. The additional resources allocated to the Department as part of the FY 25 Executive Budget will support our efforts to redesign sidewalk sheds. Since the Mayor's plan was announced, we have released solicitations and selected firms to deliver on two major initiatives, which includes redesigning sidewalk sheds to make them less obtrusive and more aesthetically pleasing and to study Local Law 11, which requires buildings greater than six stories in height to have their facades inspected periodically to determine whether any changes to the program are needed. We have also released guidance to the construction industry regarding the use of netting in lieu of sidewalk sheds and rules regarding the installation of art on sidewalk sheds. Key proposals in the plan require legislative action and we look forward to working with this Committee to pursue those changes in the near future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. We welcome any questions you may have.



City of New York
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HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
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ADOLFO CARRIÓN JR.
Commissioner

Testimony of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development to the New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings

FY 2025 Executive Budget Hearing

May 14, 2024

Good Morning Chair Sanchez, Chair Brannan, and members of the New York City Council. I am Adolfo Carrion Jr., Commissioner of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD), and I am joined by members of our agency's senior leadership team.

Housing Policy is *Always* Personal

The work we do here at the nation's largest municipal housing agency, in partnership with this city council, is very personal to me. Like many public servants in this chamber and throughout our government, I am a direct beneficiary of the critical investments government made that allowed my family to flourish in this great city and beyond, and so I'd like to begin my brief testimony with a personal reflection.

My parents arrived in New York City from Puerto Rico in the early 1950s. Like so many others, they came looking for work in the global city. As new arrivals, they had little to no resources, very limited ability to speak English, and little formal education. In one generation, they were able to rise to the middle class. From a Williamsburg basement tenement apartment, to Jacob Riis Houses in the Lower East Side, to a HUD-financed rental, to their first home in the north Bronx, it was all possible because government invested in our family with the understanding that it would pay huge dividends for our society. This is why this work is so personal to me and I know you've heard the Mayor share a similar story. Investments in affordable housing work. And that is exactly why we fought so hard this past year to get better tools to continue investing in the next generation and support those who worked hard to build this great city.

Growing up, I certainly didn't understand the nuances of housing policy. I wasn't aware of our housing code, or zoning rules, and I wasn't paying attention to the budgetary decisions of our local government. But I knew my parents were relieved when we were chosen for a public housing apartment. And I knew the excitement and joy for our entire family on the day we moved into our new home in the North Bronx. Mostly, I always knew what it meant to have a home.

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My parents taught us that no one succeeds or fails alone. When you know you and your kids have a safe place to sleep at night, in a neighborhood where you know you'll be able to stay for years, you can then give back, you can be a leader, you can advocate for others, you can raise kids to hold jobs and start businesses you never would have dreamed of...even for yourself. As HPD Commissioner, I bring my parents' lessons to work every day.

In New York City, every child should have the opportunities given to my family and that means we must maintain and deepen our commitment to creating and preserving affordable housing. This is about the roof over a child's head, the ability for an older adult to age in place comfortably and safely with dignity and grace, and the chance for a formerly homeless veteran to access supportive services in a dignified place they can call home. We come before you today not just talking about numbers and data, we're quite literally talking about our neighbors' lives.

It is a privilege to testify before you all today, as HPD's Commissioner, as a father and grandfather, and – more than anything – as the former New York City kid who had a shot to succeed in life because public servants like us invested in affordable housing.

Investing in Affordable Housing

What does a real investment in housing look like? The Mayor set a moonshot goal of 500,000 homes created and preserved—because *that's* what it will take to solve the housing shortage and homelessness crisis—and we are moving full steam ahead to make it a reality.

Our mission is to create and preserve affordable homes, especially for vulnerable, low- and middle-income New Yorkers. We're constantly finding ways to finance deeper affordability and to partner with community organizations who provide wrap around services to better serve New Yorkers. In the past two years, the City broke record after record to create and preserve as many affordable homes as possible while getting people into these new apartments as quickly as possible.

HPD's proposed fiscal year 2025 expense budget totals \$1.8 billion, of which \$275 million is pass-through funding for the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA). Excluding pass through funding allocated for the New York City Housing Authority, our agency's operational budget is \$1.6 billion.

Approximately 50%, \$790 million, of our expense budget comes from federal grants, primarily for Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers and other rental assistance programs. The agency also relies heavily on funding from the Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships program, which support targeted code enforcement, emergency repairs, tenant anti-harassment, and downpayment assistance for first-time homebuyers.

The balance of our expense budget consists of \$747 million in city funds, with a relatively small amount of state and other categorical grants amounting to \$1.3 million. City funds are used to fill gaps in programs and services that are not eligible for federal reimbursement or require a local matching contribution. This requires innovative design and implementation of new programs and services to maximize city resources.



Our capital commitment plan for fiscal year 2025 totals \$2.2 billion, of which \$429 million is pass-through funding for NYCHA's Permanent Affordability Commitment Together (PACT) program, leaving a balance of \$1.7 billion for the agency's project pipeline. Almost 98% of our capital plan is funded by city sources, while the remaining 2% is financed by the federal HOME block grant for affordable housing.

It's not enough to just create housing - where we build and the types of homes, we build matter. Every New Yorker should have access to safe, quality housing they can afford in the neighborhood that best fits their needs. Too many New Yorkers face a wide range of obstacles to having true choice in finding a home. Our city is still very segregated, especially by race, and we committed to breaking down the obstacles to fair housing.

Through Where We Live NYC, we set 81 specific commitments and have made significant progress toward those goals in the first few years of this administration. These commitments now permeate every aspect of our work. How we plan, how we build and preserve affordable housing, how we think about building quality and housing stability. Now we're starting work on the next iteration of Where We Live NYC, which we expect to complete in mid-2025.

At its core, here is our prescription: talk to New Yorkers, pursue opportunities to build housing of all types in every corner of this city and ensure that all New Yorkers have real housing choice: the choice to stay in their current home and their current neighborhood or the choice to move to a new home in a neighborhood that better fits their needs.

Our development division of more than eight teams works on hundreds of projects. Everything from converting hotels and commercial buildings into affordable homes to helping homeowners create safer basements to rent out at affordable rates. And, our Office of Neighborhood Strategies is working with communities throughout the city to plan for the preservation and development of affordable housing in a manner that fosters more equitable, diverse, and livable neighborhoods.

Through our Housing Access and Stability team, we are connecting thousands of New Yorkers to homes throughout the five boroughs. They not only run Housing Connect, the City's affordable housing lottery, but oversee our rental voucher programs and homeless placements, altogether which serve over 50,000 households a year. Through our rental voucher program and homeless placement programs, we can extend the reach of our affordable housing to the lowest-income New Yorkers.

You all know of the incredible work of our Enforcement and Neighborhood Services team, with our inspectors and emergency repair teams in almost every district every day, our attorneys active in every Housing Court, our HPD In Your District initiative covering any district that is interested and our Alternative Enforcement Program tackling the most distressed buildings. You have heard from this team directly at these hearings more than any other HPD team, and we continue to work with you productively to explore new tools and new ways to improve our process, increase transparency and communication, and work together towards our shared goal of every New Yorker having a safe place to rest their head.

Our Division of Asset and Property Management is responsible for ensuring the longevity and affordability of homes created and preserved by HPD. And, we're focused on proactively



identifying at-risk buildings and portfolios, and stabilizing those that are struggling and those that have been mismanaged.

Hand in Hand, Creating a City of Yes!

In the two months since our first budget hearing for fiscal year 2025, our State legislature and governor passed a comprehensive housing package arming us with new tools to better confront the housing crisis. Specifically, Albany created a new affordable housing tax incentive, while creating an extension to allow in-progress buildings to complete, ensured there would be affordable housing when office buildings convert to housing, removed the cap on floor-area-ratio to allow for the construction of more affordable homes and opened the door for us to start of a meaningful program for safer basement apartments.

Together, the new housing package and the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity proposals, will help create the new housing, and new affordable housing we need and will jumpstart our progress toward meeting the Mayor's 500,000 moonshot goal and the goals set out in the Council's recently passed fair housing framework.

We now need the City Council and our neighbors to help create a "City of Yes" and pass zoning changes to create a little more housing in every neighborhood, from the highest-density to lowest-density areas. Taken together, these small changes will have a big impact on New Yorkers' housing needs without over-burdening any one area's infrastructure or creating the dramatic change that New Yorkers often fear. Approving this citywide change to what is and isn't allowed to be built here stands as a critical step toward creating a healthier housing market and a fairer and more equitable city.

The City of Yes will help HPD bring new affordable housing to communities more quickly and effectively. For example, the Universal Affordability Preference will allow 100% affordable HPD projects to include more units and establishes a deeper affordability threshold than existing Voluntary Inclusionary Housing programs. Tweaks to the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing rules will allow for a standalone Option 3 – the Deep Affordability option – when MIH is mapped, allowing projects in MIH areas to offer deeper affordability. The Accessory Dwelling Unit proposal will complement HPD's Plus One ADU pilot program, enabling homeowners to create space for family members, such as grandparents or adult children, to live nearby or to add new revenue streams through a rental unit, creating greater financial stability.

Our best chance at success for creating a city where everyone has access to safe, affordable housing is by continuing to work hand in hand with you and deepening our partnership.

We continue to work with OMB and City Hall as the budget process develops to make sure that our needs are supported.

We are encouraged by your commitment to creating safe and affordable homes in the City we all love.



Everyone has a Housing Story

In New York City, everyone has a story. Those stories shape us, connect us, and often center around home and housing. As public servants, those stories impact our work, our advocacy, and our decisions. That's true if you're a project manager on the HPD development team, a housing inspector out in the field or an elected official here in City Hall.

At HPD we hear those stories, whether they're told to us or witnessed by us. It is a privilege to be the agency providing affordable housing and keeping New Yorkers safe in their homes.

Our stories don't begin with us. Mine is also the story of my mother who was the glue for our family. Originally from the Puerto Rican countryside, from a small farming family which relied almost entirely on the food they grew. She moved to New York in 1952 and like many women of her generation, she spent her life taking care of us. While my dad created a vibrant faith community, it was my mom who made sure our application was complete for NYCHA and it was my mom who made sure we learned how to save up to become homeowners. Maybe most importantly, she made sure, no matter what, our apartments were always a nurturing home.

My story, my history, is one of family, migration from a US territory, friendships forged in our neighborhood, hard work, struggle and celebrating every success. It's the story of affordable housing and community investment.

It's our job to do everything in our power so that today, in 2024, no young mom needs to choose between homelessness and an unsafe basement apartment. No mom should be kept up at night wondering if they'll be chosen for affordable housing, there should simply be enough. No one should worry about being priced out of the neighborhoods they love and the vibrant communities they have created.

I grew up the child of Puerto Rican migrants, determined to create stability and a new home for their kids. Because of their determination and the help of government housing programs, we went from a basement apartment in a Brooklyn tenement to public housing to our own home in the Bronx. Because someone said, we need to fund affordable housing in New York City, the grandson of Puerto Rican farmers sits before you today as Commissioner of HPD.

It's been a decade since my father passed and five years since Mom did, but I think about them every day. Not only because as a son I miss them terribly, but because as a public servant, I never want to forget the lessons of my childhood.

I take my duties as Commissioner very seriously and strive to be a responsible steward of our resources as an agency in a way that will bring the same housing opportunities to others that my family was able to benefit from. Home is the foundation on which we build the future of our city.

Thank you very much for having us here today. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.





JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS

**STATEMENT OF PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS
TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS
MAY 14, 2024**

Good afternoon,

My name is Jumaane D. Williams and I am the Public Advocate for the City of New York. Thank you very much to Chair Sanchez, Chair Brannan, and members of the Committee on Housing and Buildings for holding this hearing and allowing me the opportunity to provide a statement.

For the past two years, New York City has experienced weakening infrastructure that has led to building, parking lot, and crane collapses. This is a concerning trend in the overall infrastructure and building safety. The impact of unchecked safety and code violations was made clear last December when a portion of a Bronx residential building collapsed. In addition, it is vital to deliver proper audits of licensed professionals' certifications to improve quality and safety in the future. Due to the numerous dangerous building collapses, the headcount for DOB inspectors is troubling. Currently, the executive budget does not include a budget for inspector position restoration.¹ The Council is calling for the Administration to restore \$19M worth of the eliminated positions, especially those that are vacant.² As of March 2024, the vacancy rate at DOB is 4.7% which is significantly lower compared to the vacancy rate in May 2022 which was 30.1%.³ Although it is lower, DOB is still facing staff challenges with the removal of 24 full-time positions in the baseline from FY24.⁴

Fire and crippling infrastructures have been a recent trend in all five boroughs. The Bronx, in particular, has experienced many tragedies due to landlord abandonment and neglect, and it's no surprise that these fires are taking place in communities of more color. There has been an increase in lithium-ion battery fires throughout the city. In 2022, these batteries caused 220 fires and 6 deaths⁵ and in 2023 they caused 268 fires and 18 deaths and 150 injuries.⁶ So far this year, there have been 77 lithium-ion battery fires.⁷ The most recent fire took place in April when fire marshals were arresting an e-bike retailer and a battery exploded.⁸ Three months ago in Harlem, there was another fire that caused the death of Fazil Khan, a young journalist. It was truly a tragic incident that could have been prevented.⁹ Many residents are

¹ <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/View.ashx?M=F&ID=12945599&GUID=E3D07A0C-78DB-40F1-AC48-91B145730938>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ <https://pix11.com/news/local-news/manhattan/2-people-injured-in-nyc-fire-lithium-ion-battery-is-possible-cause-officials/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CThere%27s%20not%20an%20awful%20lot.220%20fires%20and%20six%20deaths>

⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/29/nyregion/ebike-charging-station-nyc.html>

⁷ <https://brooklyn.news12.com/lithium-ion-batteries-fire-prevention-bill-for-brooklyn-goes-to-senate-for-final-vote>

⁸ <https://gothamist.com/news/fdny-battery-explodes-during-queens-e-bike-retailer-arrest>

⁹ Maslin Nir, Sarah. "E-Bike Battery Caused Fire That Killed Young Journalist, Officials Say". *New York Times*. February 28, 2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/28/nyregion/fazil-khan-fire-lithium-ion-battery.html>



JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS

displaced and unable to return home every time a fire occurs. Consequently, the City provides them with temporary shelter, emergency housing vouchers, and relocation assistance. It is critical that we maintain the ample funding that provides these vital services to residents that survived a fire. In addition, we need more inspectors who can identify violations that can potentially cause collapses and fires as well as addressing emergency complaints.

I also want to uplift three recommendations by New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, which calls on the Council and administration to fund and staff an additional 10 positions at the Office of Building Energy and Emissions Performance for Local Law 97 for compliance and enforcement which would require a total of \$1.6M. The second recommendation is to fund and hire 3 new positions at the Office of Policy and Strategy at HPD which would require approximately \$480K. Lastly, we are calling for a least \$5M allocated for local NYC organizations to provide outreach and education on compliance for Local Law 97.

I hope during today's hearing the administration will provide more information on the issues I highlighted in my statement. We cannot have unsafe and weakening infrastructure that puts New Yorkers at risk everyday. Thank you.



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Testimony of Emily Goldstein, Director of Organizing & Advocacy, ANHD

Before the New York City Council Housing and Buildings Committee Regarding Priorities for the New York City Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget

May 14, 2024

Thank you to Committee Chairs Brennan and Sanchez, and to the committee members, for the opportunity to testify today on the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Executive Budget. My name is Emily Goldstein, and I am the Director of Organizing & Advocacy at the Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development (ANHD).

About the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD)

ANHD is one of the City's lead policy, advocacy, technical assistance, and capacity-building organizations. We maintain a membership of 80+ neighborhood-based and city-wide nonprofit organizations that have affordable housing and/or equitable economic development as a central component of their mission. We are an essential citywide voice, bridging the power and impact of our member groups to build community power and ensure the right to affordable housing and thriving, equitable neighborhoods for all New Yorkers. We value justice, equity, and opportunity, and we believe in the importance of movement building that centers marginalized communities in our work. We believe housing justice is economic justice is racial justice.

ANHD's work directly supports the needs of our members who develop, manage, and organize to preserve affordable housing, and who fight to bring equity into low-wealth communities in New York City—especially communities of color. Our groups rely on us for technical assistance and capacity-building resources that allow them to maximize their resources, skills, and impact. The support services, research, analysis, public education, and coalition building we do helps to identify patterns of local neighborhood experiences and uplift citywide priorities and needs. Our work translates into the capacity to win new programs, policies, and systems that ensure the creation and preservation of deeply and permanently affordable housing, and economic justice.

Housing Capital

Restore Housing Capital Funding

We strongly oppose the 20% reduction in affordable housing capital funding - from \$2.6 billion in FY24 to \$2.1 billion in FY25 - proposed in the Executive Budget. The administration's proposed cuts would go beyond a straightforward reduction in affordable housing units. HPD's development pipeline already has a serious backlog due to years of understaffing and other

pandemic-related delays. Cutting capital dollars would exacerbate this problem and cause further delays, increasing costs for every project held up, and reducing the impact of every dollar spent. It is also likely that reducing capital funding would make it difficult for the City to fully utilize available Low Income Housing Tax Credits, which are paired with city subsidy to finance affordable housing developments. **We urge both the Council and the Administration to fully restore previously committed housing capital funding.**

At a time of record homelessness and housing insecurity in New York City, it is crucial to maintain and strengthen our commitment to funding the construction and preservation of affordable housing. This is the moment to invest more, not less. Therefore, in addition to this restoration, we encourage the following new capital funding commitments.

Emergency Preservation Funds for Non-Profit Affordable Housing Providers

New York's affordable housing stock is at serious risk due to unaddressed rent arrears accumulated during the height of the pandemic. ANHD and our members have been ringing the alarm bells since the onset of the COVID pandemic in 2020. The deprioritization of income-restricted housing in New York's Emergency Rental Assistance Program led to the disheartening result that many of our affordable housing developments continue to carry increasingly unsustainable deficits from rent arrears. Non-profit, mission-driven developers are particularly vulnerable because they generally operate on razor-thin margins in order to maximize affordability in their buildings and services in their communities. They do not have past profits or income from market-rate buildings in their portfolios to help make up these gaps, and many are experiencing challenges with being able to pay vendors, to contribute to capital reserves, to renovate units for re-rental, and pay their mortgages.

If New York does not address rental arrears now, not only do we risk losing affordable housing units, but many of New York's lowest-income tenants will be at risk of displacement and homelessness. Mission-driven providers are doing all they can to avoid evicting tenants with significant rental arrears, but have almost no remaining options. The City must do its part to intervene to place our affordable housing stock back on sound financial footing and avoid further worsening our already untenable homelessness crisis. **We urge the City to budget a new \$250 million in Emergency Preservation Funds in the Fiscal Year 2025 to keep our affordable housing in sound financial and physical condition and keep our lowest-income tenants housed.**

Homes Now, Homes for Generations

In addition, we urge a commitment of an additional \$2.5 billion in capital funding over the next 5 years specifically dedicated to the Neighborhood Pillars and Open Door programs, to ensure robust funding for the preservation of existing rental housing as permanently affordable, and



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development of affordable homeownership opportunities in New York City. The Neighborhood Pillars program enables non-profit, mission-driven developers to acquire existing distressed, at-risk, or available for-profit-owned housing, rehabilitate it, and preserve it as a permanently affordable housing resource for the community. The Open Door program, finances the new construction of multi-family shared equity co-operatives, giving low and moderate-income New Yorkers a path toward homeownership.

With this proposed 2.5 billion, these two programs will create new homeownership opportunities for an additional 3,100 New York families and preserve and rehabilitate rent-stabilized units for nearly 9,000 households, without pulling funds away from other valuable and much needed affordable housing development pipelines. This five-year program is an essential piece of the puzzle to fix the housing crisis and ensure that New York City can once again be a City of opportunity for working and middle-class people.

NYCHA Capital Needs

Public housing remains New York City's most important source of deeply and permanently affordable housing. Ongoing, chronically poor housing conditions impact residents' employment, children's schooling, and increase healthcare needs. NYCHA residents, like all New Yorkers, are entitled to safe and healthy homes. New York City must prioritize NYCHA residents as core members of our communities and NYCHA housing as a key piece of the City's affordable housing plan.

The contracting process for discretionary funding is inefficient and results in significant delays in payments for organizations. ANHD and many in the NFP sector call for a more efficient discretionary funding process.

To that end, we ask that the City contribute \$3.55 billion towards our public housing stock's capital needs, which will preserve 15,000 affordable homes.

Agency staffing

None of the City's capital or operating budget commitments turn into tangible results without the work of agency staff. Unfortunately inadequate staffing at HPD, DOB, and numerous other agencies has led to backlogs, delays, and inadequate services that impact stakeholders across the board. We urge the city to fully fund housing and homelessness agencies at a level that allows them to properly move buildings through the development process, implement and enforce legal requirements, and perform inspections, and generally respond in a robust and timely manner to the needs of tenants, shelter residents, voucher holders, affordable housing developers, and the public as a whole. This includes doing away with destructive PEG proposals, restoring past cuts, and increasing staffing levels where appropriate to improve agency performance.

HPD

Inadequate HPD staffing affects tenants and affordable housing developers alike. HPD must be funded to have sufficient staff to properly enforce the housing maintenance code, including inspectors to respond to tenant complaints and also do proactive enforcement, and legal staff to pursue housing court cases that actually hold landlords accountable for their recorded violations.

