

1 COMMITTEE ON AGING JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON  
HOUSING AND BUILDINGS 1

2 CITY COUNCIL  
3 CITY OF NEW YORK

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5 TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

6 Of the

7 COMMITTEE ON AGING JOINTLY WITH THE  
8 COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

9 ----- X

10 December 12, 2019  
11 Start: 10:22 a.m.  
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13 HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

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15 Chairperson for Committee on Aging

16 Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.,  
17 Chairperson for Committee on  
18 Housing and Buildings

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20 Diana Ayala  
21 Chaim M. Deutsch  
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23 Mathieu Eugene  
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3 Kim Darga  
4 Associate Commissioner for Preservation at the  
New York City Department of Housing Preservation  
5 and Development

6 Emily Lehman  
7 Assistant Commissioner for Special Needs Housing  
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8 Jocelyn Groden  
9 Associate Commissioner for the Bureau of Social  
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11 Zoey Chenitz  
12 Senior Policy Counsel at the New York City  
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14 Alexander Riley  
15 Legal Aid Society

16 Katelyn Andrews  
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17 Peter Kempner  
18 Legal Director at Volunteers of Legal Service

19 Suhali Mendez  
20 Advocate in the Disability Justice Program at New  
York Lawyers for the Public Interest, otherwise  
21 known as NYLPI

22 Stacy Bliagos  
23 Executive Director of HANAC

24

25

2 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: [GAVEL] Good morning. Wow,  
3 come on, aren't you guys excited about this hearing?  
4 I am. I'm Council Member Margaret Chin; Chair of the  
5 Committee on Aging and I thank you all for joining us  
6 today for this joint oversight hearing with the  
7 Committee on Housing and Buildings on Senior  
8 Affordable Housing.

9 I also want to thank Chair Robert Cornegy who is  
10 on his way for Co-Chairing this hearing today.  
11 There's no question that our city's older population  
12 is increasing rapidly in New York City. The  
13 population of people 65 and older has increased from  
14 947,000 in 2005 to 1.13 million in 2015 alone.  
15 Today, there are nearly 1.6 million adults age 60 and  
16 over in our city. Despite this boom, New York's  
17 affordable senior housing stock has only begun to  
18 catch up to meet demand.

19 Although the city is working to increase senior  
20 affordable housing waiting lists for affordable  
21 housing are up to seven to ten years long and older  
22 adults have to wait until they turn 62 to even become  
23 eligible.

24 The numbers speaks for themselves. Live on New  
25 York reported that in 2017, in two Manhattan

1 community districts in the upper west side, there  
2 were nearly 20,000 seniors waiting for 45 affordable  
3 housing openings. Many seniors are already  
4 struggling to make ends meet relying on retirement  
5 funds or Medicaid funding to cover living, medical  
6 and housing expenses.  
7

8 Our seniors should not face even more barriers to  
9 afford a roof over their head. While DFTA,  
10 Department for the Aging, does not lead the  
11 construction of senior housing. It does provide  
12 programs to help seniors afford their housing needs.  
13 One example is this Home Sharing program. Operated  
14 through a partnership with the New York foundation  
15 for senior citizens which pairs seniors with other  
16 older adults and younger adults, matching seniors  
17 with roommates help with the rent and combat social  
18 isolation.

19 Additionally, in partnership with the civil court  
20 of the City of New York, DFTA operates the assigned  
21 council project for individuals age 60 and older.  
22 This program provides eligible older adults with a  
23 social worker and lawyers who are system with their  
24 housing court cases and unlawful evictions.  
25

2 In addition to testimony from DFTA and HPD, the  
3 committee will be hearing Intro. 6 sponsored by  
4 Council Member Barron which require the city to give  
5 senior tenants information about legal assistance  
6 before eviction and Intro. 225, sponsored by Council  
7 Member Brannan which requires the installation of  
8 protective devices such as grab bars and threats in  
9 the bathrooms that help enhance mobility, safety and  
10 the quality of life for seniors and persons with  
11 disabilities in multiple dwellings.

12 Our question today is what is the city  
13 proactively doing to meet the challenge before us and  
14 what can we do better? We look forward to learning  
15 more about DFTA's program that supports seniors with  
16 securing and maintaining affordable housing and HPD  
17 program that expands senior affordable housing and  
18 support seniors ability to age in place.

19 In order to strengthen our efforts to help every  
20 New Yorker age in in the communities they help to  
21 build. It is imperative that this work is tackled  
22 together. Interagency coordination is a critical  
23 piece of this puzzle.

24 I'd like to thank the committee staff for their  
25 help in putting together this hearing, our Counsel

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2 Nuzhat Chowdhury, Policy Analyst Kalima Johnson,  
3 Finance Analyst Daniel Droop and Finance Unit Head  
4 Dohini Sompura and also my Deputy Chief of Staff  
5 Marian Guerra. And I'd like to thank the members of  
6 the Committees who have joined us today. We have  
7 Council Member Rose, Council Member Grodenchik,  
8 Council Member Cabrera, Council Member Perkins,  
9 Council Member Rosenthal and Council Member Louis.  
10 Did I get it right everybody?

11 So, now we are going to have our Council swear in the  
12 Mayor's panel.

13 COUNCIL CLERK: So, please raise your right hand.  
14 Sorry, right hand, thank you. Do you affirm to tell  
15 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth  
16 in your testimony before this committee and to  
17 respond honestly to Council Member questions.

18 PANEL: I do, yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: You may begin.

20 KIM DARGA: Good morning Chair Chin, Chair  
21 Cornegy and Members of the Committees. My name is  
22 Kim Darga; Associate Commissioner for Preservation at  
23 the New York City Department of Housing Preservation  
24 and Development.

2 I am joined by my colleague Emily Lehman;  
3 Assistant Commissioner for Special Needs Housing at  
4 HPD to discuss HPD's work supporting seniors and new  
5 construction.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to highlight the  
7 multi-faceted efforts HPD has implemented in addition  
8 to the many services provided by our sister agencies  
9 to support New York senior citizens by building and  
10 preserving historic numbers of affordable housing,  
11 protecting tenants from harassment and using  
12 innovative tools to expand our efforts to those who  
13 need it the most.

14 It is no secret that the city is facing a housing  
15 crisis. Since Mayor de Blasio launched the Housing  
16 New York plan in 2014, New York City has accelerated  
17 the construction and preservation of affordable  
18 housing to levels not seen in 30 years.

19 HPD is now positioned to speed up and expand the  
20 plan to build or preserve an additional 100,000 units  
21 for a total of 300,000 home by 2026. As a result,  
22 five years into the plan, we have established a new  
23 baseline for how affordable housing can and should be  
24 built in New York City.

2 Already, this administration has financed over  
3 135,000 affordable apartments through fiscal year  
4 2019, 57,000 of which serve very low income  
5 individuals making less than roughly \$37,000 a year  
6 or \$48,000 for a family of three.

7 This housing is available to all New Yorkers  
8 including, but not limited to the seniors that built  
9 the city and would like to remain here.

10 As part of Housing New York, the administration  
11 committed to create a preserve 15,000 senior homes  
12 and apartments. Through the new expanded Housing New  
13 York 2.0, we are now committed to serve a total of  
14 30,000 senior households residing in affordable  
15 apartments.

16 To meet this additional commitment, we launched  
17 Seniors First in October 2017, a three prong strategy  
18 to better serve the housing needs of older New  
19 Yorkers on fixed incomes. First, make more homes  
20 accessible to seniors and people with disabilities.  
21 Second, build new 100 percent affordable senior  
22 developments on underserved NYCHA land and other  
23 public and private sites. And third, preserve  
24 existing senior developments.



2       These initiatives will increase the number of  
3 affordable senior housing units within the city as  
4 well as improve the ability of seniors who live in  
5 affordable housing today to age comfortably and  
6 safely in their current homes.

7       Simple changes can make staying in one's home a  
8 viable, safer option and create a more accessible  
9 city for all New Yorkers, making it possible for more  
10 seniors to stay in the homes they live in is an  
11 important anti-displacement tool as we work towards  
12 protecting our more vulnerable residents.

13       HPD is using a wide range of measures from the  
14 physical to the financial, to ensure that seniors can  
15 stay in their homes and communities as they age and  
16 to create inclusive neighborhoods for seniors and  
17 people with disabilities.

18       HPD funded rehabilitation projects are now  
19 required to include accessibility improvements,  
20 identified through an enhanced building physical  
21 needs assessment. This holistic review not only  
22 identifies basic building system needs, like a roof  
23 or heating system but also building-wide improvements  
24 to help seniors age safely in their homes.

1  
2 In exchange for HPD funds, we require regulatory  
3 protections or a longer regulatory term for existing  
4 protections to ensure that rents remain affordable  
5 for existing residents.

6 In addition to this building-wide assessment,  
7 HPD's Aging in Place initiative offers existing  
8 senior residents modifications within their homes to  
9 help these residents live more comfortably and reduce  
10 the risk of falls.

11 Our New Home Fix program assists low and moderate  
12 income homeowners in one to four family properties,  
13 fund home repairs by providing favorable financing  
14 for low income and senior households.

15 Further, HPD continues to work with our partners  
16 in the city to increase enrollment in SCRIE, which  
17 freezes the rent for seniors living in rent regulated  
18 apartments. This helps ensure that more of our  
19 seniors living in rent regulated apartments can stay  
20 in their homes and the city they love without fear of  
21 being displaced by escalating rents.

22 Finally, the de Blasio Administration has made  
23 protecting tenants from harassment a core part of its  
24 strategy to confront the affordable housing crisis.  
25 This administration has worked in partnership with

2 the City Council and various branches of government  
3 to tackle the issue with a comprehensive multipronged  
4 approach.

5 As a city, we are focused on keeping people in  
6 their homes and neighborhoods by successfully  
7 advocating with many members of the council to close  
8 loopholes in rent regulation laws at the state level,  
9 creating and preserving historic numbers of  
10 affordable housing, empowering tenants with more  
11 resources, aggressively enforcing city codes and  
12 utilizing all of our partnerships to create data  
13 driven innovative tools targeted at stopping  
14 harassment before it starts.

15 We therefore understand the intent of the bills  
16 being heard today but want to continue conversations  
17 with the council to make sure we are getting at the  
18 same goals to protect seniors in a targeted and  
19 appropriate manner.

20 EMILY LEHMAN: Good morning, my name is Emily  
21 Lehman and I would like to speak to the additional  
22 efforts HPD is undertaking to bring new affordable  
23 housing units to a variety of populations including  
24 seniors.

2 Over the course of the plan, HPD has financed  
3 nearly 44,000 new apartments for all New Yorkers,  
4 including seniors. HPD is explicitly committed to  
5 supporting the city's seniors in our affordable  
6 housing portfolio. Since the start of the HNY plan  
7 in 2014, HPD has financed over 8,500 affordable  
8 senior apartments through over a dozen different  
9 housing programs. This work provides critical relief  
10 to a population of city residents who are projected  
11 to increase over the next two decades.

12 One important tool that we use to add to our  
13 affordable senior housing stock, is our senior  
14 affordable rental apartments SARA program. SARA  
15 provides gap financing in the form of low interest  
16 loans to support the construction and renovation of  
17 affordable housing for seniors 62 and older with low  
18 incomes. Through September 2019, we have funded  
19 approximately 3,000 new affordable senior units  
20 through this program.

21 Our new construction term sheets for HPD  
22 financial assistance also encourage intergenerational  
23 housing and we are now seeing projects benefit as a  
24 result of the zoning for quality and affordability  
25 ZQA Amendment. Which makes it easier and less

2 expensive to create quality affordable senior  
3 housing.

4 The passage of zoning for quality and  
5 affordability by the council, a key tool to modernize  
6 zoning rules, also enabled the creation of the  
7 privately financed affordable senior housing program,  
8 which incentivizes the creation of new affordable  
9 senior units.

10 And in addition to providing subsidy through SARA  
11 and other HPD financing programs, the city has also  
12 committed significant numbers of public sites for the  
13 development of new affordable senior housing.

14 None of this work would be possible without the  
15 strong support provided to senior housing needs by  
16 our many partners and allies. HPD is excited to  
17 build on previous successful collaborations with the  
18 Department for the Aging through our expanded focus  
19 on seniors and we are grateful for the information  
20 and assistance they have offered on our new tool to  
21 help seniors in our portfolio age in place.

22 HPD was part of the Advisory Committee for DFTA's  
23 Aging in Place guide for building owners and believes  
24 it is a tremendous resource for private landlords who  
25 are interested in making changes to their buildings

1  
2 to enable their residents to continue to live in  
3 their homes as they age and their needs shift.

4 It is one of the Aging in Place guides that we  
5 often reference to develop our seniors first  
6 initiative. We also work with them closely when  
7 senior centers are in HPD projects and in a variety  
8 of other ways to support this important population.

9 The City Council has also played an invaluable  
10 role in improving access for senior housing. I  
11 especially want to thank Chair Chin as well as Chair  
12 Cornegy and Speaker Johnson for their strong  
13 leadership in this critical area to serve some of the  
14 city's residents in the most need.

15 We are encouraged by the progress we have been  
16 able to achieve over the last six years through  
17 Housing New York and are excited to see the results  
18 of our strong commitments going forward.

19 Thank you for your time and I am happy to answer  
20 any questions.

21 JOCELYN GRODEN: Good morning Committee Chairs  
22 Chin and Cornegy and members of the Aging, Housing  
23 and Building Committees. I'm Jocelyn Groden;  
24 Associate Commissioner for the Bureau of Social  
25

2 Services and Direct Services at the New York City  
3 Department for the Aging.

4 I am joined today by my colleagues from the New  
5 York City Commission on Human Rights and the New York  
6 City Department of Housing Preservation and  
7 Development.