HPD is involved in the vast majority of affordable housing being produced, and we have seen in the past couple of years the effect of the staffing shortages on this side as well. 12,000 fewer apartments were built in 2022 compared to pre pandemic numbers, according to the Comptroller's office ¹. The staff shortages have caused delays in affordable housing production, meaning HPD would need to increase its production by about 42% in the upcoming fiscal year simply to meet its preexisting goals². These delays also directly impact affordable housing developers, and particularly non-profit developers, who are left carrying expensive pre-development and construction loan costs for longer before they can close and convert to permanent financing. Although HPD has made great efforts to undo its shortages, hiring about 863 full time employees in the past six fiscal quarters, the loss of institutional knowledge and experience cannot be diminished. There is still a significant backlog of affordable housing projects from the past two years requiring us to give HPD all the resources we can to ensure that we recuperate from the loss in production.

DSS & HRA

In the midst of an unprecedented homelessness crisis in New York City, the agencies responsible for safely sheltering unhoused New Yorkers and helping them to access stable permanent housing need additional funding. We know that one of the best solutions to overcrowding in the shelter system is to help folks access permanent subsidized housing, and simultaneously prevent more families from becoming homeless. The package of CityFHEPS laws passed in summer of 2023 are a critical part of making these solutions a reality. Now that the CityFHEPS expansion bills are law, we must have them fully implemented and funded. CityFHEPS is one of the key programs that helps those in shelter access permanent housing, which in turn helps alleviate overcrowding in the shelter system itself. The expansion of the program will also allow New Yorkers to more easily use vouchers to prevent eviction and thereby avoid entering the shelter system. We know that avoiding housing instability facilitates

¹ Lane, Charles. "NYC Comptroller: Staffing Shortage Led to Fewer Affordable Homes, Longer Delays." Gothamist, February 8, 2024. <https://gothamist.com/news/nyc-comptroller-staffing-shortage-led-to-fewer-affordable-homes-longer-delays>.

² Lane, Charles "NYC Comptroller"

people getting higher wages, lower healthcare costs, and higher educational and workforce prospects³.

As the Administration has claimed that logistical, staffing, and budget constraints are preventing them from implementing the new CityFHEPS laws as required, the executive budget should reflect this need, and we encourage that funding be provided. Additionally, we support increased baseline funding to allow more CityFHEPS vouchers to be provided.

Although expanding the program to families facing eviction will cost the city about \$8 billion dollars, it will save the city about \$5 billion in shelter in rehousing costs, making the net cost about \$3 billion over 5 years⁴. We can only begin to measure the benefits this expansion will have not only on the families that benefit from the program, but our city as a whole. We took the first step in creating a wider and more robust safety net, and now our budget must reflect the needs of New Yorkers and the laws we have passed.

Finally, the DSS budget should reflect an accurate assessment of the cost to house asylum seekers without resorting to inhumane and illogical measures such as time limits in shelter, and to provide the case management needed to help our newest New Yorkers access work authorization and other programs that enable them to move forward in their new lives.

Commission on Human Rights

While discrimination, including Source of Income Discrimination, is illegal in New York City, it is nonetheless incredibly common, and poses a serious impediment to voucher-holders seeking permanent housing. More broadly, pervasive discrimination by landlords, real estate agents, and others prevents far too many New Yorkers from accessing the housing they wish to live in, and contributes to ongoing disparities in housing quality, security, and affordability for BIPOC, immigrant, and voucher-holding households. We urge the city to increase funding for the New York City Commission on Human Rights to better enforce housing discrimination laws. At minimum, capacity should be increased to 2018 staffing levels, which would be an estimated cost of \$3 million in new funding for the Commission's Law Enforcement Bureau in FY25.

Right to Counsel

ANHD calls on the City Council to defend Right to Counsel, one of our best ways to protect tenants who are facing eviction and displacement and may have viable options to stay in their

³ Chatterjee, Debipriya, Samuel Stein, Oksana Mironova, and Jennifer Hinojosa. "To Fight Homelessness, House the People (Part 2): A Deeper Dive into the Costs, Benefits and Savings of CityFHEPS Reform and Expansion." Community Service Society of New York, June 20, 2023. <https://www.cssny.org/news/entry/to-fight-homelessness-house-the-people-part-2-city-fheps-costs-benefits-savings-nyc>.

⁴ Chatterjee, "To fight homelessness, house the people"



homes, including one-shot deals and vouchers. New York City's Right to Counsel has been gravely weakened by an unwillingness by the courts to slow cases until eligible tenants can obtain representation that they are entitled to, resulting in over 46,000 tenant households that have faced eviction alone.⁵ Underfunding is also a major source of the problem, which is why the city must fully fund Right to Counsel with at least \$351 million this year. The Office of Civil Justice (OCJ), which was created to implement Right to Counsel, has instead taken a back seat and done little to advocate for tenants' rights to representation. In addition to full funding, we urge the City Council to publicly support the Right to Counsel Coalition's demands to OCJ, Chief Judge Rowan Wilson, the Office of Court Administration, and the state legislature.

Address Skyrocketing Insurance Premiums

ANHD's members, and the affordable housing industry overall, have witnessed dramatic increases in insurance premiums in recent years, even before the COVID-19 pandemic began. Just as disturbingly, our members report that insurance carriers are declining to offer quotes for buildings in some neighborhoods, particularly in the Bronx, or offering quotes two- to three-times higher than other neighborhoods. Insurance carriers also use tenants' income or source of income to deny or hike up insurance costs. This discrimination is unacceptable and amounts to modern-day redlining.

High insurance costs have a direct effect on the construction and preservation of affordable housing, and will decrease the number of units we can create with our limited housing dollars. Non-profit housing developers like ANHD's members are especially impacted by this issue because they have so little slack in their operating budgets. A dramatic increase in building operating costs due to higher insurance rates means less organizational resources for staff, social services, and building maintenance. High premiums, deductibles, and exemptions are severely threatening existing affordable housing portfolios, which are underwritten to standards that are no longer a reality.

We support any efforts at the State and City level that prohibits insurance companies from discriminating against affordable housing and tenant source of income in their policies. Any change must also come with penalty and enforcement language so the costs of noncompliance are clear to both insurance companies and the NYS Department of Financial Services as the regulator.

City Contracting Reform

For years, the City's onerous procurement process has created considerable registration delays that hinder the ability of its vendors, especially nonprofits, human service providers, community development corporations, and our local M/WBE small businesses, to get paid on time. The

⁵ <https://www.righttocounselnyc.org/nyccrisismonitor>



contracting process for discretionary funding is inefficient and results in significant delays in payments for organizations. ANHD advocates for a more efficient discretionary funding process.

There are a series of City Council bills that would begin to address some of these issues. We are calling for the City Chief Procurement Officer to conduct a study and issue a report on the timing and duration of the City's procurement process and for the Procurement Policy Board (PPB) to then set procurement timelines as required under the City Charter. City agencies should be required to inform vendors, the Mayor and City Council of the reason for any late payments. And critically the City should require interest to be paid on late payments under city contracts with non-profit organizations.

A specific item of concern for ANHD and our members is that nonprofits with government contracts be allowed contract amendments and increased funding to account for increased costs to comply with Local Law 97.

Cola for Human Service Workers

City-contracted nonprofit human services workers are some of the lowest paid workers in our economy. Although the City relies on these workers to provide essential services to millions of New Yorkers, it sets poverty-level wages in their contracts. We support and ask the city to fully fund a 5% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for city contracted human service workers in the FY25 City budget, at an approximate cost of \$150 million dollars.

Our asks create equity for similar work. City contracted-human services workers deserve the same pay as City workers who do the same job, and our communities deserve to have adequately staffed and funded programs. These workers should receive the same compensation for their work, irregardless of where they are working. It will prevent staff turnover in an industry that we cannot afford to lose people in.

Fund the Community Housing Preservation Strategies (CHPSI)

New York City's housing availability and affordability crisis has continued to grow in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic along with rising economic instability and inflation. Rents in NYC have reached a historic high, leaving the majority of NYC rent burned, with half of those facing extreme rent burden, and a growing homeless population.

As NYC neighborhoods struggle to confront the persistent threat of displacement, the crisis is most acutely felt by communities of color, low-and-moderate income communities and immigrant communities. Funding for the Community Housing Preservation Strategies initiative has not been updated since 2016, meanwhile, the cost of providing services has significantly increased,



leaving communities with less support at a time when it is most needed. This moment requires a commitment to strengthen programs and services that reflect the current reality and complexity of needs.

We seek **the Community Housing Preservation Strategies initiative to be funded at \$4.95 million in the FY 25 budget**, ensuring the capacity of the program to adequately respond to the deepening housing challenges, and a needed cost of living increase for the front-line workers who have been working side-by-side with marginalized tenants fighting unfair evictions and offering direct aid to NYC residents at risk of displacement from their homes.

Funding to local groups under this initiative is determined by City Council Members who help select the CBO's most able to help address housing issues plaguing their neighborhoods and should be distributed equitably across neighborhoods and districts. This investment is strengthened by additionally providing support to the Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development, Inc. (ANHD), which offers individual and group technical assistance and capacity-building support to CBO's, as well as general contract management support. ANHD's expertise in this housing initiative ensures funded CBOs have direct access to current trends and solutions for affordable housing, and information that can increase effectiveness at the local level.

\$4.95 million for the Community Housing Preservation Strategies in FY 25 will fund ANHD and 45+ CBOs to protect low-income, BIPOC, and immigrant tenants and homeowners across New York City. Collaboratively, we will fight evictions, displacement, and protect tenants - especially on safety issues like fire prevention and heating, support code enforcement, offer housing court assistance, support apartment repossession, and provide other housing-related public education. The Community Housing Preservation Strategies initiative, funded at \$4.95 million in FY 25, will ensure:

- Tenant-focused non-profit housing providers can restore support services to adequately address the unique housing needs of their communities.
- 45+ tenant support housing providers can employ front-line workers to directly work with tenants in apartments and small homes. These staff will ensure:
- 17,600+ tenants and homeowners engage in culturally competent training, meetings, and events.
- 18,900+ tenants and homeowners receive counseling support services in their community
- 5,400+ tenants and homeowners have referrals to and connections with additional support services.
- 450+ tenant associations receive support.
- ANHD coordinates and supports the 45+ funded CBOs with individual technical assistance and capacity-building support, related group-based training and convenings



that will help them improve their tenant protection skills and strategic housing research capacity.

- Staff at CBOs have direct access to ANHD staff and targeted training options that help them improve their tenant protection skills, and their strategic housing research capacity.
- The creation of a Housing Risk Chart that helps local stakeholders and community groups identify the key threat to affordability in their neighborhood.
- The creation of an AMI Cheat sheet to provide information on how Area Median Income relates to New York City housing need.
- Technical assistance on land use and housing to Council Members and staff involved in this initiative and who are interested in preserving affordable housing.
- Continue to maintain and improve the Displacement Alert Project. Renewed funding will allow us to:
 - Continue a comprehensive user-centered redesign of the DAP Portal data tool to dramatically improve user experiences, building off of in-depth interviews with users about necessary improvements
 - Develop tutorials and training materials that will help users independently learn to use DAP Portal for basic and advanced needs
 - Ensure data is accurate and up to date across the website
 - Increase the frequency and reach of hands-on trainings to council members and their staff, community-based organizations, advocates, legal services providers, and other stakeholders
 - Continue to advocate for public data related to affordable housing displacement, which will strengthen the utility of the tool and its equity impacts
 - Continue to publish timely data analyses, visualizations, and research products to support anti-displacement policy and advocacy

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. If you have any questions or for more information, please contact Emily Goldstein: emily.g@anhd.org.



**Testimony to the New York City Council
Finance Committee & Committee on Housing and Buildings**

Executive Preliminary Budget Hearing for FY2025

May 14, 2024

Good afternoon, Committee Chairs Brannan and Sanchez and members of the Finance and Housing Committees, and thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Rachel Goodfriend, co-founder with Allyson Martinez, of Brooklyn Level Up. BKLVLUP was born out of grassroots Community Board 17 organizing efforts in East Flatbush. In 2018, we organized the “We Shall Not Be Moved” campaign to educate residents about displacement and land use policies. It became clear that we needed to work on multiple fronts in order to secure our community’s future.

Our Little Caribbean community is battling cultural erasure and many low-income residents are losing their homes due to quality of life issues brought on by speculative development. Our community, a historical hub for Black homeowners and Entrepreneurs, has seen a significant spike in development in the last 5 years. Rent prices are climbing and more than a quarter of renters are severely rent burdened. The number of Black homeowners in NYC dropped by 10% from 2002 to 2008, and another 3% by 2017. This inequity affects not only residents but also commercial corridors, where BIPOC-owned small businesses face increasing rents and closure with devastating social effects.

The BKLVLUP Community Land Trust is one powerful tool we can use to combat displacement by integrating grassroots organizing into effective community development of affordable homes, commercial, and communal spaces. The BKLVLUP CLT works to secure affordable places for New Yorkers to live and thrive and we involve our neighbors in every step of the process. BKLVLUP is a member of the New York City Community Land Initiative (NYCCLI) alongside over 20 other CLTs organizing for deeply-affordable social housing, commercial and community spaces, and other needs in low income Black and brown neighborhoods across the five boroughs.

Our organization has applied for but not yet received City Council discretionary funding through the citywide **Community Land Trust (CLT) Initiative**. Launched in FY2020, the initiative delivers comprehensive community organizing, education, training and technical assistance to support the formation and expansion of CLTs. This vital initiative has helped catalyze the growth of more than 20 CLTs, including, we hope soon, Brooklyn Level Up, across the five boroughs, as vehicles to create and preserve permanently affordable housing, community and commercial spaces.

We ask the City Council to ensure **enhanced funding of \$3 million for the CLT Initiative** in the FY25 expense budget. This urgently needed funding will support 17 neighborhood-led CLTs



and 4 citywide technical assistance organizations working to bring land and housing into community stewardship. (See attached one-pager.)

We also call on the Council to ensure **\$2.5 billion in capital funding over four years for permanently affordable housing, as outlined in the Homes Now Homes for Generations platform** endorsed by dozens of community and affordable housing groups, the City Council's Progressive Caucus, NYC Comptroller Brad Lander NYC, and Public Advocate Jumaane Williams. This funding would support CLTs and other mission-driven nonprofits in acquiring, rehabilitating, and preserving affordable housing – and constructing new housing – by expanding HPD's Neighborhood Pillars and Open Door programs.

More than 20 CLTs are organizing across NYC to address our city's worsening affordability crisis. One in three New Yorkers are severely rent-burdened, paying more than 50% of their incomes on rent, and a record 100,000+ people are living in shelters. Between 2017 and 2021, NYC lost almost 100,000 units that had rented for less than \$1,500 per month.]

By bringing land and housing into community ownership, CLTs serve as powerful bulwarks against real estate speculation and displacement. Since 1994, the Cooper Square CLT on Manhattan's Lower East Side has preserved more than 320 deeply affordable apartments and two dozen affordable storefronts in 21 buildings – and is now expanding to bring two additional rent-stabilized buildings into CLT stewardship. In recent years, East Harlem El Barrio CLT, East New York CLT, Mott Haven Port Morris Community Land Stewards, ReAL Edgemere CLT, and others have organized thousands of residents; won RFPs to develop public land; acquired and rehabilitated multifamily buildings; led neighborhood planning efforts; and launched campaigns to convert vacant sites to vibrant community, health and cultural spaces.

Enhanced funding for CLTs in the city's expense and capital budgets – through the CLT Initiative and Homes Now, Homes for Generations – will enable groups to build on this progress and meet the growing demand for CLTs. We are pleased also to be working with this Council to advance the Community Land Act bill package, which would dramatically expand opportunities for CLTs to bring more land and housing into community stewardship.

As we work to expand the supply of permanently affordable housing, New York City must protect its vital public housing stock. We join public housing residents and activists in calling for **\$3.2 billion for NYCHA** repairs and infrastructure upgrades, to ensure safe and dignified living conditions for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers living in NYCHA housing.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today.

Thank you to the New York City Council’s Committee on Housing and Buildings for holding a hearing on the Executive Budget. Our names are Oksana Mironova, IZIAH Thompson, and Samuel Stein, and we are senior policy analysts at the Community Service Society of New York (CSS), a leading nonprofit organization that promotes economic opportunity for New Yorkers. We use research, advocacy, and direct services to champion a more equitable city and state, including to urgently address the effects of the city’s housing affordability crisis.

CSS is over 175 years old and has been at the forefront of advocacy for better housing conditions since the beginning, from the city’s first tenement laws in the 1800s to contemporary organizing for strong tenants’ rights.

We provide the following budget recommendations:

Homes Now Homes for Generations

New York City has a rich social housing legacy, but now longer actively invests in new social housing stock. With a capital investment of \$2.5 billion in Neighborhood Pillars and Open Door over the next five years, the city will be able to fund the construction and preservation of permanently affordable, community-controlled affordable homes. This investment will provide stability and equity-building opportunities for low-income and working-class New Yorkers.

Neighborhood Pillars, a program with roots in the foreclosure crisis, helps mission-driven developers buy distressed multifamily buildings. It launched in December 2018, but its budget was slashed to zero in 2020. In that brief time, the program preserved 400 apartments. Our goal is to see the program scaled to its original vision. Today, there are physically and financially distressed rent stabilized buildings on the market that were mismanaged and overleveraged by their landlords. This is an opportunity for the city to intervene and both rescue these buildings and turn them into permanently affordable housing. New York City missed the chance to do this in the wake of the 2008 crisis, and the market became even less hospitable to low-income tenants. Further, Neighborhood Pillars could compliment right of first refusal laws, including Councilmember Rivera’s Community Opportunity to Purchase Act (Int 0196).

Open Door finances new construction of shared-equity cooperatives. Despite the popularity and success of older shared-equity cooperatives like Mitchell-Lamas and HDFCs, Open Door is extremely underfunded, receiving \$100M over four years. The city stopped focusing on shared equity homeownership over the last few decades. Our goal is to see Open Door’s budget increased to create more affordable homeownership and to revise its term sheets for broader affordability. This is especially important now, because homes sales prices in New York City are far beyond most aspiring homeowners’ budgets, even with other supports like downpayment assistance.

Overall, New York City’s investment in social housing is at a historic low point. Homes Now, Homes for Generations will bring Neighborhood Pillars and Open Doors spending in line with other affordable housing programs.

Funding for Community Land Trusts

We support the call for \$3 million in City Council discretionary funding to develop CLTs and permanently affordable housing, commercial and community space. Launched in FY2020, the citywide CLT Initiative has catalyzed CLT organizing in the South and Northwest Bronx, East Harlem, Richmond Hill, Brownsville, East New York and beyond. CLTs are community-controlled nonprofits that own land and ensure that it is used to provide permanently affordable housing and other community needs. CLTs are flexible and can support permanently affordable rental housing, limited-equity cooperatives, and 1-4 family homes at risk of foreclosure, as well as commercial and cultural spaces, community gardens, community-owned solar, microgrids and other infrastructure.

Save Public Housing

CSS, New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents, and advocates from across the state pushed Albany to fund a path to address a portion of NYCHA's capital needs, which would have preserved at least 15,000 NYCHA units. We called for \$710 million for NYCHA and \$190 million for other public housing agencies. The state budget this year includes \$140 million and \$75 million, respectively.

Further, while the Mayor and the Comptroller have taken steps to allow NYCHA to spend city funds more effectively by revising Directive 10 and making other changes recommended by the New York City Capital Process Reform Task Force, inconsistent funding levels and empty budget out years make it incredibly difficult for NYCHA to begin capital work. As with all affordable housing pipelines, projects take time to design, procure, and contract; budget uncertainty keeps many of these projects on hold.

Ultimately, the city must at least compliment the state-level investment with a consistent capital plan that helps address the thousands of buildings that will not be modernized by the PACT program. Residents that do not wish to convert must have a path towards modernization and should not be punished. This year's budget must include NYCHA capital totaling \$1.5 billion, including the amount already in the executive budget, which will all go towards the PACT program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. If you have any questions about my testimony or CSS's research, please contact us at sstein@cssny.org, ithompson@cssny.org, or omironova@cssny.org.



**Written Testimony of Baaba Halm
Vice President and Market Leader
Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.**

**To the New York City Council
Committee on Housing & Buildings
Public Hearing on the FY 25 Executive Budget**

May 14, 2024

My name is Baaba Halm, and I am the Vice President and Market Leader for the New York office of Enterprise Community Partners, a national nonprofit that exists to make a good home possible for the millions of families without one. We support community development organizations on the ground, aggregate and invest capital for impact, advance housing policy at every level of government, and build and manage communities ourselves. Since our New York office opened in 1987, we have committed more than \$5.3 billion in equity, loans and grants to affordable housing and community to create or preserve over 83,000 affordable homes across New York State. On behalf of Enterprise, I want to thank Chair Sanchez for the opportunity to submit testimony today on the FY 2025 city budget.

Overview

The depth of the city's affordable housing crisis is well known to all members of this Committee. Despite historic numbers of affordable housing units created and preserved, we are still not producing enough new affordable housing to meet the enormity of our need, and unprecedented challenges in areas such as insurance and rental arrears are threatening the sustainability of the portfolio and its mission-driven operators.

This testimony will highlight a number of the most pressing challenges and point to areas of the budget that must be prioritized for funding if we are to reverse the tide.

Agency Staffing

Amid a difficult budgetary environment with Program to Eliminate the Gap (PEG) funding cuts over this past fiscal year, we are appreciative that the Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD) has been largely spared damaging cuts, particularly to departments responsible for advancing the pipeline of new construction and preservation projects. We thank both the Administration for this recognition and the Council for its work in articulating the importance of affordable housing. Publicly available data shows that HPD has a roughly

equivalent headcount to pre-pandemic levels, whereas other critical agencies like the Human Resources Administration and Department of Homeless Services are significantly short.

However, while overall agency headcount may remain stable, the housing crisis has grown in severity over the past several years. Staffing levels at HPD should be adequate for it to execute its role in combatting the crisis. We hear from our mission-driven partners about those functions of the agency that are critical but where there have been delays, such as subsidy processing, lease-up, and conversion. The agency must continue to be spared any future belt-tightening; it must also be given a comprehensive look at where bolstered staffing may be needed to reach maximum efficiency.

Capital Spending

All New Yorkers understand that we must be building more affordable housing, as well as investing in preserving our existing stock. However, the capital budget for FY 25 shows less capital investment in affordable housing creation than the current fiscal year, with steeper and more troubling declines in the subsequent out years. The Executive Budget proposes \$2.15 billion for HPD capital, down from the current funding of \$2.8 billion. The Executive City Capital Commitment plan suggests a steep drop in new construction funding for FY 25 – \$378 million from \$861 million in the current budget.

This is the exact wrong time to take a step back on our capital commitment to affordable housing. The inflationary and interest rate environments combined with skyrocketing property and liability insurance costs are requiring more subsidy to get projects across the finish line, all at a time when the pipeline of worthy projects waiting their turn to reach construction closing is hopelessly long. Even modest reductions in funding at this time will have an outsize impact – less funding to go around at a time when more is needed per project. Analysis has shown that at these reduced capital levels, the city can expect a 32% reduction in affordable units financed, with steeper declines of nearly 50% in new construction and special needs housing. We urge increased funding to the HPD capital budget, including commitment for the out years of FY '26, '27 and '28.

Operational Challenges and Partner Sustainability

We want to draw the Council's attention to serious operational challenges facing affordable housing in a few different areas. These issues taken together pose a real threat to the viability of individual buildings, destabilize the housing security of the residents, and are a serious challenge to the mission-driven and often nonprofit operators. While these issues may not have simple budgetary solutions, all are worthy of our collective attention and of interagency coordination.

- *Rental Arrears.* We applaud the leadership at Department of Social Services for its efforts in eliminating the backlog of One Shot Deals which has been critical in getting tenants the necessary help to ensure housing stability. We encourage strong coordination between

DSS and HPD about portfolios and partners with large rental arrears vulnerabilities, to ensure expedited processing of those cases, so that the buildings can be made financially secure and the tenants protected from eviction.

- *Sec. 610 Assistance.* Signed into law in December 2022, the changes to Sec. 610 of the Private Finance Housing Law offer underwriting flexibility that brings more income to projects at no increase to the tenant portion of the rent. Where implemented, it has been a lifeline to buildings in distress. However, the amount of troubled projects seeking the relief has meant a backlog and long delays in processing. Reforms to the process would mean more affordable housing projects in communities across the city are brought into fiscal stability sooner.

- *Insurance.* Property and liability insurance costs continue to rise, threatening current and future affordable housing. Solutions to this multifaceted problem will involve an examination of insurance requirements by lenders, and comprehensive risk mitigation efforts by owners. We look forward to working with all parties to find relief to this problem.

Thank you for your attention to this testimony.

FY 25 EXECUTIVE BUDGET HEARING -COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH THE COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, DISABILITY AND ADDICTION AND HOSPITALS
MAY 13, 2024
WRITTEN TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY HOUSING AND SERVICES, INC.

Thank you for the opportunity for Housing and Services Inc. (“HSI”) to submit written testimony.

HSI is a member of the Supportive Housing Network of New York (“the Network”), the statewide advocacy organization for the New York State supportive housing community, and fully supports the Network’s oral and written testimony for this hearing.

HSI has over 38 years of experience as a permanent supportive housing developer and provider. We provide housing and on-site social services to 625 formerly homeless tenant households residing in four congregate projects in Manhattan and the Bronx. HSI also manages a 100 unit scattered site contract for households residing in private housing units in Upper Manhattan and the Bronx that is funded by HASA. HSI’s congregate projects have two HRA/DHS SRO Supportive Services contracts, two DOHMH services contracts and three HRA/HASA housing and services contracts. All HSI's congregate projects have significant HPD capital funding.

Our staff head count is approximately 135, representing about 95 full-time equivalent staff positions.

INCLUSION OF THE PROPOSED NY 15/15 REALLOCATION IN THE PRELIMINARY BUDEGT RESPONSE:

HSI expresses its deep thanks to the Council for inclusion of a proposed NY 15/15 Reallocation in the Preliminary Budget Response. We give special thanks to Council Member Linda Lee for her Dear Colleague letter supporting the proposed reallocation, and to all council members who signed onto the letter.

As a provider of both congregate and scattered site permanent supportive housing, HSI fully embraces the effectiveness of the scattered site model. However, current rental market conditions make it impossible to aggregate a significant number of scattered site apartments to provide a critical mass for a new scattered site program. Without a reallocation of the 50/50 split of housing units for congregate and scattered site units, the scattered site allocation will ultimately be under-subscribed, resulting in a significant failure of the NY 15/15’s bold and absolutely necessary initiative.

HSI greatly appreciates the Council’s recognition that a reallocation of NY 15/15 resources is crucial to the future production of NYC permanent supportive housing. As an experienced operator of scattered site housing, HSI sees no current or long-term viability in launching a new NY 15/15 scattered site program and has no intention to do so.

HSI has had great experience with the NY 15/15 congregate program which enabled the development of our newest 107-unit project. We are currently seeking new sites to develop using NY 15/15 congregate resources.

HUMAN SERVICES SECTOR COLA FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS:

HSI expresses its deep thanks to the Council for the passage of the Human Service Sector COLA. The COLA will provide both encouragement and relief for our dedicated but chronically underpaid essential workers.

PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS TO MOCS, HRA, HASA AND DOHMH:

HSI expresses deep concern about the proposed budget cuts to MOCS, HRA, HASA AND DOHMH in light of the already chronic delays in the registration of services contracts, approval of contract budgets and the approval and payment of periodic provider billings. The situation has been greatly exacerbated by the troubled recent migration of MOCS's contract billing system from HHS Accelerator to PASSport.

To date, HSI has approximately \$2 million in calendar year 2023 billings that are still unprocessed and unpaid and at least \$ 1 million in calendar year 2024 billings still pending and unpaid. In total HSI's FY 24 budget is approximately \$17 million and, accordingly, the payment delays are having a huge impact on our operations.

The payment backlog is creating a cash flow crisis throughout the permanent supportive housing provider community.

Proposed budget cuts will only deepen the crisis. It is imperative that MOCS and DHS, DOHMH and HASA receive sufficient funding to resolve PASSport migration issues, have resources to become proficient in the new system and get contract payments flowing to cash-strapped permanent supportive housing providers.

PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS TO HPD HOUSING CAPITAL FUNDING AND THE NEED FOR INCREASED STAFFING FUNDING AT HPD:

Analysis from the New York Housing Conference shows that the Mayor's proposed FY 25 Executive Budget calls for a 20% cut in HPD's capital funding (\$2,111,906,000 for FY 25 vs, \$2,648,678,000 in FY 24) including a 56% cut in new construction (\$278,250,000 for FY 25 vs. \$861,119,000 in FY 24). Additionally, the Mayor's proposed budget calls for a 34% cut in capital funding for special needs housing (\$362,621,000 in FY 25 vs, \$487,216,000 in FY 24) for formerly homeless individuals with mental illness. We find these proposed budget cuts to be completely at odds with the Mayor's stated goals of increasing affordable housing and increased treatment for homeless individuals living with mental illness. Rather than increasing affordable housing and special needs housing stock, the proposed cuts will only delay and prohibit the production of urgently needed housing. When combined with what we understand are the Mayor's proposed increases to funding for NYPD and the Department of Corrections, the Mayor's proposed budget continues to focus on futile short-term attempts to increase New Yorkers' perception of public safety by further criminalizing the mentally ill, rather than using permanent supportive housing as the most cost effective and humane way of addressing chronic homelessness.

The proposed budget cuts will significantly disrupt the ability of not-for-profit organizations like HSI to develop new projects and could cripple the future success of the NYC 15/15 congregate initiative. Our latest development project that went on-line in May 2022 with a DOHMH services contract

demonstrates both the effectiveness of access to HPD special needs housing capital and its tight coordination with the 15/15 initiative. We identified the site in April 2018 and secured an HPD soft commitment in May 2018, enabling us to close on acquisition of the site in August 2018, obtain a preliminary award for 15/15 rent subsidies and services funding in Fall 2018 and a construction funding close in July 2019.

We are currently working on a possible new project, also using cornerstone HPD funding. We fear that the Mayor's proposed cuts in special needs capital funding and, what we understand is a 3-year backlog in the HPD development pipeline, will make our potential new project unworkable. In this scenario we must either ask the site seller, in an already impossibly tight real estate market, to wait three years to close on acquisition or for us to acquire the property and attempt to fund unsustainable holding costs and inevitable construction cost increases for three years.

The success of the NYC 15/15 congregate initiative requires sufficient and ready HPD special needs housing capital funding. The Mayor's proposed budget cuts will undermine the future success of the initiative's bold and absolutely necessary targets.

We urge the Committee to call for increases in both HPD capital and staffing funding in the FY 25 budget to both protect the NY 15/15 congregate initiative and eliminate the backlog in the HPD development pipeline.

The tenants, staff, Management and Board of Trustees thank the Committee for its consideration of this testimony.

James Dill

Executive Director
Housing and Services, Inc.

Testimony of Housing Works
Before
The New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings
Regarding
The New York City Fiscal Year 2025 Budget
May 14, 2024

Thank you, Chairperson Sanchez, and Members of the Committee on Housing and Buildings, for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Housing Works, a healing community founded in 1990 with a mission to end the dual crises of homelessness and AIDS. My name is Anthony Feliciano, and I am the Vice President of Community Mobilization for Housing Works. We currently provide a range of integrated medical, behavioral health, housing, and support services for over 15,000 low-income New Yorkers annually, with a focus on the most marginalized and underserved—those facing the challenges of homelessness, HIV, mental health issues, substance use disorder, other chronic conditions, and incarceration. and, most recently, migrants displaced from their homes due to violence or other crises who seek safety and a better life in the United States.

Housing Works is also a founding member of the *End AIDS NY Community Coalition* (EtE Community Coalition), a group of over ninety healthcare centers, hospitals, and community-based organizations that are fully committed to ending AIDS as an epidemic in all New York communities and populations. Housing Works fully supports each of the *Additional NYC Investments for the FY 2025 Budget* proposed by the ETE Coalition to fill key funding gaps in our NYC HIV response – which are attached and incorporated by reference as part of my testimony.

At Housing Works, we believe as a core value that housing is healthcare and a basic human right. Our mission is to provide safe, secure, and stable housing to New Yorkers experiencing homelessness, employing a low-threshold, harm reduction approach that respects the dignity of every person. As a provider of over 750 units of supportive housing, we witness firsthand both the powerful impact of safe, stable housing and the barriers posed by the underfunding and understaffing that cripples our City's response to the affordable housing and homeless crises.

The Mayor's Executive Budget falls far short of the action necessary to address these challenges. In my oral testimony I will focus on the urgent need for action to address NYC's affordable housing crisis, as well as aspects of the Executive Budget plan that will specifically hinder Housing Works' efforts. Our written testimony includes more detailed calls for action by the Council to support the development of affordable and supportive housing and to transform our failed homeless response.

Support the *Homes Now, Homes for Generations* Campaign

I will begin my testimony by expressing Housing Works' strong support for the *Homes Now, Homes for Generations* campaign recently launched by the Council's Progressive Caucus in collaboration with the Comptroller, Public Advocate, leading housing organizations and unions representing City workers, and a host of housing advocates and community-based organizations. Years of reliance on private market solutions has demonstrably failed to create the affordable housing New Yorkers desperately need, and it is time for common sense direct and meaningful City investments in the creation and preservation of housing with true and permanent affordability. The most powerful tool that government has to address our housing crisis is investment in social housing solutions, and we strongly urge the Council to support the campaign's call for \$2 billion over four years to create new

affordable homeownership opportunities for 3,500 families and to preserve and rehabilitate rent-stabilized units for nearly 7,000 households.

Reverse the harmful cuts to City agencies and non-profit providers.

I will turn now to Executive Budget failures that, unless reversed, will impede day to day efforts to meet the housing needs of New Yorkers.

The arbitrary cuts and hiring freezes over the past year have done tremendous damage, with critical agencies left without the staff and resources needed to meet the most basic needs of New Yorkers. City agencies are not functioning effectively, causing massive delays in affordable housing development, supportive housing placements, processing applications for rental assistance, and timely reimbursement of non-profit providers for services delivered. These delays are a direct result of agency understaffing at housing and homelessness-related agencies including DOHMH, HPD, DHS, HRA, DOB, and DCP. The Executive Budget fails to restore these cuts and calls for further reductions in personnel at DSS and HPD, which will only further delay services for New Yorkers in need. As one example, HRA's HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) is woefully understaffed, making it difficult or impossible for housing providers to meet the needs of New Yorkers with HIV experiencing homelessness.

It is also critical to restore funding for City-contracted nonprofit agencies providing housing, homelessness prevention, homeless services, and other essential assistance, and protect them from further budget cuts and hiring freezes so as not to worsen existing staffing shortages and increase already untenable caseloads. Housing Works, on behalf of the marginalized New Yorkers we serve and represent, implore the City Council to fully restore the Mayor's devastating and regressive cuts to the essential services that sustain and support our most vulnerable citizens, and to reject further cuts to these agencies and the non-profit agencies that work on the front lines of poverty and homelessness to meet critical needs. We call on the Council to adjust the budget based on actual needs and use your oversight authority to ensure timely delivery of essential services.

Take action to facilitate affordable and supportive housing development.

Nor does the Executive Budget include sufficient funding to adequately expand the City's affordable and supportive housing stock—one of the most critical issues facing New Yorkers that should be prioritized in the capital plan. Addressing homelessness effectively requires substantial new City investments in housing with deep affordability, including supportive housing for those who need it. Housing Works calls for \$2.5 billion in additional new construction financing each year for the next five years for apartments specifically built for homeless and extremely low-income New Yorkers, including: doubling the set-aside in new affordable housing developments for homeless households from 15 to 30 percent, to produce at least 6,000 new apartments per year; and building an additional 6,000 apartments per year for households with extremely low incomes. In addition, we urge the City to accelerate the creation of 15,000 new NYC-funded supportive housing units, working towards a goal for their completion by 2025 rather than 2030. The high delinquency rate in commercial buildings also presents an opportunity, and we call for a dedicated funding stream and the appropriate level of zoning relief to convert these properties to affordable housing.

As a developer of affordable and supportive housing, Housing Works also calls for administrative action to streamline these efforts. Our developments are needlessly delayed by difficulties getting permits and approved certificates of occupancy. Correcting the understaffing at DOB and HPD

must is essential. We also call for the establishment of a specific unit within DOB assigned to expedite supportive housing and affordable housing development.

Improve and expand the CityFHEPs program.

Housing Works is grateful for the improvements to the CityFHEPs program enacted by the City Council, and fully support efforts to enforce their implementation by the Administration. However, as you know, the CityFHEPs process is plagued by unpredictable and lengthy delays, rampant discrimination from landlords and brokers, and administrative missteps that discourage applicants, alienate landlords, and prolong homelessness. In addition, the program arbitrarily excludes individuals and families in non-DHS transitional housing settings such as the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) hotels. We urge the Council to address aspects of the program that undermine its efficacy, including using your oversight authority to hold DSS accountable for administrative problems, and increasing funding for enforcement of source of income protections.

We also urge the Council and Administration to expand eligibility for CityFHEPs to include residents of any type of emergency or transitional housing, and for State and City action to work to expand eligibility for the program to include new immigrants.

Fund housing assistance as HIV prevention.

Evidence shows that lack of safe stable housing significantly increases vulnerability to HIV acquisition among populations already overrepresented among new HIV infections, including people of trans experience and Black and Latino young men who have sex with men. Targeted funds are urgently needed to support housing assistance as HIV prevention for highly vulnerable persons experiencing homelessness, to enable them to benefit from comprehensive HIV prevention including PrEP. We call on the Council and Administration to direct \$10M in local and federal Ending the Epidemic funding for housing assistance as HIV prevention.

Invest in the City’s human services workforce and infrastructure.

Housing and homeless service providers, and other members of the human services workforce, made up predominantly of women of color, are grossly underpaid. Housing Works, and the EtE Community Coalition support the Mayor’s recent announcement of a \$741 million investment for an estimated 80,000 human services workers employed by non-profit organizations with a City contract as part of a new cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and urge the Administration to ensure that this investment in the human services workforce includes all workers on the frontlines of delivering public health and essential social services to New Yorkers.

In addition, we join the #JustPay Campaign to call on the Administration to set a living wage floor of no less than \$21/hour for all City funded human services workers and to create and fund a comprehensive wage and benefit schedule for City contracted human services workers comparable to the salaries made by City employees in the same field.

It is also time for meaningful action to address the underfunding of critical non-profit infrastructure needs. While we welcomed adoption by the City of a contracting agency’s approved Federal indirect rate after years of inadequate funding, to date total contract amounts have not been adjusted to reflect the additional infrastructure funding, and social service agencies employing their approved indirect rate have been required to cut direct services by an amount equal to the additional indirect costs covered. We call on the Council to support the funding required to amend each existing NYC human services contract as soon as practicable to increase the total contract amount to reflect the

contracting agency's approved Federal indirect rate "below the line" without impacting contract funding for direct services.

Additional investments needed to transform the City's failed homeless response.

In addition to the priorities identified above, Housing Works stresses the need for increased NYC resources and innovative new approaches to transform the City's inhumane and ineffective response to the homelessness crisis. Through our work over the past few years providing COVID isolation and quarantine services for New Yorkers experiencing homelessness, Housing Works has come to deeply appreciate how awful and dehumanizing the City shelter system is, and the urgent need to transform the way homeless people are treated in New York City. We must stop criminalizing and harassing people experiencing homelessness and stop stigmatizing people experiencing homelessness, especially those who are dealing with behavioral health issues while trying to survive in shelter or on the streets. We urgently need new approaches and a new vision for what is acceptable.

Of course, as noted above, addressing homelessness requires substantial new City investments in housing with deep affordability, streamlined and more efficient access to meaningful rental assistance such as the City FHEPS program, and creation of sufficient supportive housing for those who need it.

In addition to the actions called for above to support housing development, we join the Council's call for \$19.6M in this year's budget to progress the 15/15 Supportive Housing program, and also call on the City to reallocate the NYC 15/15 initiative to accelerate production and preserve older housing stock, and to remove arbitrary barriers to the housing created. NYC 15/15, the City's 15-year plan to develop 15,000 units of supportive housing, is currently in its seventh year. However, the initiative is in danger of not meeting its target due to problems with the scattered site model. (Only 17% of the 7,500 scattered site units are awarded, nearly halfway through the program). We recommend immediately shifting a portion of unawarded units into four "buckets": congregate, traditional scattered site with higher rates, preservation, and non-traditional scattered site (units in City-funded developments with homeless set-asides). In addition, we urge the City to amend eligibility for the program to remove, to the extent possible, the requirement that residents meet the federal definition of "chronic homelessness." This definition can be difficult or impossible for many people experiencing homelessness to demonstrate, and while we acknowledge that it is a requirement for programs funded at least in part by Federal Continuum of Care homeless housing funding, the City should not employ the definition to define eligibility for any program that does not receive CoC funding.

Likewise, we support the Council's call for \$6.4M in funding for Justice Involved Supportive Housing (JISH) to ensure 500 supportive housing units are brought online and adequately supported for New Yorkers to successfully transition back into their communities.

Meanwhile, in addition to housing development, we must urgently adopt effective, evidence-based approaches to meet the immediate needs of the many sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness who are coping with untreated or undertreated chronic medical and/or behavioral health issues. We must stop treating mental illness and substance use disorder among low-income New Yorkers as criminal justice rather than public health issues, and instead adopt harm reduction approaches that provide every New Yorker with the safe, stable housing necessary to engage in

behavioral health care, including private rooms for those struggling with mental health issues. We call for an immediate stop to street and subway sweeps by the police and sanitation department that are used to harass and intimidate vulnerable New Yorkers who choose to sleep on the streets or in subways rather than often-dangerous congregate shelters. Homeless outreach, conducted by trained outreach workers instead of the police, must focus instead on connecting people to resources they want, including low-barrier shelters and permanent housing. Likewise, our response to behavioral health crises must change, with increased funding and commitment to support and expand competent, evidence-based, interventions to address mental health and substance use disorder emergencies that are conducted solely by mental health professionals, with no police involvement unless specifically requested by a response team.

Transforming our homeless response requires additional investments in programs that have demonstrated their effectiveness in serving the most marginalized New Yorkers.

Housing Works operates three Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) Emergency Reentry hotels serving over 360 individuals, providing emergency housing and holistic social services and medical care for people being released from jail and prison without a place to live at the time of their release. This program has been highly effective at giving people returning from incarceration a much-needed sense of stability and the opportunity to engage in vocational, educational, and mental and physical health services throughout the process of obtaining permanent housing. We call for expansion of this transitional housing program through increased funding for additional units.