8 I would like to thank you for this important  
9 opportunity to discuss DFTA and the city's commitment  
10 to ensuring the dignity and quality of life of  
11 diverse older New Yorkers throughout the Bureaus. As  
12 older adults continue to represent the fastest  
13 growing segment of New York City's population, with  
14 nearly 1.73 million people age 60 and older it is  
15 estimated that by 2030 with the booming of the older  
16 population one and five New Yorkers will be age 60  
17 and older. It is for this very reason that it is  
18 critical that we provide older New Yorkers with the  
19 proper tools and resources they need to thrive both  
20 financially and socially and allow them to stay  
21 safely in their homes.

22 DFTA's priority is to provide the services and  
23 resources older adults need to remain in their home.  
24 This includes a variety of in home services based on  
25 individualized need that include things like case

1 management, home care, home delivered meals, friendly  
2 visiting, social supports. And community services  
3 like, geriatric mental health funded through Thrive  
4 New York City, senior centers, senior employment,  
5 care giver support programs, elder abuse and crime  
6 victim intervention services and volunteer programs  
7 that work to meet the individual needs of older  
8 adults.  
9

10 Some of the programs I would like to highlight as  
11 part of today's important discussion include  
12 naturally occurring retirement communities, home  
13 sharing, which was brought up earlier and the  
14 assigned Council project and minor home repair.

15 I'll start with NORCs, we are very proud of the  
16 Naturally Occurring Retirement Community, often  
17 referred as NORCs. The term refers to a residential  
18 location that is not age restricted or built  
19 specifically for older adults, but that over time,  
20 has a significant concentration of older residents.  
21 Think of it as a perfect mix of aging in place while  
22 giving older adults everything they need in an  
23 intergenerational setting to age well. The goal of  
24 the NORC is to provide services that meet the self-  
25 identified need of older adults of a particular



2 community, so they remain independent and age in  
3 place.

4 A NORC emerges from the community empowerment and  
5 activism between older residents, aging service  
6 providers and community stakeholders. NORCs push in  
7 services that people can remain in place. Many NORCs  
8 provide case assistance, health care management,  
9 health promotion, recreation and other needed  
10 services such as transportation, escort, telephone  
11 reassurance, friendly visiting and sometimes things  
12 like late housekeeping. NORCs promote community  
13 building, help combat social isolation and promote  
14 independence.

15 The New York Foundation for Senior Citizens Home  
16 Sharing program seeks to match persons for whom  
17 shared living arrangements would benefit financially  
18 and help to promote their wellbeing and potentially  
19 reduce things like social isolation.

20 The program is open to adults age 18 and older  
21 and only one participant in the match needs to be age  
22 60 and older. Host, own or rent apartments or houses  
23 in one of New York City's five boroughs and must be  
24 open to sharing part of their dwelling with at least  
25 one other compatible person.

2 Through the proprietary quick match system and a  
3 staff of professional licensed social workers, the  
4 New York Foundation for Senior Citizens determines  
5 the most compatible share mates by evaluating 31  
6 unique lifestyle objectives. In recent months, the  
7 Department for the Aging, has taken significant steps  
8 to redevelop the home sharing program focusing on  
9 more robust communication, outreach and partnership  
10 strategies.

11 Understanding that this is a program that  
12 requires a targeted approach, home sharing offers  
13 affordable housing and provides both social and  
14 financial benefits.

15 The Assigned Council Project is a joint offer  
16 between DFTA and the Office of Civil Justice of the  
17 Human Resource Administration, Department of Social  
18 Services. Our program provides New Yorkers who are  
19 age 60 and older who are faced with eviction  
20 proceedings, legal and social service support,  
21 including legal representation that allows them to  
22 stay in their homes.

23 Community based legal service providers  
24 contracted by OCJ provide full legal representation  
25 to ACP clients in coordination with social workers

2 that are provided by the Department for the Aging's  
3 assigned Council Project. The overall goal is to  
4 prevent the eviction of the older adult, but beyond  
5 that, ACP has an opportunity and works with older  
6 adults to meet their holistic social service needs.

7 Key services provided by DFTA ACP are the  
8 preparation at submission of SCRIE, initial and  
9 appeal applications, as well as rental assistant  
10 grant loan applications to cover rent arrears.  
11 Utilizing internal resources along with the resources  
12 of our critical partner organizations, our direct  
13 service staff are able to maximize engagement,  
14 assessment, data collection, advocacy, service  
15 referrals and provisions of concrete services as a  
16 means to stop a downward spiral. Referrals to senior  
17 centers, case management agencies and numerous  
18 community based organizations also help address the  
19 specific needs of the older adult.

20 DFTA's housing specialists advise older adults on  
21 financial matters and entitlements along with their  
22 rights as tenants. Their work includes referrals to  
23 rent assistance programs as well as shared living  
24 arrangements, Section 202 Housing, Market rate senior  
25

2 residences with services and affordable housing  
3 services designed for the general public.

4 DFTA's Minor Home Repair program is small but  
5 it's an essential component in DFTA's broad portfolio  
6 aimed at assisting older adults. Through this  
7 program, senior owners of private homes, condo's, co-  
8 ops and even renters with consent and after multiple  
9 attempts sometimes to enlist their landlord are  
10 benefiting from free home maintenance and repair  
11 services.

12 In conclusion, each of New Yorkers older adults  
13 deserves and requires our resources and support, so  
14 they can live and thrive in the communities they  
15 built, raised their families on and called home for  
16 much of their lives, sometimes all of their lives.

17 DFTA supports the intent of these bills and  
18 welcomes the opportunity for further discussion and  
19 collaboration to ensure that all aspects of the bills  
20 have been explored. We shall continue to build and  
21 strengthen our partnerships with our sister city  
22 agencies always bringing the aging lens into every  
23 conversation.

24 As the advocates for older adult, we are mindful  
25 that our priority is to keep older adults in their

1 home, independent, healthy, happy. The best way for  
2 us to do this is to ensure that older adults are  
3 always represented and that we continually strengthen  
4 the relationships that we have built with our sister  
5 agencies, nonprofits, the Council. It is imperative  
6 that we continue to build on the successes that we've  
7 seen and set proper precedent for how we want older  
8 New Yorkers to be treated.

9  
10 The Council has been a continuous ally in  
11 ensuring that older adults have dignified quality of  
12 life and we look forward to working with you in the  
13 future.

14 Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

15 ZOEY CHENITZ: Good morning Committee Chairs Chin  
16 and Cornegy and Members of the Aging and Housing and  
17 Buildings Committees. I'm Zoey Chenitz; Senior  
18 Policy Counsel at the New York City Commission on  
19 Human Rights. Thank you for convening today's  
20 hearing.

21 Before turning to Intro.'s 225 and 6, I'll  
22 highlight some of the commissions recent work. The  
23 Commission is the local Civil Rights Enforcement  
24 Agency that enforces the New York City Human Rights  
25 Law. One of the broadest and most protective anti-

2 discrimination and anti-harassment laws in the  
3 country, now totaling 26 protected categories across  
4 nearly all aspects of city living. Housing,  
5 employment and public accommodations in addition to  
6 discriminatory harassment and bias based profiling by  
7 law enforcement.

8 By statute, the commission has two main  
9 functions. First, the commissions Law Enforcement  
10 Bureau enforces the City Human Rights Law by  
11 investigating complaints of discrimination from the  
12 public, initiating its own investigations on behalf  
13 of the city and utilizing it's in house testing  
14 program to identify entities breaking the law.

15 Second, through the Community Relations Bureau,  
16 which is comprised of community service centers in  
17 each of the city's five boroughs, the commission  
18 provides free workshops on individuals rights and  
19 businesses. Employers and housing providers  
20 obligations under the City Human Rights Law and  
21 creates engaging programming on human rights and  
22 civil rights related issues.

23 Over the past four in a half years, since  
24 Commissioner Carmelyn Malalis took the helm of the  
25 agency, the commission has implemented 28 changes to

2 the City Human Rights Law, including seven new  
3 substantive areas of protection and other statutory  
4 expansions of the agencies mandate and scope. At the  
5 same time, the commission is increasingly becoming  
6 the preferred venue for victims of discrimination.

7 In fiscal year 2019, the commission fielded  
8 nearly 10,000 inquiries from members of the public  
9 via calls, emails, and in person intakes, the highest  
10 in the commissions history resulting in 785  
11 complaints filed and 396 pre-complaint interventions.

12 Also, in fiscal year 2019, the agency obtained  
13 over \$5.3 million in damages for complainants and  
14 nearly \$800,000 in civil penalties for a combined  
15 total of over \$6 million. The highest in the  
16 commissions history and over five times the amount of  
17 damages in penalties recovered in 2014, the year  
18 prior to the start of Commissioner Malalis's tenure.

19 In fiscal years 2018 and 2019, the Commission  
20 awarded approximately \$1.2 million in damages to  
21 complainants and over \$300,000 in civil penalties in  
22 housing cases related to disability.

23 Disability rights and access is one of the  
24 commissions core priorities. In fact, a program  
25 within the commissions Law Enforcement Bureau called

1 Project Equal Access, works directly with landlords  
2 and other housing providers to ensure that residents  
3 with disabilities can obtain accommodations in their  
4 homes and buildings without ever having to file a  
5 complaint or go through an investigation and  
6 litigation.  
7

8 Of course, if landlords are unwilling to make  
9 reasonable accommodations, a complaint is filed with  
10 the Commissions Law Enforcement Bureau and the case  
11 proceeds through investigation and possibly  
12 litigation.

13 The commissions project Equal Access was able to  
14 achieve accommodations in 139 matters in fiscal year  
15 2019. Up significantly from the prior year. With  
16 respect to filed complaints, claims on the basis of  
17 disability consistently represent one of the most  
18 common types of complaints filed at the agency across  
19 all areas of jurisdiction.

20 The City Human Rights Law guarantees the right to  
21 accommodations for people with disabilities unless  
22 providing such an accommodation would pose an undo  
23 hardship. Disability is broadly defined under our  
24 law to include any physical, medical, mental or  
25 psychological impairment as set forth in the law.



1  
2       This broad definition reaches most, if not all,  
3 of the disabilities or conditions that people may  
4 develop as they age. Meaning that older New Yorkers  
5 who require reasonable accommodations to fully and  
6 safely enjoy the use of their homes, have a right to  
7 request them from their housing providers under the  
8 disability protections of the City Human Rights Law.  
9 The cost of reasonable accommodations is born by the  
10 housing provider.

11       A case resolved earlier this year, demonstrates  
12 the strength of the city humans rights laws  
13 protections and the commissions commitment to  
14 creating meaningful and wide ranging change. The Law  
15 Enforcement Bureau resolved a case involving housing  
16 provider river park residences LP, in which a tenant  
17 alleged that River Park failed to reasonably  
18 accommodate his use of a wheelchair by refusing his  
19 repeated requests over several years to widen the  
20 bathroom door and install a rolling shower in his  
21 apartment and to make the buildings entrance  
22 accessible.

23       After the Law Enforcement Bureau investigated an  
24 issue to probable cause determination, the parties  
25 entered into a conciliation agreement requiring that

River Park revise its anti-discrimination policies, create a website, the first of its kind as part of a conciliation agreement with the commission that is specifically designed to be accessible to individuals with disabilities and includes information about requesting reasonable accommodations, conduct anti-discrimination training for all employees, display the commissions postings and pay complainant \$160,000 in emotional distress damages.

The highest emotional distress damages award to date in a housing action. As further relief negotiated under the settlement, River Park has installed automated entrance and mailroom doors throughout the four buildings of River Park Towers to make the entire housing complex physically accessible.

In a decision and order issued by Commissioner Malalis in 2017, following a trial at OATH, the Commission awarded \$45,000 in emotional distress damages to a child and \$50,000 to the child's mother in addition to a \$60,000 civil penalty where a landlord refused for three years to provide a bathtub necessary for a child with a disability.

2 The landlord also engaged in a campaign of  
3 harassment against the child and her mother by making  
4 false complaints to the police and the Fire  
5 Department and by filing an unwarranted eviction  
6 proceeding against them. The \$60,000 penalty could  
7 have been reduced to \$10,000 if the respondent had  
8 made the ordered reasonable accommodation within a  
9 certain period of time after the decision.

10 Following an appeal, the Supreme Court upheld the  
11 Commissions decision in full and because respondent  
12 failed to make the required reasonable accommodation  
13 on time, imposed the full Civil penalty. Respondent  
14 was also ordered to undergo training and to post a  
15 notice of rights at the building.

16 Intro. 225 would require the installation in  
17 multiple dwellings of devices such as grab bars and  
18 shower treads for seniors and people with  
19 disabilities. The bill would allow eligible owners  
20 to seek a tax abatement for certain related  
21 installations.

22 We support the intent of the bill to ensure that  
23 people with disabilities, including older New  
24 Yorkers, are able to safely use their bathroom and  
25 remain in their homes. However, the commission has

2 some concerns that Intro. 225 could undermine  
3 existing disability protections under the City Human  
4 Rights law that already require the provision of  
5 these types of accommodations.

6 We are continuing to review the bill and look  
7 forward to working with Council to identify the best  
8 approach to meeting the policy objectives outlined in  
9 the bill. Intro. 6 would require that the owner of a  
10 dwelling unit serves a person who is 62 or older with  
11 a petition or notice to evict. The owner must also  
12 notify HPD of the residents name, address and phone  
13 number so that HPD then may notify the person of  
14 available, legal services.

15 Violations are punishable by a Class A  
16 misdemeanor. The bill also requires the commission  
17 and HPD to analyze the information received from  
18 housing providers concerning senior evictions and  
19 issues a public report identifying and trends in  
20 senior evictions and any findings or patterns of  
21 discrimination in senior evictions.

22 Again, the Commission supports the intent of the  
23 bill to help older New Yorkers age in place  
24 particularly in affordable housing. The Commission  
25 is also committed to working to identify and root out

2 discriminatory patterns and practices in housing  
3 across all areas of protected status including age.

4 We look forward to working with Council to ensure  
5 that the appropriate approach is taken to ensure that  
6 older New Yorkers are able to keep and enjoy their  
7 homes, free from discrimination.

8 We appreciate the Council's attention to these  
9 critical issues and will continue to work with you in  
10 partnership to ensure that older New Yorkers and  
11 people with disabilities can safely enjoy and remain  
12 in their homes surrounded by family and community. I  
13 look forward to your questions.

14 CO-CHAIR CORNEGY: Thank you so much for your  
15 testimony. I'm going to take this opportunity just  
16 to read my opening statement.

17 Good morning everyone, I'm Council Member Robert  
18 Cornegy; Chair of the Committee on Housing and  
19 Buildings and I want to thank Council Member Chin;  
20 Chair of the Committee on Aging for holding this  
21 joint oversight hearing on senior affordable housing.

22 We're joined by fellow Council Members who have  
23 already been read off. Alright, but we've been  
24 joined by Council Member Barron. Today, we've heard  
25 testimony from the Department of Housing Preservation

2 and Development and the Department of Aging about the  
3 city's efforts to maintain and increase the  
4 availability of affordable, accessible housing for  
5 the city's senior population as well as, from  
6 interested members of the public. We will also have  
7 a chance to learn more about the administrations  
8 plans to improve senior housing through the seniors  
9 first component of its Housing New York plan.

10 There's no question that the nations senior  
11 population is growing and New York City is no  
12 exception. As my Co-Chair noted, the city is home to  
13 nearly 1.6 million individuals over the age of 60 or  
14 18.6 percent of the total population. That number is  
15 only projected to grow and while the number of older  
16 adults continues to rise, it is unclear whether the  
17 city's efforts to meet their housing needs has risen  
18 accordingly.

19 Senior housing that is affordable, safe, and  
20 supportive is essential to allowing older adults to  
21 age with dignity and security. Making more  
22 affordable and accessible housing available to  
23 seniors, would go a long way in reducing the number  
24 of seniors who enter the shelter system or wind up  
25 moving to long term care facilities. And could also

2 mitigate any decline in quality of life that comes  
3 with making such a move.

4 This is an important issue that is especially  
5 important to me as my district is home to a sizable  
6 senior community and has been designated as a  
7 naturally occurring retirement community otherwise  
8 known as a NORC.

9 Today, we'll hear from the administration or  
10 we've heard from the administration about the efforts  
11 it has taken to improve the availability of  
12 affordable housing for seniors, both preserving  
13 existing housing and through creating new ones.  
14 We'll explore the city's changing demographics, the  
15 current housing market and current and anticipated  
16 efforts to ensure city housing stock is available to  
17 meet the needs of growing senior population.

18 HPD is tasked with developing and preserving  
19 affordable housing in the city and we look forward to  
20 hearing about the measures it has taken and continues  
21 to take to specifically meet the needs of seniors,  
22 whether through the administration's Seniors First  
23 program or HPDs Aging in Place efforts.

24 We'll also hear two pieces of legislation related  
25 to improving housing for the city's older population.

1  
2 First, Intro. 6 sponsored by Council Member Barron,  
3 would require property owners to disclose certain  
4 information to the city before evicting tenants who  
5 are seniors and require the city to provide  
6 information to those tenants about legal assistance  
7 that maybe available to them.

8 Second, Intro. 225 sponsored by Council Member  
9 Brannan would require the installation of certain  
10 protective devices including bathroom grab bars and  
11 treads in homes of seniors and persons with  
12 disabilities to improve safety and mobility.

13 I want to thank the advocates attending today's  
14 hearing. I look forward to collaborating further, as  
15 we work to improve the quality of life of this city's  
16 older adults.

17 We will now hear remarks from Council Member  
18 Barron, sponsor of Intro. 6.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you to the Chairs  
20 for holding this hearing, to the public for coming to  
21 participate and to those on the panel who are sharing  
22 their information. This bill as has been said, will  
23 require HPD to provide tenants who are 62 years of  
24 age and older with information about the legal  
25 services that are available to them and it would



2 require the landlord to notify HPD, so that we can  
3 act and give assistance to those persons who are in  
4 such condition before they would be evicted.

5 It would also require, as has been said, the  
6 Commissioner to report to the Mayor and to the  
7 Speaker of any patterns of discrimination against  
8 tenants, particularly those who are in that senior  
9 category.

10 Just to give you a little bit of history, this  
11 bill was introduced 13 years ago, in 2006 by my  
12 predecessor, my husband, who is now Assembly Member  
13 Charles Barron. And it was based on an eviction case  
14 that occurred in Harlem. The tenant was Ms. Florence  
15 Rice, that's why we are calling this the Florence  
16 Rice bill, and she was facing eviction from her  
17 apartment in Harlem and it was particularly notary  
18 because there's been a particular push against  
19 seniors, many of whom live alone and don't have  
20 family and don't have the ability to perhaps even  
21 get to all the mail that their inundated with to be  
22 aware of the crisis that they may be facing. And  
23 more than 20 percent of older adults live in poverty,  
24 more than 20 percent of our seniors live in poverty.  
25 And many of them are rent burdened and do not qualify

2 for public benefits and it's projected that by 2030,  
3 20 percent of the population will be 60 or older.

4 And while the city is doing a great job to make  
5 sure that we expand the housing opportunities and  
6 address the issues that seniors face in terms of  
7 finding affordable housing, we've got to make sure  
8 that we have a city agency in place, a city agency  
9 plan in place that will provide protection for  
10 seniors specifically to help them remain in their  
11 homes once they have gotten adequate housing. And to  
12 protect them from those unscrupulous persons and  
13 plans that try to evict them.

14 So, I just want to again thank the Chairs and  
15 look forward - glad to know that you support the  
16 intent. That means we have a common starting  
17 position and to move forward so that we can make this  
18 bill a reality. Thank you.

19 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: So, I'm going to open up  
20 -

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Oh, I forgot, I just want  
22 to recognize of course, my husband, he was the first  
23 one that introduced the bill as well as my staff, my  
24 Chief of Staff Indigo Washington. Thank you.

2 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Thank you Council  
3 Member, we're going to open with a few questions from  
4 the Chairs and then move directly to questions from  
5 my colleagues.

6 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you. We've also been  
7 joined by Council Member Deutsch.

8 Thank you for your testimony. I have a couple of  
9 questions to start with HPD. I know that in your  
10 testimony, you talked about the SARA program, Senior  
11 Affordable Rental Apartment program and then you  
12 talked about how many units were funded, 3,000 new  
13 affordable units were funded through September 2019,  
14 when did this program start?

15 EMILY LEHMAN: So, we rolled out the SARA program  
16 for the first time under Housing New York. The term  
17 sheet was first posted in late 2014.

18 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So, it's between 2014 to 2019  
19 that the program has funded about 3,000 units?

20 EMILY LEHMAN: Correct, so the SARA program, I  
21 would like to point out is only one of many programs  
22 through which we can develop senior housing. So,  
23 well, the SARA program is the primary way, we've  
24 developed new senior housing. In total, we've  
25 developed about 3,800 new senior units. In total our

2 total production of senior housing, new construction  
3 and preservation is 8,500 units and we have done that  
4 through over twelve dozen programs.

5 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: But a lot of it is through  
6 preservation. So, those are not new units, the new  
7 units are only 3,800.

8 EMILY LEHMAN: Correct.

9 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So, how's the administration  
10 really focusing on developing more, because of such a  
11 critical need and relating to that is I know there  
12 was a lot of excitement around when we were doing the  
13 mandatory inclusionary zoning and the whole ZQA,  
14 Zoning for Quality and Affordable Housing and there  
15 were a lot of discussions about developing senior  
16 housing on these parking lots that are next to senior  
17 buildings and not being utilized. Do you have any  
18 statistic or any senior building built on some of  
19 these senior housing parking lots since the ZQA was  
20 passed?

21 EMILY LEHMAN: Thank you Council Member, those  
22 are great questions. So, first I would just like to  
23 take a step back. HPD has financed over 135,000  
24 units under the housing plan to date and while 8,500  
25 of those have been specifically for seniors. Seniors

2 are eligible to apply to any of the units that we  
3 financed. In terms of producing more units  
4 specifically for seniors, so we have the SARA program  
5 under which we financed approximately 3,000 units.  
6 Through the passage of ZQA, and the creation of  
7 errors, we have been able to finance new senior units  
8 in other programs, in other loan programs that HPD  
9 finances. And then specifically building new senior  
10 housing on parking lots and other underutilized land  
11 is something we have also been able to do. We refer  
12 to that initiative as housing plus.

13 And one example of a project, of a Housing Plus  
14 project that we've developed is [INAUDIBLE 59:35] up  
15 in the Bronx. It is a 175 new units of senior  
16 housing on an existing 202 campus. That opened at  
17 the end of 2018.

18 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: And also, I know a lot of the  
19 housing has been developed on city owned sites.

20 EMILY LEHMAN: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Are we successful in doing any  
22 on private sites?

23 EMILY LEHMAN: Yes, so, specifically with the  
24 SARA program, we have developed a mix of public sites  
25 and private sites. Just within the list of public

2 sites, we have 24 sites that are either in  
3 construction, predevelopment or upcoming RFP's  
4 specifically to develop senior housing on and then we  
5 have a very robust pipeline of private sites as well.

6 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Can you share that with us?

7 EMILY LEHMAN: The list of sites?

8 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Yes.

9 EMILY LEHMAN: I'm happy to follow up with a list  
10 of them.

11 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Yes, please do. The other  
12 question that I have is that I know that we have you  
13 know, new senior housing that are built but a lot of  
14 them don't have a social service component. I know  
15 we have DFTA here, so yes, we have a new senior  
16 building but there's a lack of support of services  
17 because there not supportive housing. And another  
18 issue that came to our attention from constituents,  
19 is also that some of the new senior buildings that  
20 are built or some of the existing senior buildings  
21 don't have onsite security. You know, 24/7 and that  
22 is a concern, so going forward, how do we make sure  
23 that when we do new senior housing and do  
24 preservation, that we do include a social service  
25 component in there and also, security to make sure

2 that the seniors will be you know, safe and get the  
3 services they need where they live?

4 EMILY LEHMAN: Thank you, yes, also very good  
5 questions and we do recognize how valuable having  
6 these services onsite in our senior buildings are to  
7 the residents.

8 In regard to services, any new project that HPD  
9 is funding through the SARA program, we now do  
10 require onsite services. There are a few different  
11 funding options for services available. HRA has an  
12 RFP for senior services specifically for SARA  
13 buildings.

14 In addition, a developer could elect to include a  
15 supportive housing component in their senior  
16 building, so we would be providing supportive housing  
17 specifically for seniors and the services funding  
18 such as NYC1515 would be available in that building.

19 And then second, in regards to security, although  
20 it is not a requirement that security be provided, we  
21 do find that almost all of our new construction  
22 senior buildings have been including some level of  
23 security.

24 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Yeah, but not all, so that is  
25 something that HPD really needs to kind of work with

2 the developer on to make sure that we have those  
3 programs.

4 So, you are talking about 8,500 units out of  
5 135,000, that's only 6 percent of the housing. But  
6 the senior population is growing and right now is at  
7 least 18 percent of the city. So, how are we going  
8 to be catching up to make sure that we meet the  
9 needs?

10 KIM DARGA: So, maybe it's worth talking about  
11 recent changes that we have made. The original  
12 housing planned that we launched early in the  
13 administration made a commitment to create, produce,  
14 preserve 15,000 units of senior housing. And we have  
15 in late 2017, as part of Housing New York 2.0, we  
16 doubled that commitment. So, in the last couple  
17 years, we have been ramping up our programs and  
18 initiatives that specifically can serve seniors. I  
19 think it's worth noting something that Assistant  
20 Commissioner Lehman mentioned earlier, which is that  
21 in addition to the senior specific initiatives that  
22 we have, Housing New York, 2.0 increased the  
23 commitment overall to producing affordable housing  
24 and preserving affordable housing in the city. And



2 that that affordable housing is also available to  
3 seniors.

4 As part of Housing New York 2.0, the three throng  
5 approach, preserve existing senior housing to the  
6 maximum extent possible. Creating new affordable  
7 senior opportunities through programs like SARA and  
8 to also help meet seniors where they live today  
9 through our Aging in Place initiative.

10 All of those initiatives are now up and running,  
11 so we do expect that we will be able to increase  
12 production across the board.

13 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: That's good. I just wanted to  
14 welcome students from the Long Island City High  
15 School sitting on the balcony. Welcome, taking a  
16 civic lesson, how do we help our seniors get more  
17 affordable housing, right, all your grandparents.

18 Okay, so, I wanted to pass it back on to the  
19 Chair. I have some other questions but let's get  
20 other colleagues in.

21 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: So, I just have a couple  
22 of quick questions before I defer to my colleagues  
23 for questioning because I know they have other places  
24 to be.