A more effective homeless response must also include reentry planning for all individuals being released from prisons and jails to identify viable housing options prior to each individual's scheduled release date, fund the creation of supportive housing specifically for individuals reentering the community after incarceration, and prohibit housing discrimination based on an arrest or conviction record. To this end, we call on the Administration and Council to preserve the Rapid Reentry Housing program and make this program a permanent step in the continuum of city housing that will allow us to reduce the census of the deadly city jails and create truly safe communities by meeting the immediate reentry needs of our community members. This model provides an immediate, short-term, placement for the estimated 1,000 people on Rikers in any given year for whom MOCJ identifies homelessness as a significant barrier to their release. We need these units in addition to the transitional MOCJ housing beds since sufficient transitional housing is rarely able to receive people directly from jail. We ask that the City Council recommend an additional allotment of \$50 million to fund roughly 700 additional units dedicated to rapid reentry housing.

We also call upon the City Council to hold the Administration to its pledge to create at least 3,000 new Safe Haven and single-occupancy stabilization beds for unsheltered homeless individuals, with a focus on expanding the number of these facilities for women and transgender or gender-non-conforming individuals, and for an increase drop-in center capacity citywide. It is time to reduce the City's reliance on large congregate facilities for homeless single adults and shift the creation of new capacity toward single-occupancy accommodations as well as smaller, low-barrier shelter designs which are more home-like and have better staffing for those with complex needs.

Development of this capacity, however, will require a coordinated and well-managed effort by responsible NYC agencies to ensure that existing hotels and other properties are deployed in a manner that meets the needs of all vulnerable populations. Housing Works has been working with DHS for over three years to pilot an innovative new "stabilization center" for people experiencing

unsheltered homelessness, designed to provide drop-in services, ready access to private accommodation, on-site medical and behavioral health care, and intensive case management focused on identifying permanent housing solutions – all delivered employing a low-threshold, harm reduction approach. We have been stymied to date, however, by the inability to secure a hotel facility. More recently, DHS has also indicated an unwillingness to fund the on-site medical and behavioral health services essential to the success of the model. We urge the Council to use your oversight authority to ensure that Safe Haven and stabilization hotels for New Yorkers experiencing unsheltered homelessness include the on-site medical and behavioral health services required to serve this marginalized population.

Finally, we at Housing Works welcome the Council’s actions to protect our right to shelter and to stop the cruel and illegal policy of arbitrarily limiting the length of an individual or family’s stay in shelter operated by New York City agencies.

Housing Works is proud to operate two hotels for asylum-seeking families that currently house 535 individuals, of whom almost half—244—are children. Each household we serve is eager to work, to contribute to the life of New York City while bettering their lives. They have the same hopes and dreams as every group of immigrants that have come to our City and have made it the rich and diverse place that we love. Indeed, the asylum seekers we house have a deep culture of working and are eager to gain employment, they take the best possible care of their families, and they endeavor to ensure that their children receive the education they deserve. But like every group of new immigrants they are dealing with formidable legal, language, and cultural challenges. Erecting additional barriers to basic survival services can only deepen their marginalization. Housing Works believes that as a City we have not only a legal but also moral obligation to provide safe shelter for new arrivals.

We at Housing Works, like most New Yorkers, we have been shocked and saddened by each step of the Administration’s arbitrary attempt to effectively deny safe shelter through “churning” marginalized newcomers to our City who are experiencing homelessness. First, by imposing a 30-day time limit on shelter for single adult migrants housed in non-DHS shelters. Then, with New York State approval, expanding that time limit to include adult migrants in DHS-operated shelters. But nothing could have prepared us for the unimaginable next step of imposing a 60-day limit on safe shelter for families of new immigrants. Housing Works and the new immigrants we house have every reason to believe that this lawless and unconscionable process of denying shelter will continue unless the City Council steps in to stop it.

We should all be proud that our New York State constitution, reflected in over 40 years of court orders and local laws, requires that our City and State provide shelter and services to all single adults and families experiencing homelessness. Housing Works is confident that the Adams Administration’s deeply troubling attempts to modify the right to shelter legal protections will fail, but we are saddened that these efforts to undo or undermine the fundamental right to shelter seek to pit new New Yorkers against other residents experiencing homelessness.

It is simply not true that we lack the “resources and capacity” to meet the needs of new arrivals. What we lack is political will. In the face of record homelessness, a record number of evictions, and unacceptable numbers of vacant affordable and supportive housing units, we can and must deploy every tool at our disposal to keep low-income households from losing housing and get New Yorkers experiencing homelessness back into permanent housing more quickly, to ease pressure on the

shelter system so that we continue to honor New York City's right to shelter. Basic next steps must include robust case management for new arrivals and State and City action to expand eligibility for the CityFHEPS program to include new immigrants, among other strategies.

We of course join the call on the Federal government to increase funding to help the City meet the needs of new immigrants, and to grant immediate work authorization for new arrivals who desperately want employment. Meanwhile, however, these new immigrants who have undertaken long and arduous journeys at the risk of their lives are our neighbors, and we cannot abandon them.

In conclusion, Housing Works calls on the Council and the Administration to be bold when it comes to addressing NYC's unprecedented crisis of homelessness that drives poor individual and public health outcomes among NYC's most vulnerable residents. We call for increased Council oversight of the City's homeless response and for an increased emphasis on peer and community health workers, a focus on cultural competency in service delivery, and implementation and rigorous evaluation of new approaches to the crisis of homelessness that drives poor individual and public health outcomes among NYC's most marginalized residents.

Thank you for your consideration. Please direct any questions to Anthony Feliciano, Vice President of Community Mobilization at Housing Works, Inc., at a.feliciano@housingworks.org.

Attached:

End AIDS NY Community Coalition: *Proposed Additional Investments for the FY 25 Budget*

Ending NYC's HIV Epidemic is Within Our Reach - Let's Finish the Job Proposed Additional NYC Investments for the FY 2025 Budget

New York City and State have made significant progress implementing the historic 2015 Ending the Epidemic (EtE) Blueprint recommendations developed collaboratively by HIV community members, providers, advocates, and public health authorities. Our EtE efforts enabled us to “bend the curve” of the epidemic by the end of 2019, decreasing HIV prevalence for the first time since the epidemic began, and the most recent HIV surveillance data show that this trend continues.

However, the data also shows that while HIV health outcomes have improved across all communities, stark and unacceptable disparities persist in HIV's impact on Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) communities, transgender New Yorkers, and young men who have sex with men, with Black and Latino/Hispanic New Yorkers accounting for 83% of new HIV diagnoses in NYC in 2022. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated barriers to HIV prevention and care, suppressing uptake of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), HIV testing, and connection to care, and people with HIV (PWH) face heightened vulnerability to severe COVID-19 disease and mortality.

Together with DOHMH, community-based providers have worked hard to regain momentum lost due to COVID and to continue the work necessary to end our HIV epidemic. Confronting the challenges to end the HIV epidemic in all NYC communities and populations requires both sustained EtE efforts and new action to advance health equity, including continued improvements to our HIV service delivery systems to address racism and implicit bias, meaningful investments on the social and structural determinants that we know drive HIV health inequities, and concrete efforts to improve drug user health, support sexual health and wellbeing, and end the co-occurring hepatitis C epidemic.

The end of NYC's HIV epidemic is within our reach. Instead of harmful cuts that will undermine our progress, now is the time for renewed efforts if we are to end our HIV epidemic for all New York communities and populations and advance health equity.

URGENT PRIORITIES:

The End AIDS New York Community Coalition is a group of over 90 health care centers, hospitals, and community-based organizations across New York City and State that are fully committed to realizing the goals of our historic *Blueprint for Ending the Epidemic* for all New Yorkers.

While each of the investments and policy changes set out in this document is necessary to fully implement EtE Blueprint recommendations to end the AIDS epidemic in NYC, the End AIDS NY Community Coalition highlights five critically important immediate priorities required to address the stark and persistent HIV health inequities that undermine our HIV response, leaving individuals and communities behind:

Urgent New York City Council ETE Priorities		Funds Required
<p>1. Sustain Funding for the Council’s Ending the Epidemic Initiative – FY25</p>	<p>Organizations funded through the NYC Council Ending the Epidemic Initiative provide community-based, culturally competent HIV prevention and care services that are critical to ensure continued and equitable progress towards the City’s ETE goals. These services are more essential than ever as we continue to overcome the barriers to engagement and retention in effective HIV prevention and care presented by the COVID-19 crisis. Efforts funded include innovative approaches to improve health care coordination and data-to-care strategies, targeted services designed to meet the unique needs of members of priority populations, and efforts to expand equitable access to comprehensive HIV prevention including PrEP. We ask the City Council to sustain funding of your EtE Initiative at a level at least equal to the FY24 funding of \$9,373,342, and to prevent any cuts to DOHMH administered contracts that could undermine this vital Council initiative and our efforts to equitably end AIDS.</p>	<p>\$9.4M</p>
<p>2. Restore Funding for Critical DOHMH & HRA Contracts</p>	<p>Community-based providers funded by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and Human Resources Administration (HRA) have recently been notified that contracts essential to Ending the HIV Epidemic will be terminated or significantly reduced as a result of implementation of the Administration’s required January PEGs. Programs that will be decimated by these cuts include the City’s innovative “Undetectables” antiretroviral adherence intervention, which has been proven through rigorous research to support viral load suppression among low-income New Yorkers with HIV who face multiple barriers to medication adherence such as housing instability, hunger, and behavioral health issues. Launched by the City to support our EtE goals, the Undetectables program has been recognized by the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC) and other bodies as a best practice for addressing HIV health disparities by sustaining engagement in effective HIV care. Other programs facing elimination or cuts include DOHMH’s essential PlaySure Network 2.0 program that is the backbone of NYC’s HIV prevention efforts, the ReCHARGE crystal meth harm reduction program, the agency’s Faith-Based HIV prevention and care programs, and their HIV Prevention and Literacy: Older Adults Program, as well as HRA’s Realizing Independence through Support and Employment (RISE) workforce development program. These EtE initiatives cut as a result of the DOHMH and HRA PEGs will exacerbate the ongoing HIV, HCV, and substance</p>	<p>\$5.7M</p>

	<p>use disorder epidemics that DOHMH is charged with addressing, with the greatest impact felt by New Yorkers most marginal to our health systems. Past and ongoing PEGs have already dramatically harmed NYC agencies who serve these New Yorkers. Now is not the time to worsen their impact by cutting essential service contracts. We ask the City Council to restore the funding for these DOHMH & HRA contacts.</p>	
<p>3. Authorize and Expand Overdose Prevention Centers</p>	<p>The ETE Community Coalition calls upon the Council to act to officially authorize the operation of Overdose Prevention Centers (OPCs) in NYC, and to fund at least five OPCs in addition to the two programs currently operating with \$1.5M each annually in Opioid Settlement funding that supports approximately 90% of costs of the programs, excluding actual observation of participant injections. We ask the Council to exercise your oversight authority to require release of the prepared DOHMH request for proposals to operate these additional OPCs and call for at least \$1.5M in annual funding for each of at least five additional OPCs, to include at least one OPC operating in each NYC Borough, for a total of \$7.5M annually to support expansion of this life-saving initiative.</p>	<p>\$7.5M</p>
<p>Urgent Administration ETE Priorities</p>		<p>Funds Required</p>
<p>4. Viral Hepatitis Prevention Initiative-FY25</p>	<p>The New York City Council's Viral Hepatitis Initiative established in 2014 is the strongest public health response to the hepatitis B virus (HBV) and hepatitis C virus (HCV) epidemics that have hit NYC's communities. The Viral Hepatitis Initiative serves people at highest risk for hepatitis B and C, HIV infection, overdose, and coronavirus, including the uninsured, immigrants, and people who have used drugs. The initiative has also trained and employed over 58 patient navigators, over 111 peer navigators from syringe exchange programs, and has trained over 4,000 clinical providers in hepatitis B and C testing and treatment. We request an increase from the \$2.4M allocated by the Council for this initiative in the FY24 budget, and for this essential funding to be baselined going forward. The increased funding would support several new staffing lines to increase DOHMH capacity and ensure the sustainability of critical patient navigation services. This funding would accelerate efforts to eliminate hepatitis B and C in New York City by 2030, per NYC DOHMH's 2021 viral hepatitis elimination plan, by moving to a multi-year baseline funding model.</p>	<p>\$5.4M Baselined, effective FY25</p>

<p>5. Fully Fund DOHMH Sexual Health Clinics</p>	<p>NYC’s Sexual Health Clinics are a core component of the City’s “status neutral” ETE efforts, providing sex-positive, gender-affirming sexual, reproductive, and harm reduction services for New Yorkers, regardless of ability to pay, insurance coverage, or immigration status. Last year alone, these clinics served more than 35,000 New Yorkers and provided over 60,000 visits. However, the re-opening of some clinics closed after the COVID-19 has been delayed and two clinics, in Riverside and Crown Heights, remain closed. Consequently, the number of visits to Sexual Health Clinics has not returned to the pre-pandemic numbers, despite <i>increased</i> need, as rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are on the rise, uptake of HIV PrEP use is stalled among members of disparately impacted BIPOC communities, and new HIV cases occur year after year. It is critical to reopen the two clinics that remain closed due to the COVID-19 crisis. In addition, all Sexual Health Clinics must offer comprehensive, state-of-the-art sexual health and supportive services needed to effectively address the full range of overlapping sexual health needs. Additional investments are needed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expand clinic hours of operation and the services offered at each clinic, including PrEP initiation and ongoing care, medication abortion, contraception services, and supportive services (e.g., social work services, patient navigation, behavioral health services); ● Launch new clinic services, including hepatitis B vaccine, hepatitis C treatment, syringe service programs (SSPs), and gender-affirming care; ● Establish youth-focused and women-focused practices at one or more clinics; ● Establish “Quickie Labs” at additional clinics (currently, only Chelsea and Fort Greene have Quickie Labs) to provide “express,” automated and streamlined STI testing; ● Make the minimal investment necessary to alter the COVID-19 Express testing equipment currently in use at the Riverside location to use the lab equipment to expand STI Express testing once the federal COVID emergency funding ceases at the end of 2024. ● Increase awareness of clinic services, including expanded and new services, through social marketing campaigns and community outreach; ● Support continued necessary facility and infrastructure renovations at clinic sites. 	<p>\$10M Baselined, effective FY25</p>
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Additional New York City Council ETE Priorities		Funds Required
Support Human Services Agencies with Adequate Indirect Funding	Non-profit human service organizations that have been on the front lines of both the HIV and COVID responses as NYC vendors face ongoing and new challenges as the result of years of severe underinvestment in essential infrastructure needs. We welcomed the adoption by the City two years ago of a contracting agency's approved Federal indirect rate after years of inadequate funding. However, to date total contract amounts have not been adjusted to reflect the additional infrastructure funding, and social service agencies employing their approved indirect rate have been required to cut direct services by an amount equal to the additional indirect costs covered. We call on the Council to support the funding required to amend each existing NYC human services contract as soon as practicable to increase the total contract amount to reflect the contracting agency's approved Federal indirect rate "below the line" without impacting contract funding for direct services. For the Ending the Epidemic Initiative Contracts alone, we request approximately \$2M in additional indirect funding be added to existing contracts to afford providers their Federally approved indirect rates.	\$2M
Harm Reduction Services	Sustain current NYC Council funding that supports the delivery of a range of harm reduction services by four existing harm reduction providers. This funding is critical to ensure the ongoing delivery of a range of essential services that currently support program participants.	\$1.4M
Fill the Continuing Gap in Funding Resulting from Reduction of the NYS Article VI Match	The NYS Fiscal 2025 Budget does not include funding to restore the reimbursement rate for the Article VI Public Health General Works Fund. This ongoing reduction has a direct impact on community-based organizations and the health services they provide. While we condemn the State's continued public health disinvestment at a time when NYC faces ongoing epidemics of communicable diseases that include COVID-19, HIV, viral hepatitis, TB, STIs, and Mpox, it is essential that NYC step in to ensure a sustained and robust response. We call upon the Council to mitigate the impact of Article VI reductions on essential NYC public health programs, and in particular the impact on council discretionary initiatives including the Ending the Epidemic and Viral Hepatitis Prevention Initiative.	\$90M

Additional Administration ETE Priorities		Funds Required
Wage Equity for Human Services Workers	<p>Inadequate NYC contract reimbursement rates have resulted in poverty-level wages for many human services workers, who are predominantly women and people of color. Essential human services workers are among the lowest paid employees in the NYC economy, resulting in high turnover and serious disadvantage in an increasingly competitive labor market. The EtE Community Coalition supports the Mayor’s recent announcement of a \$741 million investment for an estimated 80,000 human services workers employed by non-profit organizations with a City contract as part of a new cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and urge the Administration to ensure that this investment in the human services workforce includes all workers on the frontlines of delivering public health and essential social services to New Yorkers.</p> <p>In addition, we join the #JustPay Campaign to call on the Administration to set a living wage floor of no less than \$21/hour for all City funded human services workers and to create and fund a comprehensive wage and benefit schedule for City contracted human services workers comparable to the salaries made by City employees in the same field.</p>	\$108M
Invest in the Development of Housing with Deep Affordability	<p>To meet the housing needs of New Yorkers living with or vulnerable to HIV infection, we must expand the City’s affordable and supportive housing stock—one of the most critical issues facing New Yorkers. This requires substantial new City investments in housing with deep affordability, including supportive housing for those who need it. We call for at least \$2.5 billion in additional new construction financing each year for the next five years for apartments specifically built for homeless and extremely low-income New Yorkers, including: doubling the set-aside in new affordable housing developments for homeless households from 15 to 30 percent, to produce at least 6,000 new apartments per year; and building an additional 6,000 apartments per year for households with extremely low incomes. In addition, we urge the City to accelerate the creation of 15,000 new NYC-funded supportive housing units, working towards a goal for their completion by 2025 rather than 2030.</p>	\$2.5 Billion/year FY25-FY29

<p>Fund Non-Profit Legal Services Organizations to Address Source of Income Discrimination</p>	<p>To maximize the effectiveness of existing NYC voucher programs, including HASA rental assistance and CityFHEPs vouchers requires more consistent and effective legal action to enforce the City prohibition on source of income discrimination. We call for funding to support contracts with non-profit organizations with a record of successful litigation to address the continued illegal discrimination by brokers and landlords who refuse to accept government-funded rental vouchers.</p>	<p>\$4.4M</p>
<p>Expand Housing and Services for Runaway and Homeless Youth by Funding 100 Additional DYCD RHY Beds</p>	<p>Address NYC's homeless youth crisis and provide housing supports as an HIV prevention intervention by funding an additional 100 Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) beds. Over the past year, it has been increasingly difficult to secure a vacant DYCD RHY bed for a young person experiencing homelessness. There simply are not enough beds to meet the need. Funding needs to be made available to add 60 beds for Runaway and Homeless Youth (16-20yo) and 40 beds for Homeless Young Adults (21-24yo), which will expand the current DYCD RHY bed portfolio by 100 beds. In addition, DYCD must prioritize allocating any new beds that are funded to serve populations with the greatest documented need in areas that are easily accessible to young people.</p>	<p>\$6.2M</p>
<p>Housing Assistance as HIV Prevention</p>	<p>Evidence shows that lack of safe stable housing significantly increases vulnerability to HIV acquisition among populations already overrepresented among new HIV infections, including people of trans experience and Black and Latino young men who have sex with men. Targeted funds are urgently needed to support housing assistance as HIV prevention for highly vulnerable persons experiencing homelessness, to enable them to benefit from comprehensive HIV prevention including PrEP.</p>	<p>\$10M (local and Federal EHE funding)</p>
<p>Support for Routine Testing to Address Congenital Syphilis</p>	<p>The dramatic and sustained increase in congenital syphilis in NYC underscores the need for additional action to identify new syphilis infections, particularly among women of childbearing age seen in emergency departments who might not otherwise present for prenatal care. Funding is requested to launch a new DOHMH program to deliver technical assistance to emergency departments on implementing routine syphilis testing among all people who are or could become pregnant who present in emergency departments.</p>	<p>\$200K</p>
<p>Health Services for Un/Underinsured LGBTQ New Yorkers</p>	<p>Increase funding for agencies to support LGBTQ-affirming and culturally competent comprehensive health services – including primary, behavioral, sexual, and reproductive health services – for un/underinsured LGBTQ New Yorkers.</p>	<p>\$980K</p>

<p>Harm Reduction as HIV Prevention</p>	<p>Expand the number of City-funded sites that offer syringe service programs (SSPs), harm reduction education including on overdose prevention, HIV and hepatitis testing, HIV and hepatitis prevention education, linkage to HIV and hepatitis prevention and care services, and onsite supportive services, including behavioral and mental health services, drop-in services, food and nutrition services, and hygiene services.</p>	<p>\$9M Baselined effective FY25</p>
<p>HIV and Sexual and Reproductive Health for Women</p>	<p>Provide organizational support and capacity building for grassroots organizations focused on women’s HIV and sexual and reproductive health issues, offer HIV and sexual and reproductive health capacity building for providers, launch a public-facing education campaign on women and HIV.</p>	<p>\$4.5M Baselined effective FY25</p>
<p>HIV Prevention for Young Black and Latino MSM</p>	<p>Launch multi-pronged, community-informed programming focused on HIV prevention among Black and Latino gay and bisexual men and other men who have sex with men (MSM) ages 13-29 years.</p>	<p>\$4.5M Baselined effective FY25</p>
<p>Trans Equity Programs Initiative to Advance Ending the HIV Epidemic</p>	<p>Sustain and baseline funding for the Trans Equity Programs Initiative, supporting a range of services to help empower the transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) community. Funding supports education programs, workforce development, healthcare navigation, legal guidance, community workshops, mental health programs, among other services. With increased attacks on TGNC people nationwide, as well as ongoing economic troubles (e.g., increased needs for mental health, substance abuse, and food supports), we expect the needs of TGNC service providers in NYC to increase in FY24. It is essential to strengthen the ability of these programs to serve transgender New Yorkers, including delivery of HIV and sexual health services to transgender New Yorkers, including HIV and STI testing, prevention, care, and supportive services.</p>	<p>\$4.1M Baselined effective FY25</p>

	Prevent Harmful Cuts to Essential Survival Services	
<p>Restore Funding for DSS, DHS, and DOHMH and Exempt them and the Community-Based Providers They Fund from Additional PEGs</p>	<p>Given the serious and overlapping humanitarian and public health crises continuing to face New Yorkers, agencies responsible for handling these emergencies must be exempt from any program of systemic funding cuts. The NYC Department of Social Services (DSS) administers essential benefits and services for vulnerable New Yorkers, including the lifesaving housing assistance and benefits provided through its HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA). The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) is responsible for providing basic survival services for the growing number of New Yorkers experiencing homelessness. HASA is chronically understaffed and under-resourced, and both DSS and DHS face new challenges posed by the increasing number of New Yorkers experiencing homelessness, primarily from low-income Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is charged with protecting public health, including managing ongoing epidemics of communicable diseases that include COVID-19, HIV, viral hepatitis, TB, STIs, and Mpox. Arbitrary cuts and hiring freezes over the past year have done tremendous damage, with these critical agencies left without the staff and resources needed to meet the most basic needs of New Yorkers. City agencies are not functioning effectively, causing massive delays the delivery of essential services, as well as crippling delays in reimbursement of non-profit providers for services delivered. These delays are a direct result of agency understaffing at City agencies responsible for delivering health and human services. It is essential to fully restore the cuts to funding and staff lines over the last year to DSS, DHS, DOHMH, and the community-based providers they fund, and to fully exempt them from any future Program to Eliminate the Gap (PEG) savings plans.</p>	



TESTIMONY OF NEW DESTINY HOUSING TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON HOUSING & BUILDINGS

Gabriela Sandoval Requena, Director of Policy and Communications

May 14, 2024

Thank you, Chair Sanchez, Chair Brannan, members of the City Council Housing & Buildings and Finance Committees, and Council staff for holding this Fiscal Year 2025 executive budget hearing and for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

Founded in 1994, New Destiny's mission is to end the cycle of domestic violence and homelessness for low-income families and individuals by developing and connecting them to safe, permanent, affordable housing and services. We build and manage supportive housing, and, through our innovative programs, we assist survivors in finding permanent housing and remaining stably housed.

New Destiny is the only organization in New York City solely dedicated to the solution of permanent housing for survivors and a leading advocate in the effort to obtain the resources needed to house survivors. To learn more, please see our [policy recommendations](#). New Destiny is also a co-convenor of the [Family Homelessness Coalition \(FHC\)](#), a collective of mothers with lived experience of homelessness and organizations committed to tackling homelessness among families in our city, as well as members of the Supportive Housing Network of New York and the Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HOMELESSNESS

While only about half of all domestic violence instances are reported,¹ the NYPD filed 1 domestic violence incident report every 2 minutes in 2022.² Between 2021 and 2022, domestic violence homicides increased nearly 30%, even as murders went down by 11% in the five boroughs during that same period.³ Access to safe and affordable housing is one of survivors' biggest, most urgent concerns and it often determines whether they leave their abuser and stay alive.

Domestic violence continues to be a main cause of homelessness in New York City. More than 1 in 5 families with children who entered the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelter system identified domestic violence as the reason for their homelessness in Fiscal Year (FY)

¹ Morgan, R. & Truman, J. (2020). Criminal Victimization, 2019. U.S. Department of Justice. Retrieved from <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv19.pdf>

² NYC Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence. (2022 October 2). New York City Announces its Annual Domestic Violence Awareness Month Campaign. <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/ocdv/downloads/pdf/DVAM-Press-Release-2023-10-02.pdf>

³ New York City Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence. (2024). 2023 New York City Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee Annual Report. Retrieved from: <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/ocdv/downloads/pdf/2023-Annual-FRC-Report.pdf>

2023.^{4 5} Additionally, 10,842 survivors sought refuge in the separate Human Resources Administration (HRA) domestic violence shelter system in calendar year 2023, 96% of whom were families with kids.⁶

Once in domestic violence emergency shelter, survivors are 5 times more likely to move to DHS or another shelter than to a permanent home upon reaching the state-mandated six-month limit.⁷ Moving to DHS means that survivors lose the anonymity and specialized services of the domestic violence shelter system. Moreover, their time spent in domestic violence shelter does not count toward time in shelter in the DHS system, a marker used to prioritize households for housing. In 2023, more than 1 in 2 survivors left shelter for shelter and only 9% were able to secure permanent housing. Hundreds of other survivors were reported as *making their own arrangements, unknown, or other*. With a vacancy rate of only 1.4% in New York City,⁸ it is very likely that many of them left shelter to return to their abuser. According to the National Domestic Violence Hotline, survivors go back to their abusive partners an average of seven times before they leave for good.⁹

Survivors sleeping in shelter make up only a fraction of survivors without a safe home to go. The New York City domestic violence hotline received 87,985 calls in 2023 and more than 16,000 survivors made nearly 50,000 visits to the city's Family Justice Centers.¹⁰ While anyone can be affected by domestic violence, women of color, in particular Black and Hispanic, are disproportionately impacted. In 2022, 97% of head of households in HRA domestic violence shelter identified as female, 60% were Black, and 33% were Hispanic. Between 2010 and 2022, Black New Yorkers were 2.4 times more likely than members of other racial or ethnic groups to be victims of domestic violence homicide.¹¹

Most survivors need housing assistance because they cannot access whatever household resources existed prior or during the abuse. More than 94% of survivors of intimate partner violence experience financial abuse and isolation¹² and over half are victims of nonconsensual, credit-related transactions.¹³ As a result, survivors often have poor credit scores and rental history, or may have lost their rental subsidy due to violations committed by the abuser. The

⁴ Silkowski, A. (2019). Housing Survivors: How New York City Can Increase Housing Stability for Survivors of Domestic Violence. New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer. Retrieved from https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/Housing_Survivors_102119.pdf

⁵ New York City Department of Social Services. (2023). Reasons for Eligibility for Families with Children for Department of Homeless Services Shelter (Asylum seekers was the largest category, accounting for 32%, while evictions, formal and informal, accounted for 11%).

⁶ New York City Department of Social Services. (2024). 2023 Annual Report on Exits from NYC Domestic Violence Shelters.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. (2024). 2023 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey Selected Initial Findings. Retrieved from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdfs/about/2023-nychvs-selected-initial-findings.pdf>

⁹ National Domestic Violence Hotline. Supportive Someone Who Keeps Returning to an Abusive Relationship. Retrieved from: <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/supporting-someone-who-keeps-returning-to-an-abusive-relationship/>

¹⁰ New York City Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence. (2024). ENDGBV 2023 Fact Sheet. Retrieved from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/ocdv/downloads/pdf/2023-ENDGBV-Annual-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

¹¹ New York City Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence. (2024). 2023 New York City Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee Annual Report. Retrieved from: <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/ocdv/downloads/pdf/2023-Annual-FRC-Report.pdf>

¹² Postmus, J., Plummer S., McMahon, S., Murshid, N., & Kim, M. (2012). Understanding economic abuse in the lives of survivors. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 27(3), 411-430.

¹³ Bhattacharya, A., Dorosh-Walter, B., Reid, B., Sussman, E., Kourousias, L., Garcia Bigelow, M., Menna, M., Correa, M., Cameo., Young., Wee, S., & Inzunza, T. (2022). Reinvesting in Economic Justice, Equity, and Solidarity for Survivors in New York City. Retrieved from <https://nycsurvivoiej.mailchimpsites.com/>

shortage of affordable housing only heightens the barriers for survivors as they strive to regain stability. In 2023, the net rental vacancy rate of homes renting under \$2,400 fell below 1%.¹⁴ Challenges are even greater for survivors from marginalized communities, survivors with a disability, and non-citizens survivors due to systemic discrimination and lack of equitable access to resources.¹⁵

RECOMMENDATIONS

Increase Funding for Affordable Housing Production and Allow for Upward Mobility.

New York City's affordable housing and homelessness crises can only be addressed by increasing affordable housing supply. New Destiny is deeply concerned about the allocation for the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) in the Mayor's FY 2025 executive budget. According to an [analysis](#) by the New York Housing Conference, the capital budget for HPD next year is 20% less than this year at \$2.1 billion. This funding will not be enough for the city to keep developing affordable housing at the current rate. In fact, at this funding level, the number of affordable homes financed by new construction programs will be reduced by 52%, including new homes made available through Housing Connect and special needs programs that finance supportive housing.

The FY 2025 budget must include resources that meet the housing needs of our most vulnerable neighbors and allow New Yorkers to build generational wealth by becoming homeowners. **New Destiny calls on our city leaders to increase HPD's capital budget by \$1 billion next year and supports the *Homes Now, Homes for Generations* campaign, which proposes an annual investment of \$250 million over five years into two underutilized housing programs: Neighborhood Pillars and Open Door.**

Improve the city-funded supportive housing program: NYC 15/15. Increase overall access to supportive housing by building more, and relying less on an already crowded housing market, to house New York's most vulnerable residents. New Destiny supports the Supportive Housing Network of New York's [recommendations](#) to improve NYC 15/15, especially the ask to develop additional congregate units above the original 7,500 allocation.

NYC 15/15 is in its eighth year and falling below its target. The city has only awarded 17% of scattered site allocation, whereas 80% of congregate units have been awarded. **Now that [Mayor Adams announced](#) that domestic violence will be eligible for NYC 15/15 supportive housing, it is critical that the administration increases service and capital funding for the program to develop additional congregate supportive housing.**

New Destiny thanks the Council for their leadership and advocacy for expanding HPD resources, calling for \$6 million to better meet the needs of survivors through the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence microgrant program, and including \$19.6 million for NYC

¹⁴ New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. (2024). 2023 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey Selected Initial Findings. Retrieved from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdfs/about/2023-nychvs-selected-initial-findings.pdf>

¹⁵ Kulkarni, S., & Hill, E. (2020). Understanding the Cycle of Housing Insecurity for Marginalized Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence. Retrieved from <https://safehousingpartnerships.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/CoordinatedEntryPapersCycleofHousingInsecurity.pdf>

15/15, plus an additional \$50 million in capital funding for supportive housing, in their FY 2025 Preliminary Budget Response.

We are also grateful to the Council for their Domestic Violence Empowerment (DoVE) initiative discretionary funding support in past years and respectfully requests that funding is renewed in FY 2025. Council Discretionary Funding enables New Destiny to cover operational costs and continue providing vital services to families and individuals who have gone through the double trauma of homelessness and abuse.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony. New Destiny looks forward to continuing to collaborate with the Council. We welcome any questions you may have.

Gabriela Sandoval Requena
Director of Policy and Communications
gsrequena@newdestinyhousing.org



**Testimony to the New York City Council
Finance Committee & Committee on Housing and Buildings**

Executive Budget Hearing for FY2025

May 14, 2024

Good afternoon, Committee Chairs Brannan and Sanchez and members of the Finance and Housing Committees, and thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Will Spisak and I am a Senior Program Associate at New Economy Project, a citywide organization that works with community groups to build a just economy based on cooperation, racial and neighborhood equity, and ecological sustainability. Through coalition organizing, legal and policy advocacy, and other strategies, we challenge systemic wealth extraction and advance policies and institutions that expand democracy, economic cooperation, and community-led development.

New Economy Project co-founded and coordinates the NYC Community Land Initiative, a citywide coalition that has been at the forefront of expanding community land trusts (CLTs), as vehicles for securing deeply and permanently affordable housing and equitable neighborhood development. Over more than a decade of zealous organizing and advocacy, we have made major progress: today, New York City is home to more than 20 CLTs working to address root causes of our city's affordability crisis, combat displacement, and promote self-determination in low-income and Black and brown neighborhoods across the five boroughs.

The City Council has been a critical partner in this critical work – channeling \$6 million since FY2020 to CLT organizing and technical assistance through the citywide Community Land Trust discretionary funding initiative; advancing the Community Land Act bill package, to help CLTs bring more land and housing into community stewardship; and more.

We urge the Council to redouble its commitment to CLTs and permanently affordable social housing, by ensuring the city's FY2025 budget includes:

1. **Enhanced funding of \$3 million for the citywide Community Land Trust (CLT) Initiative**, to meet the growing demand for CLTs and support three new CLT initiatives;
2. **\$2.5 billion in capital funding for permanently affordable housing**, as outlined in the Homes Now, Homes for Generations platform; and
3. **\$3.2 billion for NYCHA repairs and infrastructure upgrades.**

Enhanced funding of \$3 million for the CLT Initiative in FY25 (up from \$1.5 million in FY24) will support 17 grassroots CLTs and 4 citywide technical assistance organizations working to bring land and housing into community stewardship. (See attached one-pager.)

As coordinators of the citywide CLT Initiative, New Economy Project works with community groups and citywide organizations to deliver comprehensive community organizing, education, training, and technical assistance to support the formation and expansion of CLTs. The initiative engages thousands of New Yorkers each year – from low income tenants organizing against predatory landlords to homeowners at risk of foreclosure, small and worker owned businesses, and many other stakeholders. As the demand for CLTs grows, and emerging CLTs reach their next stages of growth, enhanced CLT Initiative funding is needed to sustain and build on this momentum.

CLTs are powerful bulwarks against real estate speculation and displacement. Since 1994, the Cooper Square CLT on Manhattan’s Lower East Side has preserved more than 320 deeply affordable apartments and two dozen affordable storefronts in 21 buildings – and is now expanding to bring two additional rent-stabilized buildings into CLT stewardship. In recent years, East Harlem El Barrio CLT, East New York CLT, Mott Haven Port Morris Community Land Stewards, ReAL Edgemere CLT, and others have organized thousands of residents; won RFPs to develop public land; acquired and rehabilitated multifamily buildings; led neighborhood planning efforts; and launched campaigns to convert vacant land to vibrant community, health and cultural spaces.

Capital funding of \$2.5 billion over four years for permanently affordable housing will enable CLTs and other mission-driven nonprofits to seize opportunities to create, rehabilitate, and preserve urgently needed affordable homes. We join with dozens of other community and affordable housing groups, the City Council Progressive Caucus, NYC Comptroller Brad Lander, and Public Advocate Jumaane Williams in urging the city to adopt the Homes Now Homes for Generations platform, which would significantly expand HPD’s Neighborhood Pillars and Open Door programs.

These measures are urgently needed to address our city’s worsening affordability crisis. One in three New Yorkers are severely rent-burdened, paying more than 50% of their incomes on rent, and a record 100,000+ people are living in shelters. Between 2017 and 2021, NYC lost almost 100,000 units that had rented for less than \$1,500 per month. A recent report found that NYC rents are rising at seven times the rate of wages.

As we work to expand CLTs and the supply of permanently affordable housing, New York City must protect its vital public housing stock. We join public housing residents and activists in calling for \$3.2 billion for NYCHA repairs and upgrades, to ensure safe and dignified living conditions for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers living in NYCHA housing.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today.

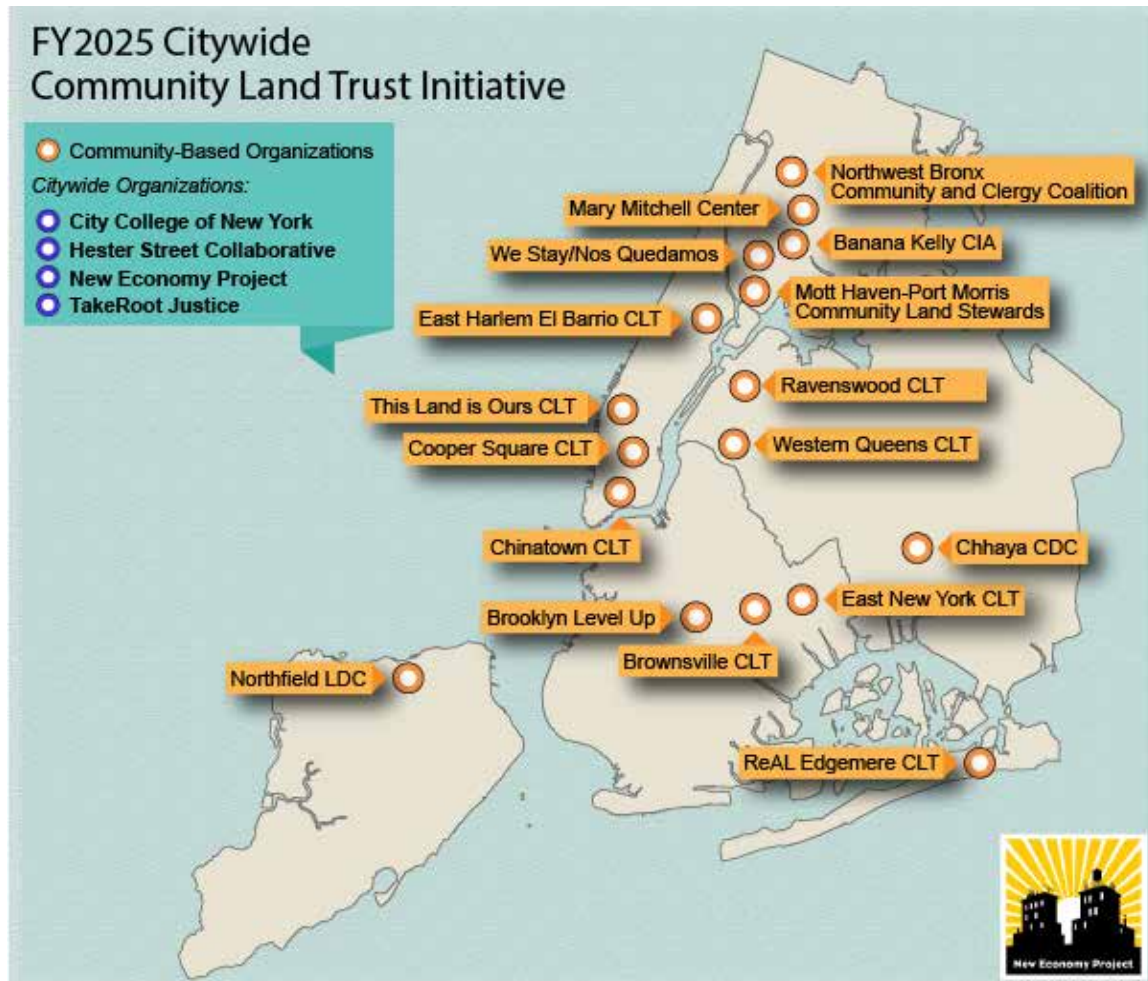


Community Land Trust Initiative

FY2025 Discretionary Funding Request

The **citywide Community Land Trust Initiative** requests **\$3 million** in FY2025 City Council discretionary funding to support 21 organizations working to develop community land trusts (CLTs) and permanently-affordable housing, commercial and community spaces. The CLT Initiative delivers in-depth education, organizing, and legal and technical assistance to support the formation and expansion of CLTs in low-income, Black and brown neighborhoods. By taking land and housing off the speculative market, CLTs combat displacement and address root causes of NYC's deepening affordability crisis.

Launched in FY2020, the CLT Initiative has catalyzed the growth of grassroots CLTs across the five boroughs; organized and educated thousands of New Yorkers; and brought land and housing into permanently affordable community control. Nine CLTs now steward or are in active stages of acquiring property for deeply affordable housing and other needs.

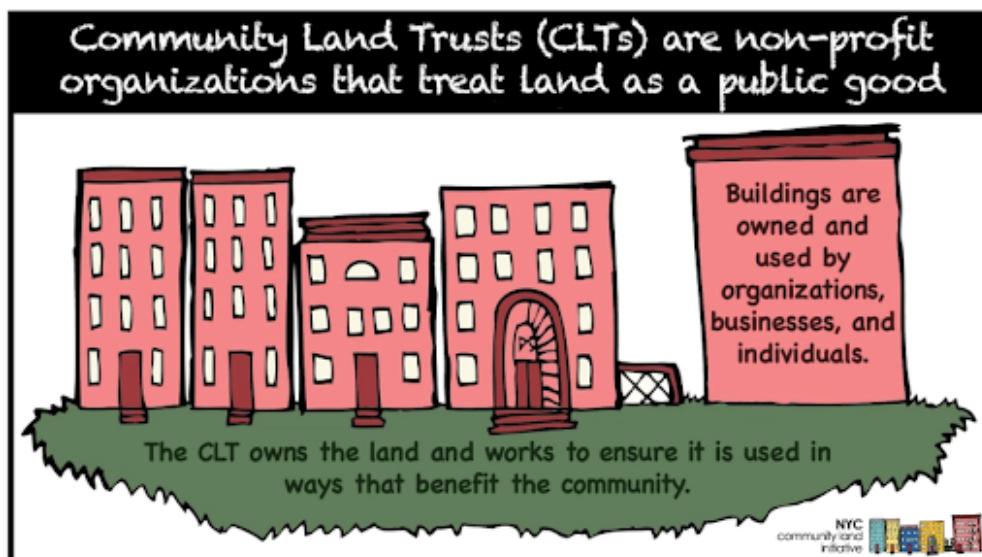


Enhanced funding of \$3 million in FY2025 is needed to meet the growing demand for CLTs. This year, the CLT initiative will:

- ◆ Support 17 grassroots CLTs – including 3 new CLTs in Brooklyn and Queens, and 9 CLTs stewarding land and housing – and expand organizing and technical assistance citywide.
- ◆ Provide 65 technical assistance engagements to CLTs on matters such as incorporation, bylaws, property acquisition, developer partnerships, and financing.
- ◆ Conduct 200+ organizing, education, and planning sessions – in multiple languages – for tenants, homeowners, small businesses, and other community members.
- ◆ Train 100 CLT leaders and residents on community and tenant governance, and produce popular education material to support intergenerational organizing

The CLT Initiative is urgently needed to stabilize neighborhoods and keep New Yorkers safely housed. With Initiative support, CLTs will create and preserve thousands of permanently affordable homes – including rental, shared equity, and supportive housing. CLTs also will develop community and cultural spaces, affordable storefronts for small and worker-owned businesses, community solar projects, and other infrastructure.