1  
2 I have an overarching kind of contextual  
3 question, so we can kind of frame what we're doing  
4 here today. I had the pleasure of literally right  
5 before I got elected, serving on central staff as a  
6 Policy Analyst on Aging and Veterans and familiarized  
7 myself very much with the Age Friendly New York and  
8 Aging Improvement districts that I was under a former  
9 administration. I'm wondering has this current  
10 administration adopted the policies that were  
11 associated with Age Friendly New York and if so,  
12 where are we?

13 KIM DARGA: Sure, so, as you probably know, the  
14 Age Friendly New York Initiative began in 2009 and in  
15 2017, the city updated the Age Friendly plan with new  
16 goals and commitments to better serve New York City  
17 seniors. Two, which folks focused on HPD specific  
18 recommendations. One is to support affordable senior  
19 housing. As I mentioned, actually in 2017 as well,  
20 as part of Housing New York 2.0, we expanded what we  
21 had already been doing through our commitment to new  
22 affordable housing through the SARA program as well  
23 as expanding our outreach and work around preserving  
24 existing senior developments in New York City  
25 including the 202's.

2 And then, the other part of that, commitment was  
3 to broaden access to affordable housing for LGBT  
4 seniors and we have actually done that as well in  
5 part through work that we've done through new  
6 construction and the SARA program specifically.

7 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Also, I would like to  
8 say that my district most recently was awarded the  
9 designation of having a NORC, a vertical NORC  
10 actually, because we have a great deal of home  
11 ownership that we're trying to preserve for our  
12 seniors and we absolutely look forward to - I want to  
13 thank my Co-Chair for after some persistent advocacy  
14 from me. Her absolutely helping walk through that  
15 process. So, we look forward to any upcoming months  
16 actually seeing that program come to fruition in Bed  
17 Stuy and Northern Crown Heights.

18 I wondered if you had a breakdown by district of  
19 affordable housing units for seniors for members.

20 KIM DARGA: I do not have a breakdown by district  
21 today, but certainly, we can follow up with you. I  
22 do have information by bureau if that is useful.

23 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Yeah, so I don't know if  
24 you disseminate that information by precinct or by  
25 literal council district, but that's something I'd

2 like to discuss with you and find out how you do it  
3 and whether it actually is conducive for members to  
4 have a thorough assessment of what's under their  
5 preview.

6 KIM DARGA: Sure, I think we're all happy to  
7 follow up on that.

8 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Okay, so how many  
9 affordable housing units with support services are  
10 available versus overall units?

11 KIM DARGA: That's an interesting question. I  
12 don't think we have an exact breakdown of units that  
13 have supportive components to them or additional  
14 support services within the affordable housing  
15 portfolio. I can say that through both, as Assistant  
16 Commissioner Lehman mentioned earlier, through our  
17 new senior development in the SARA program, we do  
18 incorporate seniors, sorry, services for seniors.  
19 There is also some support for seniors within the HUD  
20 202 developments. We actually found there is some  
21 inconsistency there and we've looked to - we're at  
22 currently actually evaluating what we can do to  
23 create a more consistent level of services when we  
24 are financing the 202's. Not every 202 in New York  
25 City is actually also, has a support from the city,

2 but when we are doing outreach to them and as they  
3 are coming to us for financial assistance, we are  
4 looking for how we can help.

5 I think it's particularly right now, given the  
6 change in the federal guidance, coming from HUD on  
7 allowing a portion of the 202 properties to take  
8 advantage of the RAD program. We are trying to  
9 figure out how to support those properties and how to  
10 ensure that the right type of support is there for  
11 the residents.

12 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: So, obviously like my  
13 Co-Chair mentioned, having seniors age in place and  
14 have it be sustainable is critical and services  
15 associated with supporting that. So, I don't know  
16 whether there's a blanket system we could create,  
17 because I think that there are some seniors in my  
18 district in particular that are falling through the  
19 cracks.

20 So, they meet an income requirement that doesn't  
21 allow them to have support services on site, at least  
22 and are challenged in finding those services. We see  
23 that in our office quite frequently. So, I'd  
24 definitely like to revisit with my Co-Chair the  
25 potential for more support services to be available

2 even when seniors are financially stable. More  
3 support services for sustainable care, you know, the  
4 ability to stay in there homes.

5 KIM DARGA: Sure.

6 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: And then my last  
7 question is a follow up question to my Co-Chair  
8 around security and whether or not any of the  
9 security that we're talking about on site for seniors  
10 is by a metric. And is there a movement for -  
11 because there's a movement for biometric security in  
12 low income buildings in the city, which I'm studying  
13 extensively to see what you know, potential  
14 disproportionate negative impact it's going to have  
15 on minority communities.

16 I'm wondering if we have the same thing running  
17 synonymously for seniors in terms of biometric  
18 security.

19 KIM DARGA: I think we would have to get back to  
20 you on that.

21 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Okay, I wish you would  
22 because what we found in minority communities is that  
23 implementation has caused tremendous barriers. I'd  
24 hate to think that while we're doing and trying to  
25 deal and unravel that, it's happening for seniors as

2 well and then we'll have to go in and try to unravel  
3 that. So, to the extent that we can look at it  
4 upfront and see if there's actually a service and/or  
5 amenity that meets the needs of seniors before it's  
6 implemented, we should probably have that discussion  
7 based on what I'm finding with buildings in minority  
8 communities attempting to use biometrics as a form of  
9 security.

10 KIM DARGA: Okay, thank you.

11 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Questions from – oh, we've  
13 been joined by Council Member Espinal. We have  
14 questions from Council Member Barron.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you Madam Chair.  
16 Once again, glad that you support the intent of  
17 Intro. 6 and just want to know, how do you envision  
18 what input or suggestions can you give to us in  
19 shaping this bill to make sure that it moves forward  
20 expeditiously and is a document that both sides can  
21 agree is worthy? What suggestions can you give to us  
22 in terms of creating the list of seniors? How do we  
23 generate that list? How can we make sure that people  
24 don't fall through the crack?

2 We understand that there are all kinds of privacy  
3 issues that we have to make sure we don't violate,  
4 but what suggestions can you offer to us in terms of  
5 generating that list of persons who would qualify?

6 KIM DARGA: So, maybe I'll make an initial  
7 attempt and then my colleagues can join in as well.  
8 So, we absolutely as you said, support the intent of  
9 the bill. HPD and absolutely the other agencies  
10 representing here care greatly about supporting  
11 seniors and also minimizing tenant evictions and  
12 we've done a lot, specifically, the administration  
13 has done a lot to combat tenant harassment.

14 And I think we're open to continuing the  
15 conversations with you. I think we are going to have  
16 to address the privacy concerns that you've mentioned  
17 and I don't know if my colleagues want to add to that  
18 today, but I think it would be worth following up  
19 with you specifically about that.

20 EMILY LEHMAN: Sure, I'd be happy to add onto  
21 what my colleague at HPD was able to share. So, I  
22 think you've really on the core of what our question  
23 might be as we continue to look at the bill and think  
24 about the best path forward.



2 So, I think from the Commissions perspective,  
3 we're often cautious about context where housing  
4 providers might be making inquiries about different  
5 areas of protected status, but age would certainly be  
6 one. And I think as the bill is currently drafted,  
7 it does contemplate that housing providers would need  
8 to know the ages of their residents in order to be  
9 able to report subsequently to HPD when an eviction  
10 might be underway or being contemplated.

11 So, what we would want to think through, are  
12 there any unintended adverse consequences where that  
13 information, because it's already in the housing  
14 providers hands could be used for ill will and  
15 whether it could in ways contribute to  
16 discrimination. So, we'd be happy to look at it  
17 further and think through those issues with you as we  
18 move forward.

19 JOCELYN GRODEN: Hi from the perspective of the  
20 Department for the Aging, I'm going to echo my  
21 colleagues here. We certainly support the intent of  
22 the bill and are committed to keeping seniors safe in  
23 their home. We have a number of services which I  
24 talked about in my testimony around the assigned  
25 Council project and partnering Legal Services with

2 Social Services to address the needs of older adults  
3 who are faced with eviction proceedings. We also  
4 work with seniors through a variety of in home and  
5 support services to look at benefits and needs and  
6 keep them safely in their home.

7 We'd certainly welcome the opportunity to go  
8 through the details with you at some later date and  
9 work together.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you and on another  
11 matter, the Chair brought up the issue of security in  
12 senior buildings. Do you know what the requirement  
13 is in particularly NYCHA buildings that are senior  
14 buildings? What kinds of requirements are there for  
15 security and I ask the question particularly because  
16 there is a building, a senior building in my district  
17 called a Woodsen[SP?] where over the past three  
18 years, there have been two murders of seniors in the  
19 building, in their apartments which still remain  
20 unsolved.

21 So, I'm wondering what, if you have that  
22 information is the basic requirements? What are  
23 buildings required to do to provide security for  
24 seniors?

2 EMILY LEHMAN: Sure, my colleagues from NYCHA are  
3 not here today, so I think we'd have to follow up  
4 with them specifically to inquire about that matter.

5 JOCELYN GRODEN: And I want to add, the  
6 Department for the Aging is committed to elder  
7 justice and we do a lot of work through our elder  
8 abuse and crime victim resource center, that works  
9 extensively to meet the needs of older adults who  
10 have been victimized by crime and abuse, both from a  
11 preventive lens and from an intervention lens.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I would appreciate  
13 getting the answer from what NYCHA is doing  
14 particularly.

15 Thank you, thank you to the Chairs.

16 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you. Council Member  
17 Grodenchik followed by Council Member Deutsch with  
18 questions.

19 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: I just want to say that  
20 we've been joined also by Council Member Diana Ayala.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Am I ready Mr. Chair?

22 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Yes, Mr. Grodenchik.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you Madam  
24 Chair, thank you Mr. Chair. Good morning everybody,  
25 it's still morning right, okay. I just want to

2 follow up on Chair Cornegy's comments regarding the  
3 NORC's just to kind of give them a boost because they  
4 are such a critical resource. Yesterday, I was with  
5 a bunch of people having lunch. I represent an area  
6 in Eastern Queens where the city kind of meets the  
7 prairie, so it's very low density and we have many  
8 people who have been living, it's not unusual,  
9 including my Aunt who has been living in her home for  
10 70 years.

11 So, it's not unusual to see people 50, 60, 70  
12 years or more in the NORC's which are run by Common  
13 Point in my district are among the first NORC's. I  
14 think they are state funded, but that's okay. We  
15 work very closely with our state representatives.  
16 So, I just want to give them a boost because they are  
17 very important for us in keeping people in place,  
18 keeping our seniors in a community that they have  
19 literally helped to build because they came over the  
20 hill, there was nothing there. You know, I met  
21 people 100 that have lived in - you know it's not  
22 unusual. It's getting less and less but it's not  
23 unusual.

24 The other question I have, since we're talking  
25 senior affordable housing, what's the minimum

2 footprint for a building? How much land do you need  
3 to build a building on? I know it depends on zoning.  
4 I asked this question yesterday; I was at school  
5 construction. I said how much do you need to build a  
6 school. They said a minimum of 20,000 square feet.

7 So, if we wanted to build a building,  
8 hypothetically, what would we need?

9 EMILY LEHMAN: I think it depends on a number of  
10 factors but unfortunately, our colleagues from City  
11 Planning aren't here today, so I think that might be  
12 something we could discuss further with them.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Okay, alright.  
14 Alright, thank you Madam Chair and Mr. Chair, thank  
15 you.

16 KIM DARGA: I do want to if I may, just one thing  
17 that might be beneficial in terms of NORC's where  
18 there are number of senior homeowners specifically,  
19 we have launched very recently, only a month ago, our  
20 New Home Fixed program. Which is a home repair  
21 program that expands significantly on the resources  
22 that we had previously to help homeowners do home  
23 repairs.

24 It's a program that we administer in partnership  
25 with the Center for New York City Neighborhoods as

2 well as a couple other community based organizations,  
3 the [INAUDIBLE 1:29:04] Foundation and HS of New York  
4 City as well as AFFY[SP?], and I think it's one of  
5 the things that we've tried to do there specifically  
6 is make sure that the financing is as affordable as  
7 possible, both for low income homeowners but also for  
8 senior homeowners.

9 Seniors, unless they are middle income, basically  
10 can qualify for zero interest repair loans. We pair  
11 that with financial and housing counseling if it's  
12 useful for the homeowner, but also, we have built in  
13 some estate planning as well. Which we found is  
14 particularly important for senior homeowners.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you.

16 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: I'm sorry, I just want  
17 to ask, that particular program, are seniors able to  
18 access that if they're living in areas that are where  
19 they need to make - so, there's a lot of  
20 neighborhoods in my district are protected in terms  
21 of - what do you call it, yes, in historic districts.  
22 Can they use those programs to make accessibility  
23 changes to their property in conjunction with the  
24 guidelines for the other program?

2 KIM DARGA: Yeah, so, the program actually allows  
3 a broad set of repairs. We raise the amount of  
4 funding that's actually available and it varies, a  
5 single family property is eligible for up to \$60,000  
6 and then two family, \$90,000, three family \$120,000  
7 and a four family \$150,000.

8 So, it can be used to do more extensive  
9 renovations to a home. It can be used to do Aging in  
10 Place related improvements. If you have a homeowner  
11 that has challenges and is looking to do  
12 modifications to their home. So, it can be used very  
13 broadly. Window replacements, if you're in a  
14 historic district, all of those things.

15 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: And are these grants or  
16 loans?

17 KIM DARGA: They are loans, there are two main  
18 types. There are for low, very low income  
19 homeowners. There are forgivable or evaporating  
20 loans. So, the term depends on the amount of  
21 financing we're providing but up to 15 years.