CLTs preserve public investment and affordability over generations. Manhattan's Cooper Square CLT and East Harlem El Barrio CLT steward more than 400 deeply affordable apartments, as well as storefronts for two dozen community-serving small businesses. East New York CLT, Mott Haven Port Morris Community Land Stewards, Bronx CLT, ReAL Edgemere CLT, and others are acquiring their first properties, including multifamily buildings, vacant City land, and more.



New Economy Project coordinates the citywide CLT initiative. for more information, contact Will Spisak at will@neweconomy-nyc.org.

Learn more about NYC's CLT movement at nyccli.org

Testimony of Brendan Cheney, New York Housing Conference

**New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings
Hearing on FY2025 Executive Budget**

May 14, 2024

Good afternoon. My name is Brendan Cheney. I am the Director of Policy and Operations at the New York Housing Conference (NYHC). I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify about the FY 2025 executive budget.

NYHC is a nonprofit affordable housing policy and advocacy organization. As a broad-based coalition, our mission is to advance City, State and Federal policies and funding to support the development and preservation of decent and affordable housing for all New Yorkers.

NYHC is grateful for Speaker Adams and Chair Sanchez's housing leadership and advocacy for expanding HPD resources. We have an affordable housing crisis that gets worse every year and we should continue to look for ways to increase the number of affordable housing units.

We are also supportive of Mayor Adams's City of Yes for Housing Opportunity zoning text change. The proposals would allow for more housing in every neighborhood. We have a housing crisis and we need more housing. But we also continue to add housing inequitably across the city – with some neighborhoods adding thousands of units while other neighborhoods basically opt out of adding housing. If we want a fair and affordable city, we need to add housing in all neighborhoods and the City of Yes is an important step in that direction. We encourage the City Council to support the City of Yes this fall.

While we need to allow the market to add housing, we also need to continue and expand production of affordable housing. There are hundreds of thousands of households that cannot afford housing and we need subsidized housing to support them.

However, we are very concerned about HPD's ability to maintain production and move affordable housing projects through the pipeline due to insufficient funding in HPD's capital budget. The capital budget for HPD next year is \$2.1 billion, a 20% decrease from the current year budget of \$2.6 billion and insufficient to maintain current production levels according to our analysis.

NYHC estimates that the number of affordable housing units financed with capital subsidy will drop by 32% next year with the level of funding in the executive budget. With rising construction costs, which have increased 26% since 2020, the city needs more funding just to produce the same amount of housing.

In our analysis, we find that affordable housing units financed by new construction programs will be reduced by more than half (52%), including new construction programs made available through Housing Connect and special needs housing programs, which finance permanent supportive housing for people who were formerly homeless and affordable

housing for low-income and homeless seniors. Preservation projects, which utilize capital subsidies to replace building systems and make necessary upgrades, will see 15% fewer units financed.

In addition, HPD Commissioner Adolfo Carrion testified on March 11th at the City Council Preliminary budget hearing that the agency has 750 affordable housing projects in its pipeline awaiting processing and funding. This includes 300 new construction projects and 450 existing projects in need of preservation through capital subsidies to fund upgrades and repairs and/or to extend affordability in a tax abatement. The city should increase funding to move more projects through the pipeline and add more affordable housing.

The funding shortage for next year is such that it is also likely that the City will not fully utilize available federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits in FY2025 without additional city funding. Federal tax credits are paired with City subsidy in affordable New Construction and Special Needs Housing Programs to finance construction and subsidize affordable rents. Given the scale of the housing crisis, we cannot afford to leave federal funding unused.

We therefore recommend the City increase HPD's capital budget by \$1 billion in FY25 to both maintain historical affordable housing production and to increase production to advance the substantial pipeline backlog.

We estimate that \$812.563 million is needed to maintain current production levels and fully utilize federal resources. This includes \$480.75 million for New Construction Programs like ELLA and Mix and Match; \$197.379 million for Special Needs Housing programs like Supportive Housing and SARA, and \$134.434 million for subsidized Preservation Finance Programs. In addition, \$187.437 million should be invested to relieve the significant pipeline backlog and to accelerate housing production by financing an additional 417 units of new construction.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify. You can find our full analysis of the capital shortfall [here](#). We look forward to answering any questions.



**Testimony of Alia Soomro, Deputy Director for New York City Policy
New York League of Conservation Voters
City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings
Jointly with the Committee on Finance
FY25 Executive Budget Hearing
May 14, 2024**

My name is Alia Soomro and I am the Deputy Director for New York City Policy at the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV is a statewide environmental advocacy organization representing over 30,000 members in New York City. Thank you, Chair Sanchez, and members of the Committee on Housings and Buildings for the opportunity to comment.

NYLCV was pleased that the Mayor’s Executive Budget allocated \$4 million and 36 full-time positions to the NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) to implement and enforce Local Law 97. We urge the Council to continue working with the Adams Administration to ensure this law is effectively and equitably implemented, as well as ensure the NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD) is effectively funded and staffed to support efforts to end lead poisoning.

Implementing Local Law 97

In New York City, [buildings](#) account for over 70% of the City’s greenhouse gas emissions. This is one of the reasons why the City Council passed and NYLCV strongly supported Local Law 97 in 2019—to directly combat this source of climate change and reduce harmful pollutants that disproportionately impact low income and communities of color. With the first year of LL97 compliance upon us, thousands of building owners now are responsible for the carbon they emit.

While we understand the fiscal challenges facing the City, NYLCV urges the Administration and City Council to ensure the speedy, effective, and equitable implementation of LL97 by providing robust funding for DOB hiring and staffing, particularly for DOB’s Office of Building Energy and Emissions Performance (OBEEP). OBEEP must be prioritized when funding decisions are made in order to handle the full scope of work needed to implement this law effectively and efficiently, which includes technical assistance, conducting analyses required by the law, complete the LL97 rulemaking process, deliver outreach and education to owners; and prepare for the substantial review and enforcement of ‘good faith’ applications and decarbonization reports that will start coming in by May 2025. NYLCV appreciates the \$4 million proposed in the Mayor’s FY25 Executive Budget, including \$3.9 million in Fiscal 2026 and in the outyears, and 36 full-time positions, but we urge the City to continue funding and increasing the amount of

full-time staff at OBEEP in the future. According to the most recent [Housing and Buildings Committee Report](#) on the Executive Budget, none of the 36 new positions include inspectorial positions and only two positions are associated with outreach and assistance. Given LL97 deadlines, NYLCV stresses the importance of including new full-time positions for outreach and inspections.

NYLCV recently worked with an NYU Wagner Capstone project on co-op buildings' LL97 compliance using surveys of building representatives, stakeholder interviews, and site tours. The report, which we look forward to releasing soon, found significant informational uncertainty between co-op boards' knowledge and the expertise required for LL97 compliance and financial constraints and administrative burdens, both on buildings and on DOB. Based on those findings, we recommend expanding financial assistance programs targeted towards buildings with limited resources, such as enacting the modernized J-51 housing quality tax incentive program and establishing financing options tailored to buildings with less access to funding, and improving outreach and communication efforts to increase LL97 compliance.

Likewise, NYLCV recommends increased funding to support the outreach and education needed now that the first compliance period has begun, and asks that the City consider allocating more funding toward NYC Accelerator staff capacity. This should also include funding for translating materials into multiple languages. NYLCV was pleased that the Mayor's Executive Budget allocated \$1.27 million per year to continue the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing program to help building owners make buildings more efficient. The City should also explore the use of LL97 alternative compliance mechanisms such as an Equitable Building Fund for buildings that cannot meet the emission cap, which would go towards energy efficiency and electrification upgrades to designated affordable housing.

NYLCV urges the City to continue coordinating and identifying funding opportunities at all levels of government, including targeted funding for NYCHA retrofits, and low-income businesses, homeowners, and tenants. Now that the New York State Environmental Bond Act has been approved by voters, we urge the City to apply for future funding at the state level to be used toward building decarbonization for publicly-owned buildings and schools, especially in disadvantaged communities. Lastly, the City is uniquely positioned to apply for funding at the federal level given the recently-passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Inflation Reduction Act.

Moreover, as we implement LL97, the City must also increase funding for an equitable, green workforce training and development program—with an emphasis on investment in frontline communities. This law has the potential to create more than [140,000 jobs by 2030 in NYC](#). These jobs should be well-paying, union jobs, which will help reduce unemployment and raise wages. With the recent announcement of the Administration's [Green Economy Action Plan](#), we hope funding will be made available to grow the City's green workforce, specifically for a green building and construction workforce pilots. This means there should be increased access to Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs across schools and certification programs, as well as increased investments in union-linked pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and

direct-entry programs. These programs would also expand access to workers traditionally underrepresented or systematically excluded from this industry.

Local Law 97 is a critical step towards reducing carbon emissions and combating climate change, and we cannot afford any missteps or delays. The City must continue prioritizing funding for OBEEP to ensure the law achieves its ambitious intention.

Eliminating Lead Poisoning

As a member of the New York City Coalition to End Lead Poisoning (NYCCELP), NYLCV stands with advocates calling for the elimination of lead poisoning in NYC through a holistic multi-agency approach. We must eliminate all sources of lead exposures in the City because no level of lead exposure is safe, as even small amounts can cause neurological damage and other health problems especially in children. Furthermore, lead exposure disproportionately affects children in low-income and communities of color, and it will continue to do so until we take the necessary steps to ensure it ends. Despite passing Local Law 1 of 2004—the most ambitious lead poisoning prevention law in the county with the stated goal of ending childhood lead poisoning by 2010—lead poisoning is still a major concern.

As stated in [NYCCELP's 2024 Lead Agenda](#), the City must invest in programs and interventions that will especially protect children from lead poisoning. We know the primary source of lead poisoning is lead paint in NYC's old housing stock. To enforce LL1 of 2004 and the provisions that have been added to city code in the intervening years, the City must fully fund agencies in order to conduct inspections, test dust and paint for lead, remove lead service lines that deliver water, and other necessary functions that address lead concerns of New York City's families. The City's budget must reflect the needs of this unnecessary and long-standing crisis.

This includes measures funding proactive inspections and notification for tenants exposed to lead hazards. The City must ensure sufficient funding goes towards DOB's code enforcement and Office of Tenant Advocate. Additionally, HPD needs sufficient funding for its Lead Hazard Reduction and Healthy Homes Program.

NYCCELP is concerned that sweeping PEG cuts could negatively impact the efficacy of lead poisoning prevention policies and programs due to hiring freezes and vacancy reductions across all of the agencies listed above. Furthermore, recent and future lead laws will lack the funding necessary to properly enforce and to reach the goal of eliminating lead poisoning in New York City.

NYLCV urges the Council to provide robust funding for DOB's LL97 implementation and DOB and HPD's work to end lead poisoning. Without this, the City cannot adequately address existing public health inequities and future climate threats.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

**Testimony of Caroline Chen,
Senior Supervising Counsel at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
On the Executive Budget
before the Council of the City of New York Committee on Housing and Buildings
May 14, 2024**

Thank you, Chair Sanchez, and members of the Housing and Buildings committee, for this opportunity to submit testimony regarding the FY2025 Executive Budget. On behalf of NYLPI and our community clients, I appreciate this opportunity to uplift some priorities and concerns regarding the budget especially as it concerns implementation of NYC's landmark building emissions law, Local Law 97 of 2019.

We applaud the inclusion of certain climate initiatives to advance the City's sustainability and resiliency efforts. We would like to raise and address two main points here: first, that the 36 new positions funded by \$4 million in the budget be clearly committed to informing owners and helping them plan and design decarbonization projects; and second, that the \$1.27 million yearly allocation to the Property Assessed Clean Energy Financing Program (PACE) be increased to \$3 million.

1. The \$4 Million for the 36 New DOB Positions Must Be Used to Help Owners Become Ready to Apply for Funding this Fall

The budget allocates \$4 million dollars toward 36 full-time positions at the New York City Department of Buildings to implement and enforce Local Law 97. We appreciate this move. Yet 20 of the positions are for new "energy auditors," technical positions which admittedly may be hard to recruit given the civil service law and pay scale. Only two of the positions are associated with outreach and assistance.

At this early juncture of Local Law 97 implementation, we call on the Council to ensure that these funds are used to maximize the likelihood of compliance, by placing the weight of new positions on assisting owners on the front end. This is particularly important when we have no clarity on what MOCEJ is doing as to outreach or assistance, nor have we been able to obtain any data from MOCEJ or elsewhere learn about how owners are being assisted, or if the assistance being provided is meaningful and effective.

What we are hearing, unfortunately, is that many owners are opting to risk being issued violations and fines rather than comply, likely because it seems too expensive or otherwise impossible. It is unclear who or what entities are providing owners with planning and design assistance, and whether that assistance is for what is truly necessary for compliance with Local Law 97 or whether it exceeds the requirements (and thus would appear more costly or burdensome than necessary).

In line with such reports and anecdotes, we have in recent times seen support for introduced bills seeking more exemptions or lowered penalties under Local Law 97. For example, **Intro. 772-2024** seeks to amend the administrative code to count open and green spaces as part of a building's gross floor area when calculating GHG emissions limits. Passage of this bill would result in lowered or entirely exempted compliance with LL97. We believe that such bills are at least in part caused by concerns for financing. Assemblyman Brannan, for example, co-sponsors this bill, which is unfortunate as we had believed this Committee's vision to align with ours in its support for a successful implementation of Local Law 97.

That DOB needs more resources to support Local Law 97 implementation stage was made clear at the hearing on Tuesday, when Chair Sanchez noted to Commissioner Popa that only *two* DOB staffers are currently contacting 600 building owners regarding Local Law 97. This is shamefully and woefully inadequate.

We ask that the Council commit up to 10 of the 36 new positions at DOB for outreach and assistance. These positions can: (1) compile success stories we know are out there, to motivate owners throughout the City; (2) help New Yorkers better understand and access the financing resources available, now and imminently, to assuage concerns on financing; and (3) help owners make good faith efforts in the planning and design of their decarbonization work.

Across the state and country, **funding** and financing options are being worked on, likely to be widely available in a few months' time. For example, TruFund, a lender focusing on historically disadvantaged individuals and communities, has already been awarded \$10 million from the Green Bank, and anticipates being awarded more funding from the \$7 billion that Climated United has been allocated from the EPA. TruFund anticipates that its funding will become widely available in the fall, just a few months' time; in fact, it is confident that this will be the case across the lending industry.

Additionally, as you know, Local Law provides that making **good faith** efforts toward the retrofit and decarbonization of buildings will delay any penalties that would otherwise accrue. It thus makes sense that DOB dedicate its funding and resources on keeping owners informed, assisting them to plan and design their work so that they can minimize penalties, and ready them to apply for funding when it becomes available, very shortly.

We are at a critical juncture where we can help form positive public opinion on Local Law 97, and thus facilitate a true and meaningful transition to a clean climate future. We must make real efforts to help owners be committed to this process from the start, rather than throw their hands in the air and give up on complying with this important initiative.

While increased penalties for violating LL97 could fund other initiatives, we already know that the ability to collect fully, on rampant housing violations, for example, are spotty at best. I come from the housing world, where I've seen a hugely egregious, decades-long slum lord

be given 90%+ reduction to his accrued housing violation penalties during settlement. As this Committee also heard on Tuesday, housing violations are egregiously ignored, causing disastrous consequences to tenants. We must not let Local Law 97 become the Housing Maintenance Code not only on principle, but because we do not have time to waste in this critically important battle to combat climate change.

What we demand here is compliance with LL97 so that we can pass on better conditions to our future generations, and truly set New York as a standard bearer for building decarbonization in the world. We have to support that, and I hope we can thoughtfully accomplish this with these 36 new positions at DOB.

2. The Budget Allocation to PACE Must Be At Least Doubled to \$2.5 Million

Second, we see that there is \$1.27 million per year dedicated in the budget to continue the Property Assessed Clean Energy Financing Program (PACE) to help building owners make buildings more efficient. Yet this is a drop in the bucket for what is needed. Retrofit projects can be costly depending on the state and size of the building. \$1.27 million dollars per year will not fund many buildings' work.

Since our March testimony, we have not gained additional clarity on how NYC Accelerator has been utilizing its allocated \$36 million. We need transparency from MOCEJ/Accelerator to understand whether disadvantaged communities, or their community-based organizations, are being given adequate assistance.

We ask that the Council demand this budget to PACE be at least doubled to \$2.5 million yearly. Moreover, since this program is intended to allow owners to cover 100% of their upfront costs, we ask that the program be dedicated to supporting and funding efforts of qualifying buildings in disadvantaged communities, including community organizations that support these buildings and communities. This would align with NYS Climate Act's mandate that the needs of disadvantaged communities be prioritized.

In sum, we ask that the Council ensure in the final budget funds to elevate the importance of effectively implementing Local Law 97 so that decarbonization of New York City's buildings can truly be accomplished. We ask that at least 10 DOB positions of the new 36 be dedicated to outreach and assistance to truly assist owners achieve this goal, and that a \$2.5 million yearly budget be allocated to PACE and committed to disadvantaged communities' building decarbonization work.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if NYLPI or CW4A can be of assistance to this committee and the Council in the important work to make New York a true Green City. We would be pleased to provide any assistance necessary on any of the issues discussed here. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Caroline Chen
Senior Supervising Counsel for Environmental Justice
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
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212.244.4664

NYLPI has fought for more than 40 years to protect civil rights and achieve lived equality for communities in need. Led by community priorities, we pursue health, immigrant, disability, and environmental justice. NYLPI combines the power of law, organizing, and the private bar to make lasting change where it's needed most.



NYSFAH
Testimony before New York City Committee on Housing and Buildings
Hearing on FY 2025 Executive Budget
May 14, 2024

On behalf of the New York State Association for Affordable Housing (NYSFAH) I am pleased to offer testimony on the FY 2025 Executive Budget. We thank Mayor Adams, Speaker Adams, and Chair Sanchez for their commitment to the development and preservation of affordable housing and for recognizing that solving our housing crisis requires us all to work together.

NYSFAH is the largest affordable housing trade group in the country. Our membership of 400 includes for-profit and not-for-profit developers, lenders, investors, attorneys, architects, and others active in the financing, construction, and operation of affordable housing. They are the mission driven partners working to ease the affordable housing crisis and give New Yorkers a better quality of life.

Far too many New Yorkers are burdened with paying 30 to 50 percent of their incomes or more on housing, which often leads to neglecting other basic needs. The city's limited affordable and available housing inventory directly impacts the high rent costs families face. Addressing this shortage demands a multi-faceted solution that includes innovative policies and increased capital funding for the new construction and preservation of affordable housing.

The Mayor's City of Yes for Housing Opportunity initiative will change the trajectory and bring long overdue equity to the housing landscape. Calling on each community to increase its housing supply through much-needed zoning changes will ensure that New Yorkers have access to housing in every corner of the city – no matter their income level. We strongly encourage the City Council to vote favorably this fall to adopt the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity.

Equally important is increased funding for the city's housing capital programs to achieve the levels of affordable, safe, quality, and inclusive housing that our fellow New Yorkers so desperately need. These housing capital funds are needed if we are serious about solving this crisis and stabilizing our neighborhoods. The cost to build affordable housing is at a record high due to reduced rent collections, labor shortages, construction delays, cost overruns, rising interest rates and insurance costs. Even if funding levels are preserved at last year's level, affordable housing production will simply not keep pace – additional capital funding is needed to increase the housing supply.



At the core of NYSFAH’s mission is to address the affordable housing crisis through program, policy, and advocacy initiatives, and by working with our partners in government to ensure that together we meet the needs of communities. Additional capital funding is imperative for NYSFAH and other housing organizations to build and preserve housing for those who need it the most. Without this public funding commitment, we will have fewer affordable housing buildings and face a significant loss of momentum in the progress we have achieved thus far.

NYSFAH urges that the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development’s budget be increased by \$1 billion in FY 2025 to address our housing crisis and stabilize our neighborhoods. This commitment, combined with approval of the City of Yes, will give us the comprehensive package needed for historic affordable housing production.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer testimony. With your help, we can make New York City a model for a “little bit more housing in every neighborhood,” and we are grateful for your partnership to make that a reality.

Contact: Jolie Milstein, NYSFAH President & CEO, at jmilstein@nysafah.org or 646-473-1208.

**Testimony to New York City Council
Housing and Buildings Committee
Executive Budget FY25**

Public Hearing

May 14, 2024

Wendell Walters
Chief Housing Officer & Executive Vice President
Osborne Association



Thank you for the opportunity to testify to the Housing and Buildings committee. My name is Wendell Walters and I am Chief Housing Officer and Executive Vice President at Osborne Association. Osborne is one of the oldest and largest criminal justice organizations in the state. We have offices in Harlem, Brooklyn, Newburgh, White Plains, Troy, Buffalo, and our headquarters in the Bronx. We serve 10,000 participants each year and provide services from arrest to reentry. We also have programming in 41 state prisons and on Rikers Island. Through advocacy, direct service, and policy reform, Osborne works to create opportunities for people to heal, grow, and thrive.