22 For middle and moderate income homeowners, they  
23 can be low interest loans that amortize. The idea is  
24 that unlike what you would see with a private lender  
25 where they have kind of set rates in terms and then,

2 their going to look at your debt to income and your  
3 credit score and decide if you can afford that loan.  
4 Here, we look at what we can do to make sure that the  
5 homeowner can actually afford the financing necessary  
6 to do the repairs, so they can remain in their home  
7 safely. And so, we'll actually modify the loan terms  
8 to make it affordable if necessary.

9 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: So, I'd personally like  
10 to hear more about that program because where seniors  
11 have tried to access similar programs, it's been  
12 based on the value of their property and not on their  
13 ability to pay or what their annual income is and it  
14 absolutely put people in a very precarious position  
15 over time and has actually to some degree helped  
16 expedite this placement especially of homeowners.

17 So, I'd just like to offline, hear a little bit  
18 more about that program.

19 KIM DARGA: We would be happy to talk to you.

20 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Council Member Deutsch, your  
22 question and followed by Council Member Rose.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you, thank you  
24 Chair. So, this question is for the Human Rights  
25 Commission for Zoey. So, two things, two questions,



2 after a human rights complaint, what is the procedure  
3 after that? How is it investigated by Human Rights;  
4 does it go straight for a hearing? Does it go to  
5 litigations? I want to know what the procedure is  
6 from the beginning to end and the second question is,  
7 if you could give me a scenario of a pre-complaint  
8 intervention?

9 ZOEY CHENITZ: Sure, do you mind if I take those  
10 in reverse order, so that I can give you sort of the  
11 life cycle.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yeah.

13 ZOEY CHENITZ: So, I'll talk in broad terms about  
14 how a case comes to the commission and then the many  
15 paths that it can take.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: I'm sorry, can you just  
17 move the mic. Yeah, thanks.

18 ZOEY CHENITZ: Sure, thank you for that. So,  
19 people can contact the commission through multiple  
20 different avenues. Most cases come to us via 3-1-1.  
21 We're happy to receive referrals directly from  
22 elected officials from our colleagues at community  
23 based organizations and we do also receive complaints  
24 filed directly by attorney's who chose us as their  
25 venue of choice.

2 So, when we first receive an inquiry about a  
3 potential case of discrimination, there's a meeting  
4 that occurs first with our info line and that's just  
5 a very basic assessment of does this remotely fall  
6 within our jurisdiction? Did you mean in fact to  
7 contact one of our sister agencies or are you outside  
8 of the City of New York? Very basic jurisdictional  
9 questions. We can through that determine if pre-  
10 complaint intervention might be a good first step and  
11 relevant to the topic of today's hearing, issues  
12 where disability access, reasonable accommodations  
13 are at play and often more people need very prompt  
14 interventions to help them enjoy the full use of  
15 their home.

16 Those often are the types of cases where we will  
17 make efforts both through our project equal access or  
18 through other parts of our Law Enforcement Bureau to  
19 reach out first to the housing provider and  
20 essentially to help and notify covered entities about  
21 their obligation under the law. It may involve  
22 working with some of our partners here today to help  
23 them leverage resources that are available around the  
24 city. In essence just to help people get the help  
25 that they need as quickly as possible.

2 If that is not the end of the matter, if there is  
3 a discrimination case that we're going to proceed  
4 with, the first step as you alluded to is the filing  
5 of a complaint. I would highlight for everyone that  
6 we at the Commission, it's no cost to use our  
7 services and our law enforcement bureau assists  
8 complainants in drafting the complaints and filing  
9 that so Council is not required.

10 Our Law Enforcement Bureau has two functions.  
11 The first is it serves as an investigator. So, when  
12 a complaint is first filed, they will send the  
13 complaint to the respondent party, ask for an answer  
14 responding to the allegations in the complaint and an  
15 investigation may proceed from there and depending on  
16 the nature of the case, the complexity, there's any  
17 number of investigative steps that they might engage  
18 in. So, requests for information, there might be  
19 interviews of witnesses, site visits in some cases,  
20 particularly where things like accessibility in a  
21 building might be an issue.

22 And based on all of the information acquired up  
23 until that point through the investigation, the Law  
24 Enforcement Bureau will determine whether the case  
25 should proceed.

2 So, if a probable cause determination is made,  
3 the role of the Law Enforcement Bureau switches from  
4 that of a neutral investigator to that of a civil  
5 prosecutor on behalf of the city. And that's when a  
6 full litigation starts before OATH, the Office of  
7 Administrative Trials and Hearings. And from that  
8 point, there's still multiple paths the case can go  
9 forward. It can go to a full trial, many of our  
10 cases resolve through settlement. We also have an  
11 office of mediation that can place a role in  
12 mediating settlements.

13 So, we have many tools available to help resolve  
14 some cases.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: What is a typical  
16 complaint that you receive?

17 ZOEY CHENITZ: That is a difficult question just  
18 because we have so many categories of protected  
19 status across the three jurisdictional areas that are  
20 the main focus of our work. So, that's employment,  
21 housing, public accommodations.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So, in particular for  
23 senior housing?  
24  
25

2 ZOEY CHANITZ: For senior housing; I don't know  
3 if I have information on that but I would be happy to  
4 look and get back to you.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: It would be like making  
6 it handicap accessible right? That would be one  
7 complaint.

8 ZOEY CHANITZ: Disability access is one of our  
9 most prominent categories, regardless of age. I  
10 don't know if that constitutes the majority of our  
11 age related complaints. But yeah, failure to provide  
12 reasonable accommodations -

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: My question is that at  
14 the end of the day, we want to get the job done. We  
15 want to make sure that that senior whose living  
16 there, that whatever issues he or she may have is  
17 taken care of and I've seen that from a complaint  
18 being filed until a determination or until a penalty  
19 is imposed, could take sometimes several years.

20 So, during those several years, you still have  
21 the senior who is residing there, who is not getting  
22 those accommodations through what complaints he or  
23 she put in with the Human Rights Commission. So, my  
24 question, I see that the fines are hefty fines and I  
25 also see that the stakeholders of those buildings

2 where you got those complaints, where you see the  
3 complaints, they would have to go through a specific  
4 training.

5 So, if a complaint comes in through the Human  
6 Rights Commission, right, and it's something like  
7 making you know, handicapped accessible or an issue  
8 with something else that could be corrected, right,  
9 why does it get to that point where there is that  
10 hefty fine? Like, why doesn't Human Rights  
11 Commission go in there and say, listen, if you don't  
12 get this done within 30 days, you could have a  
13 \$60,000 fine and then you all have to go for  
14 training, right.

15 So, why aren't we like proactive that it  
16 shouldn't get to the point where there's \$5.3 million  
17 in damages and the city I guess makes the \$800,000 in  
18 civil penalties that goes to the city, right.

19 ZOEY CHANITZ: Civil penalties go to the city,  
20 that's right.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So, how do we prevent it  
22 getting to that point where a senior has to go  
23 through all the hurdles and all the hassles and still  
24 be in a position where it's not corrected, when we  
25 could just correct it like this within 30 days by

1 threatening that there is going to be a \$60,000 fine  
2 or a \$40,000 fine and then there's a whole training  
3 process and everything.  
4

5 ZOEY CHANITZ: So, maybe it would be beneficial  
6 to talk more broadly about some of the work the city  
7 has done to educate owners about how they can modify  
8 their buildings to make age friendly improvements,  
9 reduce trip hazards, etc.

10 The Department for the Aging worked with a number  
11 of agencies in City Council to actually put a guide  
12 together that has best practices for how to modify  
13 buildings and individual apartments to do so.  
14 Multiple agencies have various financial incentive  
15 programs to help owners and residents take on the  
16 cost of those improvements.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yeah, but that doesn't  
18 always work because if you have the bad actors, then  
19 they're not going to listen to the pamphlet, but my  
20 questions is back that number one, is that you know,  
21 if there is those high fines, right, why can't that  
22 landlord be threatened and say, you know something,  
23 you're going to have to pay this and you're going to  
24 have to go through a whole training, let's correct it  
25 now, let's get it done. Because what I'm hearing,

2 what I'm seeing is that, you're going through the  
3 whole process right, and then, it goes to courts.  
4 Then everyone has to hire lawyers, the condition is  
5 still there right, and then at the end of the day,  
6 the city ends up getting \$800,00 in civil penalties.

7 So, is it an income thing or is it taking care of  
8 our seniors? That's what I just don't, I don't  
9 understand that.

10 ZOEY CHENITZ: I appreciate the question. So, in  
11 fact what you're suggesting is the commissions  
12 approach. It is the exception to the rule where a  
13 case proceeds all the way to a trial or even to a  
14 supreme court appeal.

15 We do everything that we can to ensure that cases  
16 are resolved quickly and as soon as possible to  
17 ensure that folks get the help that they need,  
18 particularly with respect to issues like  
19 accommodations and as I mentioned earlier, we have  
20 the project equal access and pre-complaint  
21 intervention programs through our Law Enforcement  
22 Bureau, both of which are specifically targeted to  
23 the task that you're describing of ensuring that  
24 housing providers are made aware of their obligations  
25 and the consequences -



2 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yeah, all of those are  
3 very good but I'm still - because to me, it looks  
4 like it's not taking care of the seniors, it's a  
5 money grabber. That's what it looks like to me.

6 So, I just want to, we could have an offline  
7 discussion if you want but I'm going through this and  
8 you know, I'm looking through this and I'm listening  
9 to the testimony and I just don't understand because  
10 I like to get things done right away and if there's a  
11 problem and if there's a Human Rights Complaint,  
12 let's take care of it.

13 Can I ask you a question? What is the longest  
14 period of time from beginning of a complaint until  
15 maybe a possible trial? How many years could that  
16 take?

17 ZOEY CHENITZ: I don't have that information  
18 available.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Off the top of your  
20 head? Could it be more than two years?

21 ZOEY CHENITZ: We do have some cases.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Okay.

23 ZOEY CHENITZ: But it depends on the complexity  
24 of the case as to how long -

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: No, I understand that  
3 but there has to be a way to take care of our seniors  
4 and to get it done right away.

5 So, I'd love to have an offline conversation to  
6 see how -

7 ZOEY CHENITZ: Sure, there is a one point I'd  
8 love to respond to, which is with respect to fines  
9 and trainings. It is a priority of the Commission to  
10 ensure that the remedies that we provide are  
11 proportionate to the sophistication. The willfulness  
12 of violations by respondent. So, it is not when you  
13 see a large number in a particular case that may be  
14 reflective of the fact that it was a recalcitrant  
15 respondent who refused to engage in the early stages  
16 of the case with us despite repeated efforts by the  
17 Law Enforcement Bureau to engage them earlier, to  
18 warn them about the repercussions. That they are a  
19 large sophisticated entity, there may have been  
20 multiple violations of the law. So, we're dealing  
21 with smaller entities, where there are people who are  
22 endeavoring to comply if they were unaware of their -  
23 those are instances where we would look - there are  
24 some cases where there are no fines at all. We may  
25 just do a Know Your Rights training about the law.

2 So, we try to be proportionate to the nature of  
3 the violation.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So, yes, I would love to  
5 be invited to one of your complaints. I'd like to  
6 see what the process is for myself and I just want to  
7 see for myself, how it could get resolved or how it  
8 can get resolved that things have to go on for more  
9 than two years. Because I still don't understand it  
10 and unless I actually like know a specific case that  
11 you could tell me, so I'd like to speak to you  
12 offline.

13 ZOEY CHENITZ: I'd be happy to do that, thank  
14 you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Okay, great, okay, so  
16 I'll leave you my card. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Okay, yeah, Council Member  
18 Deutsch, yeah, if you could follow up offline, but I  
19 think one of the questions that raised up with that,  
20 is that the interagency coordination.

21 So, if someone files a complaint Human Rights and  
22 involves a senior reasonable accommodation, are there  
23 any kind of referral, discussion with HPD or with  
24 DFTA to really help the senior while the case might  
25 be - you know, it takes time but at least get the

2 repair done or to be able to make sure that the  
3 seniors are okay.

4 ZOEY CHENITZ: Yes, again, as I mentioned  
5 earlier, while we're endeavoring to resolve cases,  
6 we're constantly working with our partners throughout  
7 the city, that's our sister agencies as well as any  
8 community groups that maybe implicated in the case.

9 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Okay, we've been joined by  
10 Council Member Treyger and Council Member Vallone.  
11 Council Member Rose with questions.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you Madam Chair and I  
13 want to thank Council Member Chin and the Chair of  
14 this Committee for her tireless efforts because we  
15 are actually going to get our first neighborhood NORC  
16 on Staten Island and she's been working at this  
17 tirelessly since she's been the Chair.

18 So, I want to thank her for recognizing you know,  
19 that need. And because Staten Island has a very  
20 unique housing you know, stock, I was wondering if  
21 you could give me the percentage of seniors that are  
22 on SCRIE and SCHE, because I know it's a limited  
23 number but could you tell me how many?

24

25

1  
2           EMILY LEHMAN: I don't have that broken down by  
3 borough, both HPD and the Department of Finance  
4 administer the SCRIE program.

5           My colleagues from DOF are not hear today but  
6 across the city in 2019, there we had more than  
7 62,000 seniors apply for and receive SCRIE.

8           COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay, so I know the number  
9 is significantly less on Staten Island. And so,  
10 these programs are grossly underutilized. How is it  
11 that people are made aware of these programs and you  
12 know, how they qualify for them?