Lack of stable housing or being unhoused is often part of the story preceding incarceration, and housing is often the most difficult reentry issue for the thousands of individuals who return to NYC from incarceration. In fact, reentry housing is by far the most common challenge cited by staff who work with our participants in a range of program areas.

As I've stated in prior testimony before this committee, we understand that affordable housing is a major problem for most New Yorkers. The demand for housing is significantly greater than the vacant and available inventory and we are all aware that the vacancy rate has plummeted to 1.4%, a level not seen in decades¹. The pace of construction to build new units cannot keep up with the demand to live in New York City, and as a result, the cost to rent an apartment continues to rise. In order to address this problem, we need to build hundreds of thousands of units and the city needs to make a greater commitment to affordable housing than is currently being proposed by the administration.

Entering this affordable housing crisis in our city are those who are returning to NYC after years of incarceration. Imagine what it must be like for them. Thousands of people return here from incarceration each year, but instead of "coming home," they go straight into the shelter system. According to the *State of the Homeless 2023*² report, every year since 2015, between 45 and 55 percent of those leaving state prison were discharged to the NYC shelter system. And with the migrant crisis already overwhelming the shelter system, it is even more difficult now.

¹ NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development, February 2024, [2023 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey - Selected Initial Findings](#)

² Coalition for the Homeless, June 2023, [State of the Homeless 2023. Compounding Crises. Failed Responses](#)

We cannot forget about these individuals - people returning from incarceration are mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, and people, too. Thankfully, significant efforts are being made by some to address the issue of housing instability for this community of people. The Fortune Society has been a leader in the development of reentry housing since building the Castle decades ago and Osborne has recently opened the **Fulton Community Reentry Center**. This transitional housing development has 140 beds for older men returning from prison, and offers an array of reentry services in the former state-owned Fulton Correctional Facility. We are grateful for operating support from DHS and past Council funding for Fulton. We are again **requesting Council support in the amount of \$250,000 for Fulton** to specifically support: 1) workforce development training for residents; 2) group sessions for residents and community members; 3) restorative justice community-building circles for residents and community members; and, 4) a therapeutic horticulture program.

Knowing that transitional housing is meant to help temporarily stabilize the lives of the previously incarcerated, there does come a time when they must be able to find permanent housing in a supportive environment conducive to their needs. With that in mind, Osborne partnered with an affordable housing developer that dedicated 52 units of supportive housing for the previously incarcerated with a target of those who are 50+ years of age and have served at least 7 years. Funding to support program operations came from the state's Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative ("ESSHI"). Located in Brownsville, Brooklyn, the **Marcus Garvey Supportive Housing Program** has brought relief to its residents in their quest to find a home and a place that recognizes their needs. This is especially so for those who were incarcerated for many years and have come back to an unfamiliar world. One resident of Marcus Garvey said, "I didn't come out into a new world; I came out into a new universe." Now in his 70s, he lives in an apartment that is his first home, and he treasures it. Just this week, we broke ground on the second phase of this project, which will provide an additional 88 apartments to people returning from incarceration.

We also have a mix of housing projects in our modest pipeline, but we have not sought participation in the City's Justice Involved Supportive Housing ("JISH") due to concerns of inadequate funding. Even with the expanded number of units from 120 to 500, there has not been an increase in the rates to keep up with service costs, staff wages, and higher service needs of the JISH population. Individuals exiting Rikers who are at risk of homelessness have some of the most complex physical and behavioral health needs. According to the Corporation

for Supportive Housing, to adequately fund the existing 120 units and bring the additional 380 units in operation, the JISH program needs \$6.4 million to align with service supportive rates with other high need populations..

While the other projects in our pipeline are all promising projects that will help many, we will not be able to fund and build our way out of the problem of the lack of reentry housing. That's why Osborne has developed a program that utilizes the most obvious source of housing - the homes of the families of the previously incarcerated. While still in a pilot stage, the **Kinship Reentry Housing Program** aims to address two intertwined challenges for people returning from incarceration: safe and stable housing, and reintegration with loved ones in the community.

Based on the "kinship foster care" model that allows relatives who are fostering children to receive the same support that unrelated foster parents receive, Kinship Reentry addresses the underlying challenges that may discourage families from offering people coming home from prison a safe place to land. The program offers families direct cash payments, counseling, and tailored support services they need to provide stability to returning loved ones. As part of that support, peer workers draw from their own experiences welcoming a loved one home to work with families to understand and address the challenges of prison and reintegration. In addition to diverting people from shelter beds that would cost the City considerably more, this solution reinforces what we already know: that people who return to supportive home environments have the best chance to rebuild their lives and thrive after incarceration. We look forward to expanding the program in NYC with additional funding, and believe that Kinship Reentry has the potential to have a statewide impact, providing housing and strengthened family relationships for the thousands returning home from prison at a fraction of the cost.

We are also fighting against housing discrimination for those with a conviction history. Much thanks goes out to the City Council for passing the Fair Chance for Housing Act, which should significantly reduce housing discrimination based on convictions. For far too long, landlords have routinely excluded those with a conviction history from a "fair chance" to rent an apartment in NYC: **79% of formerly incarcerated people and their families report being denied housing because of a conviction.**³

³ PrisonPolicy.org, September 2015, [Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families](#)

We can all appreciate the importance of stable housing; it is no less critical to the formerly incarcerated, and is a critical necessity for successful reentry.⁴ People who return from a period of incarceration are single-minded in their desire to find a place to call home upon release. Even the many who were released years ago and have transformed their lives with a good-paying job and strong references are still at risk of housing discrimination when they enter the housing market. By removing these discriminatory barriers, people are in a better position to support themselves and their families, lowering the chance of recidivism and making our neighborhoods safer.

After years of unwavering advocacy, including the dedicated efforts of the more than 100 organizations - including Osborne - that make up the Fair Chance for Housing Coalition, landlords are now limited in their use of criminal background checks. We are thankful for the leadership of the bill's chief sponsor, Council Member Keith Powers, and his staff for their patience and commitment to this cause. We could not have done it without him and Speaker Adams' willingness to bring it to the floor for a full Council vote. We in the Coalition are all extremely proud of this accomplishment.

We now enter the implementation phase in which we must put all of our effort towards ensuring the requirements under the law are fully enforced, creating fair opportunities for all. NYC has some of the strongest anti-discrimination and civil rights laws in the country, covering many different categories of people, including those who possess rental assistance vouchers. However, these requirements are only as strong as our ability to enforce them and to continually educate the public about them. The Fair Chance for Housing Coalition will continue to advocate on behalf of the law and do our part (to the extent that we can) to make sure landlords adhere to the new restrictions, but the burden truly falls to the City administration and the City Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) and they need the resources to carry out their mission. Of concern is the extensive number of circumstances that threaten proper and adequate implementation.

CCHR is underfunded compared to similar agencies in smaller cities.⁵

⁴ CAP20, April 2023, [Strengthening Access to Housing for People with Criminal Records is Key to Successful Reentry](#)

⁵ New York City Human Rights Law Working Group, March 2017, [Letter to Melissa Mark-Viverito, City Council Speaker](#)

- For example, the adopted budget for Seattle’s Office of Civil Rights in 2022 ⁶ was \$7,764,185, for about 39 staff. At that time the city had a population of 750,000.⁷
- In contrast, the CCHR budget in FY23 ⁸ was \$11.7 million – not even double that of Seattle, with 122 staff lines. The NYC population at that time was over 10 times greater, at over 8 million.⁹

CCHR is underfunded despite rising workloads.

- The Proposed FY25 Executive Budget allocates just \$13,652,383, which is woefully short of where the agency needs to be and is even slightly lower than its pre-pandemic FY19 budget of \$13.7 million.¹⁰
- CCHR had 160 staff lines in FY21.¹¹ But even that number has decreased and by summer 2023, the agency had 70% fewer staff attorneys than it did in 2017.¹²
- CCHR makes heroic efforts with inadequate resources and staff with an increasing workload. Preliminary FY24 MMR¹³ shows:
 - Complaints rose by 18% due to important changes in our laws.
 - While complaints rose, the number of officially filed complaints have sharply decreased due to understaffing.

CCHR must be fully resourced, across the entire agency.

- It is critical to fund the Law Enforcement Bureau (LEB) to hire more investigators and attorneys.
- CCHR as an agency needs to be adequately funded not just with additional investigators but also with administrative and operational support for the entire agency. If funding just goes to the LEB, the overall agency cannot properly function.
- Funding should go towards a dedicated Fair Chance for Housing unit and towards staff who can effectively respond to other forms of discrimination.

⁶ Seattle Office of Civil Rights, [Adopted Budget 2022](#)

⁷ United States Census Bureau, [Quick Facts. Seattle City, Washington 2022](#)

⁸ New York City Commission on Human Rights, [FY24 Executive Budget](#)

⁹ United States Census Bureau, [Quick Facts. New York City, New York 2023](#)

¹⁰ [Mayor’s Management Report 2019](#)

¹¹ City Council, [Report to Finance Division FY21](#)

¹² Gothamist, July 2023, [Plagues by Staff Shortages. NYC Agency Fails to Make Determinations in Most Discrimination Cases](#)

¹³ [Preliminary Mayor’s Management Report FY24](#)

- To ensure this law actually provides a fair chance, CCHR must also have resources to undertake comprehensive community engagement and education, as well as enforcement.

CCHR needs more funding than what is indicated in the Fair Chance for Housing Fiscal Impact Statement.

- CCHR's Fiscal Impact Statement¹⁴ for Fair Chance for Housing indicates a need for \$700,000 for FY25, and a total annual cost in FY26 of \$1.4 million for the hiring of ten new staff and implementation of a public education campaign. This is solely to enforce this new law, and does not reflect the overall agency need.
- With the enactment of Fair Chance, the City must increase CCHR's funding to not only return to previous staffing levels, but also to cover costs for educating the community and enforcing the new law.

CCHR must have the ability to educate the public and enforce other critical laws that directly impact people with convictions, and disproportionately impact people of color. This is a matter of racial justice due to the disproportionate numbers of black and brown people with convictions who overwhelmingly permeate the system. Monitoring the implementation of related and intersectional laws that affect people with convictions, such as the Fair Chance Act (that outlaws employment discrimination based on conviction history) and Source of Income Discrimination in housing, is also critical.

Osborne remains excited by the passage of the Fair Chance for Housing Act. This Act removes what was once an insurmountable barrier and creates a greater opportunity for housing for those with prior convictions. It will help thousands of people, despite the shortage of affordable housing in our City.¹⁵ However, what is equally important is what we do now to ensure its proper implementation. Providing the CCHR with the resources they need to meet this new obligation is critical and we support their budget funding request not only to enforce Fair Chance for Housing, but so they have the necessary resources to fulfill their many obligations under NYC civil rights laws.

Thank you.

¹⁴ City Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), [Fiscal Impact Statement](#)

¹⁵ NYC Housing Preservation and Development, February 2024, [New York City's Vacancy Rate Reaches Historic Low of 1.4%. Demanding Urgent Action & New Affordable Housing](#)



*fighting predatory equity and tenant harassment
organizing nyc tenants for the right to stay in our homes and communities*

Testimony Concerning:

The Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2025

Presented To:

The New York City Council's
Committee on Housing and Buildings

March 14, 2024

Presented By:

Jackie Del Valle

Stabilizing NYC Coordinator

TakeRoot Justice

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FY 2025 Initiative Funding Requests

- **\$4 million for Stabilizing NYC (SNYC)**
 - **\$3 million for Community Land Trust (CLT)**
 - **\$4.95 million for the Community Housing Preservation Strategies Initiative**
- + we ask the Council to advocate for capital funding for: **Homes Now, Homes for Generations (\$2.5 billion to fund Neighborhood Pillars and Open Doors)**

The cycle of predatory equity has ravaged our communities for too long. Lenders make large loans to ill intentioned landlords whose businesses are predicated on reducing services and raising rents, especially in low income communities of color. Recently [collapsed](#) Signature Bank was a main culprit of predatory equity, lending to NYC's worst landlords. The tens of thousands of tenants living in the rent stabilized housing stock suffered.

We have an opportunity of a generation. The FDIC, CPC, the NYC Comptroller, and others, have stepped in to hold the mortgages on thousands of distressed Signature-financed rent stabilized buildings where low income tenants call home. With the mortgage in the hands of willing partners, communities have the leverage we need to repair buildings and bring hundreds of them into tenant and community control. Tenants deserve to see material change, and with organizing, they can make it happen.

NYC City Council must invest in the organizing needed to fully meet the moment. With hundreds, possibly thousands, of rent stabilized buildings on the brink of default we cannot waste a single minute.

Status of FY23 and FY24 Awards:

- None of the FY24 Contracts for SNYC nor CLT have been awarded; FY23 has not been paid to most groups
- TakeRoot Justice is still waiting to register FY23 and FY24

The SNYC has been exploring asking for a larger increase (our current ask covers COLAs) so that we can best respond to the emerging crisis from the Signature Bank, which involves thousands of units. However, we feel conflicted— city funding is badly delayed, cumbersome, and does not cover interest costs and COLAs. There have been record level cost increases since the pandemic on top of years of “nonprofit” starvation where we only get funding for program staff, and our IT, HR, office, etc. shrinks instead of growing in these dynamic times.

In all the years our organization has received and managed discretionary funding awards, we have *never* experienced having these contracts registered in the same fiscal year as the award. It typically takes an additional 4-6 months *after* the fiscal year ends if not longer.

For this current fiscal year TakeRoot Justice was awarded a little over \$2 million in discretionary funding. We have not received any of this money and our HPD awards, which include that of the SNYC Initiative, have not even begun the contract registration process. We also have not registered our FY23 contracts.

As the council and my colleagues have testified today, nonprofits receiving discretionary funding are asked to perform vital services, meet deliverables, run programs, pay and manage staff yet we do not see the money until

long after the fiscal year has ended. This has been happening year after year- and these multi-year funding delays have compounded.

The nineteen other SNYC nonprofits are in this same sad, frustrating boat.

Stabilizing NYC is a \$3.70 million City Council Discretionary Initiative funding 20 groups, administered through HPD. For FY24, the Stabilizing NYC Coalition organizing members must complete a minimum of \$160,000 worth of tenant organizing deliverables. We must pay and support staff to do outreach, develop tenant associations and run building campaigns. We must pay and support staff to manage the burdensome administrative work of registering the contracts and reporting on deliverables. Yet most of the groups are still waiting on our FY23 money, which began on July 1, 2022.

Copy of what I read to the committee:

Good afternoon!

I'd like to thank the Housing and Buildings Committee for the opportunity to speak and the members who have given all their time today!

My name is Jackie Del Valle and I am the **Coordinator of Stabilizing NYC at TakeRoot Justice**. Stabilizing NYC is a coalition of grassroots organizations that combines tenant organizing with legal representation to combat tenant harassment and preserve affordable housing. **Our tenant associations form coalitions across landlord portfolios, who often have made highly speculative investments with the plan to push out tenants and flip the units out of rent stabilization. We have won rent strikes, prevented evictions corrected hazardous conditions, and empowered hundreds of tenants to lead the rent law fights in Albany for the past 10 years.**

Yes, 10 years!

And We are celebrating 10 years as a council funded initiative- and at our coalitions briefing breakfast- it's on Thursday May 23rd from 9:30-11 at 1 center street, Room 1005. Everyone here should've gotten an invite. I know it a busy day so please pop in for a bagel & coffee and to hear some powerful stories

We'll be celebrating our impact including meeting the organizers and leaders of STAND Shalom Tenants' Alliance Neighbor Defense - tenant of Daniel Ohebshalom who is currently serving jail time for failing to do repairs, tenant harassment and falsifying information.

And we will be discussing the challenges ahead. As Committee Chair Sanchez knows too well, Affordable housing and tenant rights are still under attack.

Recent data shows rents are at all time highs, vacancy rates at all time lows and the courts are overrun with evictions and the recent laws that passed in Albany favor landlords. Right now our coalition is sending out fact sheets and holding meetings on the new good cause law throughout our large network of tenant associations.

I pulled up my testimony from last year and saw I had mentioned the failure of signature bank and the organizing the Stabilizing groups were doing. Signature has been one of the more egregious multi-family lenders, having provided loans to SNYC targets Steve Croman, Raphael Toledano and [Ved Parkash](#).

A year later we are in a unique position with that portfolio. Thanks to the organizing & advocacy of SNYC groups, ANHD, UNHP and other cross portfolio tenant associations, the FDIC, and the new noteholders are

going to be holding owners to make repairs. This means hundreds of buildings will be stabilized- either by the landlord making the repairs, or if they walk away then these buildings can go to preservation purchasers – taking them out of the speculative cycle.

However, this will only happen if the tenants get organizing support. We are working with Homes for Now and the CLT initiative in asking for increased funding. Increasing funding for Stabilizing NYC will ensure that we can organize tenants to demand repairs and get community control of the buildings if the landlords continue to neglect them.

We Know HPD is still underfunded but the overall city budget is much stronger than predicted. This is the moment to increase investment in tenant organizing, CLTs and community-controlled housing which is the necessary alternative to the stop landlord speculation the SNYC groups are fighting.

Further background on our ask

For the past several years, the City Council generously awarded us \$3,700,000 to continue our work. We are requesting \$4 million to allow a 9% COLA increase to each of the 20 coalition members, helping to ensure that we can continue to do the same amount of work as business and living costs have risen sharply. With the additional increase of \$300,000 we can protect more homes, win more building improvements and strengthen community organizing across the City.

TakeRoot Justice provides legal, participatory research, and policy support to strengthen the work of grassroots and community-based groups in New York City to dismantle racial, economic, and social oppression. TakeRoot has a twenty one year history of partnering with grassroots and community-based organizations that build leadership and power within New York City's low-income communities, particularly communities of color, immigrant communities, and others traditionally excluded from policymaking.

TakeRoot Justice works side-by-side with community organizations, tenants & community leaders as they fight against gentrification to demand better living conditions, affordable rents, and a voice in the policies that shape their neighborhoods. This advocacy has resulted in millions of dollars' worth of repairs in low-income housing and has kept New Yorkers in their homes.

TakeRoot is a founder and coordinator of Stabilizing NYC, a coalition of grassroots organizations that combines tenant organizing with legal representation to combat tenant harassment and preserve affordable housing for the New Yorkers who need it most. The City Council has funded Stabilizing NYC every year since 2014.

We are requesting \$4 million to allow a modest COLA increase to each of the 20 coalition members, helping to ensure that we can continue to do the same amount of work as business and living costs have risen sharply. With the increase of \$300,000, we can protect more homes, win more building improvements and strengthen community organizing across the City.

Further, our work would not be possible without funding from the **Community Housing Preservation Strategies Initiative (CHSPI), and Community Land Trust (CLT)** and **we ask for your continued, and enhanced support for these initiatives.** My colleague Paula testifying today on the (CLT) initiative, whose work is critical to help build equity and limit speculation in our neighborhoods. With CHSPI, we fight alongside 45+ CBOS to prevent evictions, win repairs, empower tenants and protect homes. With CHSPI, we run a warmline on tenant rights for Council District (CD) 4; hold NYCHA accountable for repairs with resident leaders in CD5; and conduct monthly tenant clinics and workshops with Goddard Riverside SRO Project in CD6.

TakeRoot Justice and the 19 grassroots groups that are part of Stabilizing NYC **form and strengthen hundreds of tenant associations** to fight against predatory equity tactics. Despite the limits of the pandemic, SNYC

groups continued to organize tenant associations and represent tenants across the City. Many groups organized outreach programs aimed at those vulnerable to evictions, ensuring that tenants in the communities not only know their rights about housing court, evictions, and accessing rent arrears funds like ERAP and the Excluded Workers Fund, but also had hands-on assistance to access these and other resources.

As a result, the tenant associations we organize won rent strikes, held their landlords accountable for incorrect rent amounts and received the ERAP protections that they're entitled to in housing court. Through organizing, tenants are stopping evictions from moving forward in court and fighting to keep one another in their homes. Tenants connect their individual building experiences to the wider fight for housing justice. Through mass rallies and trips to Albany, tenant leaders connect with fellow members of the working class to fight for racial and economic justice and to build power for the tenant movement.

Despite all these efforts, tenants and communities still find themselves under attack. Safe, affordable housing continues to be threatened as we emerge from the pandemic. **Courts have been overwhelmed with eviction cases since the moratorium was lifted and tenants struggle to pay rent.** SNYC tenants grapple with predatory landlords who:

1. use a variety of harassing tactics to displace tenants to flip buildings out of regulatory status in order to maximize profits over people.
2. aggressively pursue eviction cases
3. refuse to make repairs, forcing tenants to live in dangerous & unhealthy conditions
4. warehousing vacant apartments, hoping to ultimately circumvent rent regulations

Our organizing across portfolios targets bad lenders as well. Predatory Equity would not exist without the highly speculative loans. Signature Bank, who is in the news today for unscrupulous banking practices, has been one of the more egregious multi-family lenders, having provided loans to Steve Croman, Raphael Toledano and [Ved Parkash](#). Landlords who faced allegations of tenant harassment from the Stabilizing NYC tenants.

Additionally, I am opposed to the cuts made to the housing and buildings budget by Mayor Adams!

I support #CareNotCuts and a #PeoplesBudget, and oppose the deep cuts and reductions proposed by Mayor Adams in the budget.