13           EMILY LEHMAN: Sure, so we've actually expanded  
14 SCRIE in the last couple years. We've raised the  
15 income eligibility as you may be aware to \$50,000,  
16 which means there's many more households that are  
17 eligible.

18           We have expanded outreach; I'd have to have my  
19 colleagues at Department of Finance follow up  
20 specifically on the portion that they administer. At  
21 HPD, we administer the portion of SCRIE that serves  
22 specifically HGFC Cooperatives as well as Mitchell  
23 Lama properties and we do very expansive outreach.  
24 And those properties either were appropriate, we will  
25 ensure that there is a Section 8 that we can allocate

2 to the property or SCRIE. You can do both at the  
3 same time, so I believe actually there are a couple  
4 Mitchell Lama's in Staten Island where we actually  
5 use Section 8 instead of SCRIE.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yeah, they have Section 8.  
7 However, is there any way, because of our unique  
8 housing situation, we have very little rent regulated  
9 housing. Would we be able to expand this program to  
10 other types of housing? Because it doesn't exist,  
11 but the need is so extensive, that my seniors are not  
12 able to find affordable housing. You know, we have a  
13 lot of private homeowners, landlords.

14 What is the conversation? How do I start the  
15 conversation to extend this type of benefit to a  
16 different type of housing stock that doesn't exist in  
17 Staten Island?

18 ZOEY CHENITZ: Sure, so, I think we're absolutely  
19 happy to talk about where you think the gaps may be  
20 and who particularly you are concerned with and are  
21 interested in serving.

22 Are you concerned more with renters or with  
23 homeowners?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: With renters.  
25

2 ZOEY CHENITZ: Okay, alright, so I think it's  
3 worth a follow up conversation to understand more  
4 what your particular concerns are on the  
5 vulnerabilities that you are trying to address.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay, and there's such a  
7 large waiting list. I think it's over 200,000 people  
8 now and HPD, you did say that you're going to address  
9 another 100,000 but that's by the year 2026. If we  
10 have a waiting list 200,000 applicants now, how are  
11 we going to actually meet the need and why can't we  
12 make it a priority to meet the housing needs of  
13 affordable housing for seniors before 2026?

14 This administration won't even be in office.  
15 Now, how do we ensure that the housing needs, with  
16 the projected numbers that we have now, is even going  
17 to be addressed and why can't we make it a priority,  
18 so that we're not looking at out years where you  
19 know, this might not even become a reality?

20 KIM DARGA: Sure, so this administration has  
21 committed a significant amount of resources to  
22 expanding new homeownership and preserving existing  
23 homeownership within the city. We have a commitment  
24 of \$13.5 billion to support affordable housing  
25 throughout the city. Of which, about \$1.9 billion

2 was committed as passing Housing New York 2.0, for  
3 which the seniors first initiative was one of the  
4 primary initiatives that we announced at that point  
5 and time.

6 I think your question about how do we ensure the  
7 resources. Certainly, through the budget. We've  
8 also created a number of programmatic initiatives  
9 that we have put out there including the aging in  
10 place initiative where we've changed the way that we  
11 actually do business. Meaning that now when we  
12 assess the needs of an individual property that is  
13 coming to us for renovation financing, whether it's a  
14 homeowner that's looking for help or it's a multi-  
15 family property, we are now – the assessment  
16 methodology has built into it. That the owner is  
17 required to look at things like mobility throughout  
18 the building. Right, is there appropriate lighting?  
19 Are there grab bars and staircases in common areas to  
20 help people move safely.

21 We also do that within individual apartments.  
22 Residents are given a survey and that means that once  
23 the modifications are done for one resident, the next  
24 resident there also has access to those  
25 modifications.



1  
2           We've also tried to expand the ways in which we  
3 advertise and make sure that residents throughout New  
4 York City know about affordable housing and have  
5 access to those opportunities. As you know, we  
6 launched Housing Connect back in 2013 and are now  
7 rolling out Housing Connect 2.0, which will have  
8 additional features. I'm not the marketing expert  
9 that you can see, but we'll have additional features  
10 so that residents can actually identify what exactly  
11 they're looking for in terms of size of the unit,  
12 location, etc., that will hopefully help them find  
13 resources within the communities that they are  
14 interested in living in.

15           COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: The waiting lists are  
16 sometimes problematic when we look at the lottery.  
17 What are doing to make sure that lottery recipients  
18 are fairly excessed and give the apartments - I've  
19 gotten some complaints where there was some racial  
20 discrimination when the actual person shows up to  
21 respond to the lottery and that the apartment is  
22 available and suddenly, it's not available.

23           KIM DARGA: So, maybe I can speak - I'm sorry, I  
24 don't want to cut you off.

25           COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: No.

2 KIM DARGA: Okay, so maybe I can speak about  
3 HPD's part of that process and then if you want to  
4 add anything to it as well, that would be great.

5 So, again, I don't run the marketing team, I run  
6 the Preservation team at HPD, but we do get access to  
7 any lottery logs as well as applicant files. So, it  
8 there is a concern, we also, we don't outsource all  
9 of that; we do independently verify. I can follow up  
10 with our marketing team to talk more about that  
11 particular procedure and how it works and the  
12 concerns that you've raised.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yeah, it's becoming you  
14 know, a big concern in my district.

15 EMILY LEHMAN: I would just add that we'd be  
16 happy to talk to you more about that offline. Thank  
17 you.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay, and I just want to  
19 say to HPD, thank you. You know, we just went  
20 through a ULURP, a huge ULURP affordable housing in  
21 our Bay Street corridor and it was really a struggle  
22 to get 100 percent affordability on the waterfront  
23 and I want to thank you for your efforts to help us  
24 do that. And I want to make sure that those projects  
25 move along swiftly, so that you know, it can be a

2 reality. I know I'm not going to see it before the  
3 end of my term, but I surely don't want it to be  
4 generations before it happens.

5 So, thank you for helping us make that a reality,  
6 a possibility. Now, I want to see it as a reality,  
7 so thank you.

8 KIM DARGA: Absolutely.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you Chair.

10 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you. We're joined by  
11 Council Member Torres and Council Member Eugene.

12 So, I just have a couple of follow up questions  
13 with HPD, is now, we know, we know there's such a  
14 great need for more senior housing and I know you're  
15 talking about the Mayor has made the commitment. How  
16 many senior affordable housing projects are currently  
17 in the pipeline and what stage are they at? Are we  
18 going to be able to meet the goal that was set up?

19 EMILY LEHMAN: Thank you for the question, so,  
20 you know, as we stated earlier, we have produced over  
21 8,500 units of housing specifically for seniors. We  
22 have a very, very robust pipeline of additional  
23 projects in the works. It is very hard to provide  
24 detail on projects in our pipeline until we get to  
25

2 construction closing because there are a lot of  
3 shifting pieces.

4 So, a little hard to do that, but we are on track  
5 to achieve the goals and the commitments under the  
6 Seniors First Initiative. Again, the projects that  
7 we can talk about a little bit more specifically are  
8 the ones on public sites. So, again, I said there  
9 were 24 sites that we've been working on, several of  
10 those have completed or in construction and we are  
11 queued up to move the remainder forward shortly.

12 KIM DARGA: And just - I want to highlight; we  
13 are doing really expansive outreach on the 202  
14 specifically. We've done jointly with HUD along with  
15 LISC who has a program specifically designed for  
16 outreach to 202's. We've done seven events in the  
17 last year, a little over a year now to make sure that  
18 owners of 202 property specifically know about the  
19 resources and that we are interested in working with  
20 them.

21 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: That's part of preservation.

22 KIM DARGA: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: But when you were talking  
24 about the 24 sites, so how many units in total are in  
25 that 24 sites?

1  
2 KIM DARGA: I'll have to get back to you with the  
3 specific number.

4 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Okay, it's got to be in your  
5 head. Turn back to a question for DFTA, you know,  
6 there's been a lot of excitement about the Home  
7 Sharing Program and the Mayor was talking about, this  
8 is a big action in the FY'19 budget. So, how is that  
9 going? I mean, are we making more matches, are we  
10 getting you know, more seniors, because we also heard  
11 that there was some problem because the host person,  
12 the senior who is the host were getting the income on  
13 a monthly basis and then they now are not. So, there  
14 is some issue that came up with the Home Sharing  
15 Program that we've heard from constituents. But if  
16 you can talk about the progress?

17 JOCELYN GRODEN: Sure, so we are - you know,  
18 we're fairly early into the fiscal year, we are  
19 seeing increases in the number of matches made. I  
20 think you know; this is a very targeted, innovative  
21 program. We've been really working to expand  
22 outreach as well as our partnerships around those.

23 So, for example, one sister agency that we have  
24 begun partnering with is DYCD to look at the aging  
25 out of transitional age youth and how we could

2 potentially look at finding appropriate matches  
3 between these young adults who have significant  
4 housing needs as well as our older adults who also  
5 have needs around financial stability and/or social  
6 isolation.

7 So, we are seeing some promising movements and  
8 you know, looking forward to advancing our thinking  
9 and matching marketing around this program. In terms  
10 of the second issue that you mentioned around paying  
11 the host, are you saying the host is a senior?

12 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Yeah, the host is a senior.

13 JOCELYN GRODEN: The host is a senior and they're  
14 not receiving a payment from the share mates?

15 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: No, I mean there is a subsidy,  
16 you know, they were anticipating it should be every  
17 month and then now, it's like there's a shift to it's  
18 not every month, that it's every like sixth month.  
19 Which can create a hardship for the host because they  
20 were expecting this income.

21 JOCELYN GRODEN: So, I'm happy to look into that  
22 and I will look into that and certainly get back to  
23 you. I'm not immediately aware of what you're are  
24 mentioning.

2 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Do you have any number in  
3 terms of how many match were made in this year or the  
4 past year with the new expansion?

5 JOCELYN GRODEN: It's a targeted program and  
6 there are definitely challenges inherent to this  
7 innovative model, particularly around finding people  
8 that have the extra space available in their home to  
9 run to whether it's the older adults are some other  
10 person who is willing to rent their house and share  
11 with another individual.

12 We are seeing increases as a result of our new  
13 partnerships and marketing model. So, we're  
14 optimistic that we will see increases this year and  
15 we will work towards furthering our relationships and  
16 marketing strategy to continue to see more increases  
17 going forward.

18 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Okay, so I would like you to  
19 get us some specific number later, if you don't have  
20 it now in terms of the success of the program. In  
21 terms of numbers that match that was done, because  
22 the Council has been you know, supporting New York  
23 Foundation for Seniors before the Mayor you know, put  
24 in so-called new funding to help you know, expand the  
25 program.

2 So, it's not an easy program to run and we know  
3 that and we've been supplementing funding to help  
4 them to do that. So, that's why we wanted to really  
5 get more information on that. And I just wanted to  
6 go back on the question of the SCRIE program because  
7 I know that we've had past hearings when we you know  
8 talk about it and we've heard from seniors who are  
9 actually paying more than 30 percent of their income  
10 for rent, even though they have gotten SCRIE. They  
11 might have gotten into the program late and there is  
12 no subsidy program from the city that can help them.  
13 You know, they are paying more than 50 percent of  
14 their income for rent, even though they have SCRIE.  
15 And this is an issue in some of the new developments  
16 that are coming up, like in my district.

17 You know, some of the seniors who are still  
18 working and they were so excited and happy they won  
19 the lottery, they got into a senior housing. Great,  
20 and now they are going to be retiring. So, their  
21 income is going to drop.

22 So, now, you know, we have to help them apply for  
23 SCRIE right away so at least their rent don't go up,  
24 but now their income dropped. They may not be able  
25 to afford the rent that they were able to afford when



2 they first move in based on their income. And  
3 somehow you know, the management whatever, hey, if  
4 you can't pay your rent, then you're going to be  
5 evicted.

6 So, I think this is something that the city  
7 really needs to look at these affordable housing  
8 programs when people move in, they could afford the  
9 rent but if their income drops or if they are seniors  
10 and they retire, how are we going to make sure that  
11 they can continue to be able to live in their home  
12 and not get evicted.

13 So, that should be something that we should look  
14 at as a preservation program, because we don't want  
15 them to be able to move in, because there are so many  
16 seniors applying when we're talking about waiting  
17 lists. I mean we had 99 units in the lower east side  
18 with [INAUDIBLE 2:20:34] and 65,000 senior apply. I  
19 mean, just, there is such a tremendous need out there  
20 but we want to make sure that if they are lucky  
21 enough to get in that they can stay.

22 So, that is something that we want to look at,  
23 the SCRIE program and we've been advocating with the  
24 state to see if there is a roll back because the city  
25 is the one that's paying, right. Because the

1  
2 landlord is getting their property tax decrease, you  
3 know, the SCRIE, so we're the one that's paying but  
4 then we have to rely on the state to pass the law to  
5 change the law.

6 So, somehow, I think as a city, we should really  
7 look at what we can do proactively on these programs  
8 to help seniors stay in their home.

9 Same thing like the NORC program that you know,  
10 my colleagues are talking about. This is great need  
11 for it, the one in Staten Island, the one in  
12 Brooklyn, the one in China Town that we just started  
13 this year, it's Council discretionary funding.  
14 Because there is no funding, increase funding coming  
15 from the state. I mean, this is a state funded  
16 program, the NORC program.

17 So, we should take a look at you know, with the  
18 Department of Aging, whether the city should start a  
19 funding stream that can support these kinds of  
20 programs and not be discretionary. Right, that there  
21 should be a permanent funding stream to help start  
22 NORC programs, because that's part of preservation,  
23 helping seniors stay in their home when the services  
24 and the activity and the wellness program, all those

1 things that are incorporated in a natural occurring  
2 retiring community.  
3

4 We know how successful they are. So, there's  
5 going to be more and more and that is a great  
6 preservation tool that it's not just a place to live,  
7 but to make sure the services are there. So, I think  
8 that's something the holistic approach that we should  
9 look at and see how we can you know, access funding  
10 to do that because the state and the federal  
11 government, they're not providing the resources, they  
12 are not providing the funding. Like 202, what  
13 happened to 202? There was no more 202 funding and  
14 now we're preserving the 202. How come the federal  
15 government is not providing funding through that.  
16 But the city has to come in, because we don't want  
17 those buildings to go private. We don't want to lose  
18 any affordable senior housing.

19 So, I think that as a city, we need to step up.  
20 We need to figure out a way to make sure that we  
21 preserve and we build more senior housing as much as  
22 we can to meet the growing needs.

23 ZOEY CHENITZ: Yeah, I think we agree that you  
24 know, anything we can do to help seniors stay in  
25 their homes safely and you know, a rent or if they

2 own their property to continue to afford to remain in  
3 their home is critically important and I think we  
4 would be happy to explore any new ideas that you have  
5 for how we can support more at the city level.

6 JOCELYN GRODEN: And I do want to mention, it's  
7 great to hear all this positive feedback around the  
8 NORC's. It's something we're really proud and  
9 excited about and we think it's the right model in  
10 terms of aging in place and pushing services in. And  
11 you know, we also certainly welcome discussion around  
12 new ideas, resources, opportunities. I did want to  
13 mention, there are 28 city funded NORC's that are  
14 funded with city tax dollars.

15 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Not enough.

16 JOCELYN GRODEN: Okay.

17 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: And you know that DFTA needs  
18 more funding because if DFTA's budget is less than  
19 half a percent of the city's budget, even though we  
20 fought every year to make it bigger, but the city's  
21 budget is getting bigger. So, we're not catching up,  
22 okay, so I think that we need a budget that really  
23 match the growing number of seniors that we have in  
24 the city.

2 So, we look forward to working with all of you to  
3 make sure our seniors are taken care of. Any other  
4 questions from our colleagues? Oh, Chair.

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: I just want to ask on  
6 the line of questioning that the Co-Chair mentioned  
7 in regards to funding, the Home Fix program, I know  
8 that myself and I'm sure that my colleagues are going  
9 to demand an upcoming budget that that be baselined.  
10 Certainly, you know, I'd love to hear your opinion on  
11 that and whether you would be in advocacy with us  
12 around baselined funding for Home Fix.

13 ZOEY CHENITZ: We'd be happy to talk to you. The  
14 program, as I mentioned, we launched a month ago.  
15 We've been I think on average through the current  
16 programs serving a couple dozen homeowners a year.  
17 We budgeted for this program, we hope to expand it to  
18 100 to 150 homeowners a year and we have seen in the  
19 first month interest in the program from over 500  
20 homeowners.

21 So, I think we are happy to explore how we can  
22 make sure that the program is structured in the right  
23 way and has sufficient resources, so that it can meet  
24 the demand.

2 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Oh, but I ask that you  
3 include at least my Co-Chair in that dialogue and  
4 those conversations as you're building that program  
5 out.

6 ZOEY CHENITZ: Sure.

7 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Because she's got her  
8 finger on the pulse. Tremendously, all of us have  
9 seniors in our district, but I certainly defer to my  
10 Co-Chair and the great work that she has done in and  
11 around this. I'm just pointing out that because of  
12 the amount of homeowners I have in my district, I  
13 could see this as being a very viable program for our  
14 seniors.

15 ZOEY CHENITZ: Great, we're happy to talk about  
16 that.

17 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Also, I just want to  
18 talk briefly, ask briefly about the SARA program.  
19 So, as of today, how many affordable units are work  
20 created through HPD's senior affordable rental  
21 apartments?

22 KIM DARGA: So, approximately 3,000 units.

23 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: And by 2022, how many  
24 affordable units are expected to be created through  
25 the SARA program?

2 KIM DARGA: So, it's a little hard to project  
3 exact numbers through that specific program, because  
4 again, we produce senior units through a variety of  
5 programs. So, we may have an Ella building that has  
6 a set aside for senior units that we are allowed to  
7 incorporate before of changes through ZQA.

8 So, hard to give an exact number but we expect to  
9 continue to produce more.

10 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Do you have the number  
11 of seniors themselves literally who have benefited  
12 from the program?

13 KIM DARGA: Not with me currently no.

14 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: It may have been  
15 mentioned before and if it has, just please flag for  
16 me, but HPD's SARA term sheet has not been updated  
17 since 2014, is the administration considering  
18 revisions or updates to the term sheet?

19 KIM DARGA: So, we're definitely considering  
20 updates and we welcome feedback if you have any on  
21 changes.

22 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: How does HPD and DFTA  
23 advertise the SARA program and how do seniors become  
24 aware of this program?

2 KIM DARGA: So, the SARA program is a financing  
3 program for landowners, so it would be a developer  
4 that would work with HPD to develop a project and we  
5 advertise the SARA program along with all of our  
6 other new construction financing programs.

7 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: So, it's not advertised  
8 to the individuals and advertised to the developer?

9 KIM DARGA: Correct, but once a SARA building is  
10 marketed on Housing Connect, all of our marketing  
11 tools that we use to outreach to communities are used  
12 for those buildings as well.

13 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: What marketing tools are  
14 those?

15 KIM DARGA: Sure, so one moment. So, HPD has 43  
16 nonprofit housing ambassadors that we work with.  
17 That's an expanded program, so when we launched the  
18 program, we had 17, we now have 43 ambassadors.  
19 Housing ambassadors are available to meet with  
20 households individually, they also hold public  
21 events.

22 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Are housing ambassadors  
23 individuals or organizations?

24 KIM DARGA: They are organizations but council,  
25 City Council offices can also become housing



2 ambassadors. Community boards can become housing  
3 ambassadors, so we really rely on our partners to do  
4 a lot of outreach. They can assist seniors in  
5 applying for Housing Connect and this is not just  
6 for SARA buildings but for any unit marketed on  
7 housing connect, a senior can apply for. We have  
8 increased our language access. So, if a senior needs  
9 an application, either in paper or electronically in  
10 a different language, we have that and the housing  
11 ambassadors can help provide that.

12 We also have our Ready to Rent program, which we  
13 rolled out with DCA. So, a variety of things that  
14 we've been -

15 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: So, I actually have the  
16 distinct pleasure of serving as the Council's Chair  
17 to the Democratic Conference, and as such we  
18 disseminate a newsletter. I'd love to be able to  
19 include in that newsletter, the criteria for being a  
20 housing ambassador as it relates to the Council. So,  
21 if you could get that to me, I would get it right out  
22 to my colleagues, who I'm sure based on capacity  
23 within their offices would love to participate.

24 KIM DARGA: Sure, we'll follow up.  
25

2 JOCELYN GRODEN: And Chair, I'd like to add that  
3 the Department for the Aging posts a housing resource  
4 guide on our website as well as routinely goes to  
5 senior centers to talk to older adults about housing  
6 options and benefits and resources that are available  
7 to them as part of our continual outreach efforts.

8 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: So, just meaning no  
9 disrespect, I always get the willies when I think  
10 about websites and seniors. So, we should work  
11 together. I'm not saying that listen, everybody has  
12 to move, some of us more reluctantly than others into  
13 the technological age, but as it relates to that,  
14 there's always this huge grey area as to access the  
15 information through electronic sources for seniors.

16 So, while that's a part and we should be moving  
17 towards that, incrementally, we should try to get our  
18 seniors to that place. I know in my district, some  
19 of my seniors just aren't ready and actually in my  
20 district, I'm considered a senior. In my house at  
21 least, I'm considered a senior and I'm definitely not  
22 ready.

23 So, I listen to [INAUDIBLE 2:35:40] program and  
24 there's other great programs that prepare our seniors  
25 to be technologically savvy and I respect and

1 appreciate those. It's just that as soon as I hear  
2 that there's information being disseminated through  
3 electronic means, it kind of makes the hair on the  
4 back of my neck stand up.

5  
6 JOCEYLN GRODEN: Okay, understood, it's a  
7 multipronged approach that's part of our approach. I  
8 mean part of it is electronic and what you're  
9 speaking of certainly resonates and it's also  
10 changing and it's not always just a senior that's  
11 looking at these resources, sometimes it's a  
12 caregiver or a loved one.

13 So, I think there's certainly a place for social  
14 media and the web. With that said, we're in senior  
15 center routinely talking to older adults face to  
16 face. So, we certainly appreciate the limitations of  
17 technology as an incomplete part of the outreach and  
18 a solution. Although I do think it's part of that.

19 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: And just for the record,  
20 that was not an indictment of what you do or how you  
21 disseminate your information, it just, you know, this  
22 is a very slow process in this transition for us to  
23 total electronics and I could feel the spirit of my  
24 seniors channeled through me to let you know that  
25 some of them have not yet prepared themselves in a

2 way that they can access all of their information  
3 electronically, but thank you.

4 JOCELYN GRODEN: Sure.

5 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Yeah, I think definitely with  
6 some of the new initiative from HPD on home repairs  
7 and how to make the apartment or the building  
8 accessible, I think those information - I assume  
9 there's a Chair on DFTA's website.

10 ZOEY CHENITZ: We just launched - I don't know  
11 that we've done that yet, but we are happy to do  
12 that, that's a great idea.

13 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Okay, because you know, that's  
14 like a senior would go to DFTA first, Department for  
15 the Aging first before they go to HPD. So, I think  
16 that interagency, you got to really work on that.  
17 Oh, we've been joined by Council Member Rivera. Do  
18 you have a question?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Hello everyone, thank you  
20 for being here. I don't have a question but I just  
21 because Department of Buildings isn't here and I just  
22 wanted to ask that as we develop new senior housing  
23 and as we preserve existing senior housing, that we  
24 really take security into account and I know that you  
25 all are very, very serious about that. But even

2 something as simple as scaffolding when you're  
3 complying with local laws in terms of façade work,  
4 just the lighting underneath there, sometimes is dark  
5 and you know, as we get older, maybe it's our  
6 mobility, maybe it's our vision, maybe it's our  
7 hearing, as we're constructing these new buildings,  
8 that we're looking at, you know in the stairways, the  
9 signage, how large it is. Is brail necessary, are  
10 the elevators; do they need a different kind of sound  
11 in terms of how using technology to actually speak to  
12 the tenant.

13 So, I just wanted to ask that as we construct and  
14 preserve, that we really just try to take all those  
15 kinds of nuances into account. I have a lot of  
16 NORC's thankfully and I'm looking forward to adding  
17 another one very soon. And even just under scaffold,  
18 they may want me to add lighting.

19 So, we're looking at street safety and I know  
20 that you have a lot of interagency communication when  
21 you construct these buildings and I want to thank you  
22 for your work. Just try to even think about every  
23 exist having that button to push because maybe you're  
24 not in a wheelchair but maybe the door is heavy. I  
25 receive all kinds of concerns from my constituents

2 and I just want us to be the best producer of these  
3 buildings. And so, I just want to thank you for all  
4 your work this far and to the Chair, for allowing me  
5 to speak for a minute.

6 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you, thank you for your  
7 suggestions and comment. Yeah, because some of the  
8 senior buildings, we've gotten feedback. You know,  
9 like, if they have a wheelchair or if they are on a  
10 walker, they can't open the door. So, some of the  
11 senior buildings now have the automatic, sliding you  
12 know, entrance doors. And so, I think that is  
13 something that we need to take into consideration in  
14 new building and preservation building that those are  
15 the needs because seniors cannot you know, do certain  
16 things and something will make it better like just  
17 these automatic doors to really take those into  
18 consideration.

19 I know that we've asked for a lot of statistics  
20 and whatever you don't have with you today and you  
21 promise you will send it to us and we expect that you  
22 deliver. Okay.

23 KIM DARGA: We understand.

24 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So, we expect that information  
25 and we look forward to you know, advocating with you

2 especially on the next budget to make sure that we  
3 have enough resources to support our seniors and all  
4 these new wonderful programs and to make sure that  
5 they are permanent funding and not just you know,  
6 discretionary. Just a one shot deal, so we're going  
7 to be working very hard on that.

8 So, thank you for being here and we look forward  
9 to continue working with all of you.

10 PANEL: Thank you so much.

11 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: So, we're going to call up the  
12 next panel. We have Alexander Riley the Legal Aid  
13 Society, Katelyn Andrews from Live On New York,  
14 Peter Kempner from Volunteers of Legal Services,  
15 Suhali Mendez and then, Stacy Bliagos, sorry if I  
16 pronounced your name not correctly.

17 Please identify yourself and your organization.

18 Yes, please begin.

19 ALEXANDER RILEY: Thank you to the Council and  
20 the Chairs Cornegy and Chin for this opportunity.  
21 I'm Alexander Riley; Director of the Elder Law  
22 practice, the civil practice of the Legal Aid  
23 Society. We very much appreciate the opportunity to  
24 testify about these two bills specifically and more

2 generally about the need for affordable housing for  
3 older New Yorkers.

4 As you probably know, the Legal Aid Society is  
5 the oldest and largest nonprofit law firm in the  
6 country and we annually assist low income people on  
7 more than 300,000 matters in the realms of civil  
8 practice, juvenile rights practice and criminal  
9 defense practice.

10 I am based at the Legal Aid Society's Brooklyn  
11 office for the Aging, where for decades we've used a  
12 multidisciplinary approach with lawyers, social  
13 workers, paralegals, to help our clients age safely  
14 in place.

15 First of all, with respect to Intro. 6, regarding  
16 the eviction of elderly tenants, we certainly support  
17 the goal of this legislation and thank Council Member  
18 Barron for having continued to work towards its  
19 passage. A couple of things we wanted to note. One,  
20 is that interestingly the 225, defines a senior as  
21 age 62, excuse me, as age 60. Intro. 6 defines  
22 senior as 62, so we would encourage that the Council  
23 to adopt actually the age 60 for this particular  
24 legislation.



2 I am sure that at least one of my colleagues at  
3 the table is going to talk more about the extent to  
4 which low income seniors are actually able to take  
5 advantage of free legal services at the moment, given  
6 the current limitation income-wise to 200 percent of  
7 poverty level under universal access.

8 I will mention a couple things in relation; one  
9 is certainly, at the moment, many older adults who  
10 are in subject to eviction proceedings in New York  
11 City do not qualify and therefore it would be helpful  
12 to the extent that HPD is going to be conveying  
13 information about legal service's options that they  
14 include the contact information for various bureau  
15 based bar associations. So, that older people who  
16 have the means, can have an option, an opportunity to  
17 seek private council if appropriate.

18 I was interested to hear the Human Rights Council  
19 Commissions Council expressing concern about the  
20 landlords obtaining information about people  
21 regarding potentially protected status related  
22 information. Certainly, share that concern but I  
23 would note that there is a kind of analog with the  
24 existing requirement of New York City Marshals to do  
25 an investigation to determine whether there is

2 someone who is at risk in an apartment who is going  
3 to be subject to eviction.

4 So, even under the current rules, there is a  
5 requirement that a marshal try to obtain that  
6 information then convey it the Department of  
7 Investigation, which then conveys it to Adult  
8 Protective Services.

9 To other things and with respect to Intro. 6, I  
10 was pleased to hear the discussion of the assigned  
11 Council Project program of Legal Aid Society is one  
12 of the providers of this service. I think it's a  
13 great program but currently the number of cases that  
14 are handled under the ACP is very, very small  
15 compared to the need out there. So, we would  
16 certainly hope that there would be an increase in  
17 funding for that and a corresponding increase in the  
18 number of cases.

19 In addition, even older adults who qualify with  
20 respect to their income for free legal services who  
21 might receive notification from HPD about legal  
22 services providers might have the kind of case for  
23 which there is no defense currently, with so-called  
24 no cause evictions.

2 So, there is support for legislation beyond the  
3 scope of today's discussion but providing protections  
4 to people who are in unregulated apartments. We have  
5 a client right now who has been renting the same  
6 unregulated apartment for 20 years and we're trying  
7 to help her with retaliatory eviction defense but  
8 even if we prevail on that, she eventually probably  
9 will have to move out of that apartment in the  
10 absence of any protections.

11 With respect to Intro. 225, we certainly applaud  
12 the Council's interest in expanding older and  
13 disabled apartment builders access to protective  
14 devices. However, we note as did the New York City  
15 Human Rights Commission Counsel that the New York  
16 City Human Rights Law already requires a landlord to  
17 make reasonable modifications at its expense to  
18 disabled persons as a reasonable accommodation of  
19 their disability.

20 So, to that extent, to the extent that the bill  
21 is shifting that cost from the landlord to the  
22 taxpayer, we certainly have concern about that.

23 However, this legislation is of great interest  
24 because it expands the pool of people who would be  
25 entitled to these kinds of modifications.

1  
2 Specifically, to people who are older but who are not  
3 yet disabled and who want these kinds of protective  
4 devices to prevent themselves from becoming disabled.  
5 So, to that extent, this would be a wonderful thing.

6 A couple of other things I wanted to mention in  
7 response to some comments that were made earlier.

8 Chair Chin, you mentioned a problem in relation to  
9 the Home Share program with respect to a subsidy. I  
10 will contact your office to try to get some more  
11 information about that because I would be interested  
12 to know what kinds of problems your constituents are  
13 encountering in that respect.

14 One thing I will note about the Home Share  
15 program that has always concerned me a bit, is what  
16 happens when the relationship between the person who  
17 has brought the roommate in, what happens when that  
18 relationship goes south?

19 I don't know the extent to which DFTA or the New  
20 York Foundation for Seniors can help to intervene in  
21 that situation. There is certainly no funding for  
22 and I'm not necessarily advocating. It's a fact that  
23 there's no funding to help an older person try to  
24 evict a problem roommate. So, an older person would

1  
2 have to go to housing court pro se to try to sort out  
3 that problem.

4       So, I'd be interested to know what these agencies  
5 do in these situations. And then finally, with  
6 respect to SCRIE, Council Member Chin also brought up  
7 some issues regarding this. We certainly share the  
8 belief that this is a critical program. In my  
9 office, we have a retired volunteer lawyer who does  
10 nothing but help seniors with SCRIE applications and  
11 reviews recertifications.

12       But yes, we very much share Council Member Chin's  
13 concern that somebody who applies for SCRIE, by  
14 necessity many years after age 62 may find themselves  
15 nonetheless unable to afford their apartment because  
16 their income has dropped. So, it's not like the  
17 Section 8 program in that sense at all.

18       And finally, just last thing I will mention. It  
19 has to do with what are called redeterminations.

20 It's possible one of my colleagues will discuss this  
21 as well, but currently, if a SCRIE household faces a  
22 drop in income of 20 percent or more, the tenant  
23 share can be redetermined to lower the share to  
24 account for that drop. But the way the system works  
25 currently, the onus is entirely on the tenant. The

1 SCRIE recipient to know that this possibility exists  
2 and to apply for it.  
3

4 We think the Department of Finance and to the  
5 extent the HPD administers the program, should look  
6 out for these situations and affirmatively take steps  
7 to help the SCRIE recipient apply for these  
8 redeterminations or even to just process them on  
9 their own.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you. Yeah, especially  
12 the last program that you talk about, if you could  
13 send us a little bit more information because I don't  
14 know about that program, where if your income or your  
15 household income dropped 20 percent?

16 ALEXANDER RILEY: Yeah, so the way this typically  
17 happens is that someone dies. Someone's spouse dies,  
18 the social security disappears or you know, somebody  
19 moves out. That sort of thing and so, the rules say  
20 that upon a redetermination application, the tenants  
21 frozen rent is supposed to be adjusted downward to  
22 account for this change. But again, the agencies do  
23 not look out for these changes and implement these  
24 reductions themselves. They wait to receive an  
25 application from the tenant who you know, after your

1 spouse has died, the first thing that probably come  
2 to mind is not to go on the SCRIE website and try to  
3 find out, you know, what do I need to do next.

4 So, I think this is anecdotal but I think that  
5 this option is vastly underutilized.

6 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Or they wait until  
7 recertification and then, you know, that issue that  
8 their income is less now and then wait for the agency  
9 to determine. But then they still had to pay the  
10 higher rent, higher portion before recertification.

11 ALEXANDER RILEY: That's right and the agency  
12 will not of its own accord redetermine. The agency  
13 waits for a specific separate redetermination  
14 application.

15 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Okay, we'll definitely take a  
16 look at that. Thank you.

17 ALEXANDER RILEY: Thank you.

18 KATELYN ANDREWS: My name is Katelyn Andrews; I  
19 am here on behalf of Live On New York. Live On New  
20 York is a membership organization representing about  
21 100 community based organizations that serve seniors  
22 across the five boroughs. We also are proud to  
23 convene our affordable senior housing coalition,  
24 which includes roughly 25 nonprofit affordable senior  
25

2 housing developers and other stakeholders that work  
3 together to ensure the needs of seniors are served  
4 throughout New York City as the City continues to  
5 expand its programs.

6 I know we have really well explicated the need  
7 that exists across the city but I do want to touch on  
8 one statistic. A recent study came out by the  
9 University of Pennsylvania that took a look at New  
10 York City's older adult population currently existing  
11 in shelter, and with the projections that they were  
12 able to take a look at what that is projected to  
13 become. And the estimate was that by 2030, it is  
14 likely that 7,000 older adults will be in the shelter  
15 system.

16 That is up from roughly 1,438 individuals who  
17 spent last December in temporary shelter. The reason  
18 that I point this out so explicitly, is that I don't  
19 think that we have hit the tip of the iceberg in  
20 terms of the housing crisis that exists to seniors  
21 and that's why it is so important that we're having  
22 today's hearing and I thank the Chairs for the  
23 opportunity to testify.

24 I do certainly appreciate and respect the  
25 administrations ongoing efforts and the Seniors First



1  
2 initiative is a really historic pillar of the city's  
3 housing plan and a level of intent to serve seniors  
4 that need affordable housing that we've not seen  
5 previously. Through this initiative, New York City  
6 is now home to the nation's first LGBTQ friendly  
7 affordable senior housing development that was  
8 developed by SAGE and Partners. Queens has opened  
9 its doors to HANAC's new environmentally friendly  
10 housing building, which I know Stacey will talk about  
11 today. And the Bronx's is welcomed with [INAUDIBLE  
12 3:04:26], which will bring significant new healthcare  
13 resources to the Bronx community.

14 Those are just three projects and they represent  
15 what is possible when we continue to make  
16 investments. With that said, I do want to create  
17 some recommendations on how we can continue to refine  
18 and improve the program and the resources we have  
19 today.

20 First and most importantly, we strongly recommend  
21 an increase to the per unit allocation of service  
22 funds through the SARA program that is administered  
23 by HRA. We recommend that 3,000 per unit per senior  
24 that is coming from the housing connect system be  
25 allocated through this program.

1  
2       Currently, only 5,000 in funding is awarded per  
3 SARA unit that is occupied by a formerly homeless  
4 senior, which makes up 30 percent of the buildings  
5 unit. That means that 70 percent of the building  
6 does not receive service subsidy.

7       With that said, the 30 percent of funding that is  
8 received is expected to serve all of the tenants.  
9 So, while we certainly appreciate the inclusive  
10 nature of this funding and would never want services  
11 in a building to be only targeted to one demographic,  
12 we do believe that the service amount that is  
13 currently available is not sufficient to serve the  
14 building in the way that is needed for robust  
15 programming for seniors.

16       I point this out specifically in term of the  
17 security questions that were asked earlier. A number  
18 of providers we know would love to offer 24/7  
19 security in their buildings. I know that this is  
20 something that seniors need and beyond just a  
21 security perspective, it's important for a senior to  
22 have a face when they walk in the door and somebody  
23 who can say, is everything alright? Do you need  
24 assistance maybe to call an ambulance in the middle  
25 of the night or whatever that senior might need

1  
2 outside of the service perspective of benefits  
3 applications and all of that.

4       So, I think that that front desk service really  
5 needs to be something that is explicitly funded and  
6 make sure that adequate funding is available for all  
7 housing providers to do so.

8       I also want to reiterate that funding needs to  
9 increased. Recently City Council passed the  
10 prevailing wage legislation, which is really exciting  
11 for building service workers. However, that does not  
12 extend to the human service workers that are in the  
13 building which are predominantly female,  
14 predominantly women of color. So, we are going to  
15 see a bit of disparity within building services and  
16 we want to make sure that the Human Services  
17 counterparts in those buildings also receive wage  
18 increases as well, which is why this \$3,000 per unit  
19 that would go to the 70 percent of units that are  
20 unfunded would be so important.

21       Secondly, I think that Live On New York would  
22 like to continue to emphasize the city's need to  
23 develop housing outside of the NYCHA Next Gen  
24 program. As city land becomes available, it's  
25

1  
2 important that we capitalize on those opportunities  
3 for nonprofits to develop housing.

4       Additionally, we need to ensure that senior  
5 housing is prioritized in the pipeline. We know that  
6 there's only so many resources from the federal  
7 government that come through to make these buildings  
8 possible. Whether it be volume cap or project based  
9 vouchers and we need to know that when determining  
10 what projects are going to be funded, that senior  
11 housing is a priority within that pipeline. It's  
12 something that I know HPD works hard to do given the  
13 limited constraints that they currently have but I  
14 think increasing that emphasis would be certainly  
15 welcomed and I want to add that I think it would be  
16 helpful for the city to articulate when projects are  
17 not able to go through, due to limitations in the  
18 federal supports that they are receiving, whether it  
19 be project based vouchers, Section 8, whatever it may  
20 be. So, that advocates are aware of to the extent  
21 that they are being hamstrung by decreased federal  
22 investment. So, that we can then advocate for the  
23 federal government to increase their share, because  
24 currently we don't know how many projects are being  
25

1 hindered due to lack of investment from outside  
2 levels of government.  
3

4 Finally, we certainly recommend further  
5 coordination between city agencies. Within the NYCHA  
6 Next Gen program, the initial RFP included a mandate  
7 to include community space within those buildings.

8 So, if a building was going to be 100 percent  
9 affordable housing for seniors, most of the time  
10 those developers thought it would be appropriate to  
11 include a senior center to meet the needs of that  
12 building. However, the timelines for when you're  
13 financing a building with HPD, might not correlate to  
14 the timeline for a city procurement to get funding  
15 for a senior center. Which is a challenge, we know  
16 that the city is about to re-procure the senior  
17 center system, but after FY'22, when those  
18 determinations have been made, how can we continue to  
19 ensure that senior centers are brought into the  
20 pipeline especially knowing that some senior centers  
21 have capital needs and this could be an opportunity  
22 to get new space, new equipment, new facilities.

23 So, just continuing to make sure that those  
24 agencies have the resources they need and even  
25 