Housing justice is racial justice. Decades of government disinvestment in communities of color has been exacerbated by redlining, speculation, and overleveraging. Landlords continue to benefit from systemic racism by going unpunished, face little accountability, and are rewarded for their negligent behavior. Landlords wield power over communities through denial of services, neglect repairs, illegal construction, etc and are rarely held accountable by city and state agencies. Private equity companies and speculators are working every day to find “opportunities” in this crisis as they commodify housing and seek to displace our communities for their profit.

Organizing is essential to keep tenants safe and to address the unjust impacts on the communities we organize.

STABILIZING NYC MEMBERS:

Manhattan:	CAAAY: Organizing Asian Communities • Cooper Square Committee • Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES) • Housing Conservation Coordinators • Met Council on Housing
-------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Bronx:	Community Action for Safe Apartments (CASA) – New Settlement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mothers on the Move ● Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition ● Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association
Brooklyn:	Fifth Avenue Committee ● Flatbush Tenant Coalition ● IMPACCT Brooklyn ● Neighbors Helping Neighbors ● St. Nicks Alliance ● Urban Homesteading Assistance Board (UHAB)
Queens:	Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE) ● Catholic Migration Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chhaya CDC ● Woodside on the Move
Citywide:	TakeRoot Justice

Tenant organizing builds community, where people with varying levels of vulnerability or marginalization, including immigration status, support each other. Members organizing Tenants on the ground creates lasting networks that are crucial when our communities face crises - such as COVID-19 - and need access to resources and information beyond housing as well. **Funding will continue to allow SNYC to fight speculation & displacement, develop dynamic tenant leadership and neighborhood structures.**

www.stabilizingnyc.org

[@stabilizingnyc](https://twitter.com/stabilizingnyc)

TAKEROOT JUSTICE

Testimony to the NYC City Council

Committees on Finance and Housing & Buildings

Executive Budget Hearing for FY25

May 14, 2024

Good afternoon, Committee Chair Sanchez and members of the Committee, and thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Paula Segal, and I am speaking today as Staff Attorney in the Equitable Neighborhoods practice of TakeRoot Justice. TakeRoot works with grassroots groups, neighborhood organizations and community coalitions to help make sure that people of color, immigrants, and other low-income residents who have built our city are not pushed out in the name of “progress.”

My testimony today will be focused on the Community Land Trust (CLT) Initiative, support for public housing and the redesign of our municipal debt collection system to support housing and neighborhood stability. My colleague Colin Kent-Daggett is also providing testimony to this committee with a focus on the Stabilizing NYC initiative and TakeRoot’s work in support of tenants in privately-owned housing.

TakeRoot is a member of the New York City Community Land Initiative (NYCCLI), an alliance of grassroots, affordable housing, environmental and economic justice organizations working to promote community land trusts (CLTs) and neighborhood-led development.

TakeRoot has received City Council discretionary funding through the citywide Community Land Trust Initiative since it launched in FY20. We at TakeRoot support this growing CLT movement for affordable community-controlled housing, commercial and community spaces through legal services to CLT members of the initiative and other groups exploring the CLT model. We provide everything from education on governance and incorporation, to transactional legal services in support of negotiating ground leases and joint venture agreements.

We thank the City Council for its vital support and urge you to increase funding for the Citywide CLT Initiative to \$3 million in the FY2025 budget. With this enhancement, the CLT initiative will support 21 organizations—including new CLTs in Ravenswood and Edgemere, Queens, and Flatbush, Brooklyn—and expand citywide education, organizing, and technical assistance to meet the growing and urgent need for CLTs.

New York’s CLT movement is squarely focused on addressing our city’s deepening affordability crisis and advancing racial equity in housing and land use and making great strides: half of the initiative members now steward or are in the process of acquiring land for tenant and



community-controlled housing, community and commercial spaces, an incredible outcome from merely four years of investment.

By giving communities shared ownership and control over land, CLTs serve as a bulwark against real estate speculation and displacement. CLTs also maintain affordability over generations – protecting public investment that would otherwise be lost over time. The Cooper Square CLT on Manhattan’s Lower East Side, for example, has preserved hundreds of deeply affordable apartments and two dozen affordable storefronts for local small businesses since 1994, and expanded its portfolio by two rent stabilized buildings through the support of the Initiative. East Harlem El Barrio recently celebrated the rehabilitation of multifamily buildings it acquired from the city in 2020, creating permanently affordable mutual housing units. The East New York CLT closed on its first property, a 20-unit rental building, just last month. And the Mott Haven Port Morris Community Land Stewards won a bid to transform a long-abandoned city-owned property into a Health, Education and Arts (HEArts) Center serving their South Bronx community, while the Real Edgemere CLT is working on addressing resiliency in the face of climate vulnerability so that it can develop 119 lots that were similarly warehoused by the City. TakeRoot has supported each of these transformative efforts with legal services, and we stand by to continue to respond to the needs of a growing movement.

Capital Funding is Needed for CLTs to Successfully Reverse Decades of Disinvestment

In addition to supporting the CLT Initiative, we urge the City Council to ensure robust capital funding for the acquisition, rehabilitation and preservation of community controlled affordable housing. In particular, we urge the Council to demand **\$2 billion over four years for permanently affordable housing**, as outlined in the Homes Now Homes for Generations platform endorsed by dozens of community and affordable housing groups, as well as the NYC Progressive Caucus, NYC Comptroller Brad Lander NYC, and Public Advocate Jumaane Williams. This funding would help CLTs and other mission-driven nonprofits acquire and rehabilitate properties—particularly struggling rent stabilized buildings—and construct new housing, by revitalizing and expanding the city’s Neighborhood Pillars and Open Door programs. We look forward to working with you to secure this urgently needed funding and ensure that HPD prioritizes funding for CLTs and other nonprofits that create deeply and permanently affordable homes.

Invest in Public Housing

While building new permanently affordable housing and taking land off the speculative market is critical to addressing our affordable housing crisis, we cannot ignore the deteriorating conditions of our public housing stock. NYCHA residents continue to live in inhumane conditions. Residents often go without heat, hot water, or critical repairs that are essential for health and safety. We stand in solidarity with public housing residents and several groups across the city and call on the City to dedicate \$3.2 billion to NYCHA for as capital funding for critical repairs and infrastructure upgrades.

Fund Enforcement of Municipal Arrears that Stabilizes Communities

Finally, we want to remind you that the majority of this Council has committed not authorize the lien sale as a strategy to offload municipal arrears from the City’s property owners. As you know, the lien sale eliminates the City’s leverage over slumlord and other property owners



who do not pay their City bills while exposing BIPOC communities to speculation, deed theft and displacement. Having no enforcement mechanism at all, as the City has since the last sale in 2021, is not a solution.

In FY25, the Department of Finance must have additional resources to develop a program that incentivizes timely payments, supports owner occupants with access to exemptions and payment deferrals, allows owners who simply cannot pay to resolve their debt in a manner that increases the City's supply of affordable housing, and creates a pathway towards secure affordable housing for the thousands of tenants living in buildings where their landlords skirt their obligations to both them and the City.¹ TakeRoot and the rest of the Abolish the Tax Lien Sale Coalition look forward to being a resource as the Department and the Council put a new system in place this year. We thank Council Members Sanchez and Sandy Nurse for their leadership, and the staff of the Committee on Finance for their diligence.

Contact:

Višnja Vujica, Staff Attorney, vvujica@takerootjustice.org, (929) 506-0365

Paula Z. Segal, Senior Staff Attorney, psegal@takerootjustice.org, (646) 459-3067

¹ The Committee can find a detailed framework developed by the Abolish the Tax Lien Sale coalition, with insight from the housing preservation and development sector as well as many Council members here:

https://www.eastnewyorkcft.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Leaving-the-Speculators-in-the-Rear-View-Mirror_Feb-2-2023-2.pdf.





Dear Members of NYC Council Committees on Finance and Housing & Buildings,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the NYC budget for 2025.

The Health & Housing Consortium is a collaborative network of healthcare, housing, homeless and social services organizations, and government partners with the shared goal of improving health equity and housing stability. Our priority areas focus on (1) equipping frontline workers with the information and resources they need to support people with unmet health and housing needs, (2) fostering cross-sector relationships, (3) conducting research to better understand the needs of this population, and (4) advocating for policies that will improve the care and services people receive while addressing the impacts of structural racism on health and housing.

We are a strong advocate for promoting community safety and supporting New Yorkers who have significant behavioral health needs, who often cycle between shelters, street homelessness, emergency rooms and Rikers jail. In order to promote the City's health as well as meet the health and housing needs of the most at-risk New Yorkers, **we respectfully urge Mayor Adams to increase investments in the social services and supportive housing sectors and continue his commitment to Close Rikers jail.**

For Fiscal Year 2025, we respectfully request City Council ensures a budget that will meaningfully support vulnerable New Yorkers with behavioral health needs and ethically promote public safety by:

1. Allocating an additional \$6.4 million to ensure the operations of Justice Involved Supportive Housing (JISH) units and make JISH funding its own line-item in the DOHMH budget.

JISH is currently the only NYC-designated supportive housing program for people leaving Rikers Island, with 120 apartments currently available, despite a need of more than 2,500 units.

In 2019, the City promised to fund 500 JISH units, but current funding levels cannot adequately staff or provide critical services to the existing 120 units. Despite serving some of the most complex clients in supportive housing, JISH receives

approximately \$17,000 less per unit compared to similar supportive housing units across the city.

2. Restoring \$27.8M to the Office of Criminal Justice for Alternatives, supervised release and re-entry programs including:

- a. \$6.7M for alternatives to incarceration.
- b. \$13.1M for supervised release.
- c. \$8M for re-entry services.

Closing Rikers jail requires deep investment in alternatives to incarceration, and restoring this funding is critical for the safety and health of our city.

3. Allocating an additional \$14.9M to DOHMH to meet mental health needs, and fulfilling commitments in the Close Rikers plan, including:

- a. \$2.9M more to enable 5 of the 22 newly funded state Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams to operate as Forensic ACT (FACT) teams (\$575K per team).
- b. \$6M more to fully implement Local Law 118-2023, supporting the establishment of four new crisis respite centers.
- c. \$6M more to fully implement Local Law 119-2023, supporting the establishment of five new clubhouses.

4. Asking Mayor Adams' administration to join New York City Council in publicly committing to a comprehensive reallocation plan for NYC 15/15 that better serves the evolving needs of our community.

NYC 15/15 funding needs to be reallocated to focus on removing barriers to scattered site housing and preserving the current units we have. We thank City Council for agreeing publicly to a comprehensive NYC 15/15 reallocation plan during the 2025 budget negotiations and respectfully request Council leadership continue asking the Administration to join in this commitment.

5. Restoring PEG cuts to the B-HEARD program and placing trained peers on the B-HEARD response teams.

The Consortium is also a supporter of Correct Crisis Intervention Today (CCIT) – NYC, a coalition advocating for a peer-led, non police mental health crisis response system. The current city pilot program, B-HEARD, omits peers from response teams. We ask that Council adopt the best practices and features of the CCIT-NYC model by focusing on placing trained peers on the B-HEARD response teams as well as fully restore prior B-HEARD PEG cuts.

Finally, we must address the ongoing workforce crisis in the human services sector.

We thank the council and the administration for heeding the calls of the human services sector by agreeing to a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). The proposed three-year, three percent wage increase will help these essential workers support themselves and their families as they continue to provide critical services to some of New York's most vulnerable residents.

However, the City must ensure that the nonprofits that employ these workers are paid on time for the services they provide. Nonprofits are under significant financial strain due to the City's failure to reimburse them for contractually mandated services in a timely manner. Some providers are still awaiting payment for services provided in 2018, with millions of dollars in arrears.

As proposed, the Executive Budget's significant cuts to the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS) would exacerbate this already untenable situation. We urge the Council and Administration to restore funds to personnel and non-personnel services to avert further harm.

The Consortium envisions a world where all people live healthy, fulfilling lives and experience safety and holistic wellbeing in the housing and communities of their choice, with the support they need to thrive. We must guarantee the support of New Yorkers with behavioral health needs, invest in service delivery around the experience and dignity of the individual, and ensure the workers delivering these services are paid a living wage.

Sincerely,



Bonnie Mohan
Co-Founder and Executive Director
The Health & Housing Consortium, Inc.
(646) 844-2919
bmohan@hhconsortium.org
www.healthandhousingconsortium.org



Testimony of Urban Green Council, Natural Resources Defense Council, New York League of Conservation Voters, and Regional Plan Association before New York City Committee on Housing and Buildings and Committee on Finance

Re: NYC Council FY25 Executive Budget Hearing

May 14, 2024

Good afternoon Chair Sanchez, Chair Brannan and members of the Housing and Buildings Committee and Finance Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Mayor's [Fiscal Year 2025 \(FY25\) NYC Executive Budget](#). We are here today because Urban Green Council, Natural Resources Defense Council, New York League of Conservation Voters and Regional Plan Association would like to stress our strong support for the robust \$4 million and 36 staff positions allocated at DOB to oversee the implementation of Local Law 97 included in the Executive Budget.

Since 2021, we and a wide range of stakeholders have [advocated](#) for Local Law 97 to be prioritized in the City's budget because we all agree on one thing: robust funding for its implementation is essential to continued climate progress.

This FY25 Executive Budget demonstrates the commitment to Local Law 97 that is needed at this moment.

Local Law 97 is the centerpiece of New York City's climate strategy for buildings. Since the law's passing in 2019, the Department of Buildings Office of Building Energy and Emissions Performance has worked tirelessly with *very few* staff to successfully facilitate a large advisory board process. Since the Bureau of Sustainability was established almost two years ago, DOB has continued to advance compliance with the law, issuing two sets of major rulemaking to shape the law's technical details, and navigating numerous complex implementation questions.

The first year of LL97 compliance is underway, and the thousands of building owners now responsible for the carbon they emit need guidance and oversight from DOB. To ensure the law is as impactful as its intention, the Bureau of Sustainability's staff still has a big charge, including that they must:

- Finish conducting analyses required by the law;
- Complete the rulemaking process;
- Deliver outreach and education to owners; and
- Prepare for substantial review and enforcement efforts for the LL97 annual compliance reports from covered buildings that will start rolling in by May of next year.

The Mayor's new climate budgeting publication [found](#) that private building emissions limits through Local Law 97 are the most impactful action on climate change that the city is taking, and the Executive Budget supports the charge at hand by committing vigorous staff and resources to see that work through.

We strongly encourage the City Council to pass a final budget with this full allocation at DOB for Local Law 97 because maintaining our City's trajectory to lower carbon emissions depends on it. The investment in these critical efforts will be repaid many times over by driving successful compliance, a new green workforce and healthy, low-carbon, efficient buildings that are good for all New Yorkers.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment today. We are available to discuss how we can help.

CONTACT:

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Manager, Policy
Urban Green Council
dm@urbangreencouncil.org

Donna DeCostanzo
Northeast Regional Director, Climate and Energy
Natural Resources Defense Council
ddecostanzo@nrdc.org

Alia Soomro
Deputy Director, New York City Policy
New York League of Conservation Voters
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Dale Bryk
Senior Fellow for Energy and Environment
Regional Plan Association
dbryk@rpa.org

On January 19th, 2024, at 05:45 am, I woke up to the shrill sound of my wife screaming. She yelled, HELP. FIRE. I leapt out of bed, ran into our baby boy Binyomin's room into a room that was filled with what we thought was smoke. I immediately took baby boy Binyomin out of his crib, and ran outside holding my motionless son.

Binyomin was taken to Maimonidies hospital, with my wife riding to the hospital in a separate ambulance with our one month old newborn twin girls. When the doctors informed us that Binyomin passed away, we were in shock and were in a profound state of perpetual terror and paralyzing fear; how had Binyomin, a boy who was 20 days away from celebrating his one year birthday, passed away from a malfunctioned steam radiator in the comfort of his own bedroom?

It has been almost four months, and outside of grief support, we are rightfully outraged by how the landlord was able to pass his inspections, and yet failed to provide the most basic, most essential, most important right that every human being deserves: Physical Safety.

We would like the budget to include funds for annual steam radiator inspections. This should apply to ALL residential buildings that use steam radiators, but especially prewar buildings that are using aged steam radiators, and are often known to have corroded floors that can cause the steam radiators to malfunction.

1. Why are NYC Rent Stabilized tenants allowed to live in prewar buildings that are unsafe?
2. Why are boilers inspected annually by the DOB, but not the steam radiators?
3. Why are there no mandatory safety inspections for steam radiators?
4. Why are steam radiators not equipped with a single safety feature that shuts off if a malfunction occurs?
5. Why does the death of a baby boy at the hands of a negligent landlord result in nothing more than a personal injury lawsuit?
6. Why haven't the deaths of 3 babies, all of whom were NYC tenants, resulted in **ANY** legislative change?
7. Why did 3 children so far die from a steam radiator and the only response is " freak accident?"

8. Why isn't there accountability beyond a civil lawsuit to address negligence and greed that led to the death of a child in an NYC Rent Stabilized Apartment?

With mandatory inspections, steam radiators can be properly inspected, and lives can be saved. New Yorker's deserve this. Every human being deserves this. Children deserve this. Our NYC tenants deserve this. It does not get any more serious than death, and it does not get any more important than human life. Steam radiators must be inspected to show that New York City cares about the physical safety of its residents, and that living in rent stabilized apartments should never come at the cost of losing a human life. Physical safety is not a privilege; it is a right. Mandatory inspections now.

Sincerely,

Alexander Kuravsky

alexkuravsky@gmail.com

Bessie Kimelfeld-Kuravsky

bessiekimelfeld@gmail.com

Council General Testimony,

Dear Speaker, Council Finance Chair, Committee Chair & staff,

I am submitting written testimony for public record. I support a #PeoplesBudget, and I believe all New Yorkers deserve access to housing and #CareNotCuts, including our immigrant neighbors.

I am asking the City to invest in Homes Now and for Generations, which means quadrupling the City's investment in affordable homes for New Yorkers and investing \$2.5B/5 years into HPD to preserve/build affordable community-controlled housing with union jobs.

Additionally, I urge the Council to ensure that housing agencies like the departments of housing preservation and development, buildings, and social services are fully staffed so that our city can meet the needs of New Yorkers during this unprecedented housing crisis. The Mayor's destructive budget policies and hiring freezes are impacting service delivery now, as the last few years of Performance and Management Reports have shown.

I hope that the Mayor and Council can accomplish a people's budget through negotiations. BUT if not, we need Council to use its full budget powers of amending the budget and passing terms and conditions to make sure these key funding priorities are in any budget that passes. Thank you.

Ashley Tjhung

ashley.tjhung@gmail.com

Brooklyn, New York 11201

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Bright Limm

bdlimm@gmail.com

Jamaica, New York 11435

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Caitlyn Passaretti
cdpassaretti@gmail.com

NYC, New York 10031

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Heidi Vanderlee

heidivanderlee@gmail.com

New York, New York 11222

Steam radiators need regular inspection in NYC buildings .

Steam radiator inspections are a must for all New York tenants, but especially apartments that have the elderly, children, and babies. The most vulnerable populations deserve the highest level of protection. If we have boiler inspections, we must absolutely protect our tenants by having annual steam radiator inspections.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: James O'Do

Address: Commissioner

I represent: DOB

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Laura Paga

Address: DOB

I represent: Dep Coms, Sustainability

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gina Ugarte

Address: DOB

I represent: Dep Coms, Budget

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Yegor SHAMASH

Address: ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER / CHIEF STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

I represent: DOB

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Guillermo Patino

Address: TECHNICAL COMMISSIONER, POLICY & LEGAL AFFAIRS

I represent: DOB

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kimberly Deersa

Address: _____

I represent: NYC HPD

Address: 100 Gold Street

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Commissioner Adolfo Carrion

Address: _____

I represent: HPD

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Deputy Commissioner Ahmed Tigani

Address: _____

I represent: HPD

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Deputy Commissioner Gerald Caphart

Address: _____

I represent: HRD

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ANN MARI SANTIAGO

Address: 100 Gold St.

I represent: HPD

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Jackie Del Valle (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: Stabilizing NYC - Fake Port Justice

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 5/14/24

Name: Emily Goldstein (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: ANHLD

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Brendan Cheney (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: New York Housing Conference

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/14/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Allison Nickerson

Address: _____

I represent: Live On NY

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/14/2024

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: _____

Address: Paul Rivers

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Budget Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/14/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Caroline Chen, NY Lawyers for the Public Interest

Address: 151 W 30th St 11th floor

I represent: _____

Address: _____



Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Joelanny Negron

Address: _____ BK NY 11207

I represent: East New York C.T.

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/14/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: William Spisak

Address: _____

I represent: New Economy Project

Address: 121 W 27th Street

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: ALBERT SCOTT (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: EAST NEW YORK C.T.

Address: FULTON ST. BLVD. 11207

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/14/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ben Dorman

Address: _____

I represent: Climate Jobs New York

Address: 350 W 31st Street, New York, NY 10001

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ROLANDO GUZMAN

Address: 306 UNION AVE, BROOKLYN NY

I represent: ST NICKS ACADEMY SNYC

Address: 306 UNION AVE

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 5/14/2024

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Hanlon

Address: _____

I represent: Local 3 IBEW

Address: Harry Van Arsdale Jr Ave Flushing NY

11365

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. CLT initiative Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Paula Segal

Address: _____

I represent: TakeRoot Justice (NYCCLI)

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kevin Wolfe (center for NYC Neighborhoods)

Address: _____

I represent: center for NYC Neighborhoods

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 5/14/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Onsé

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms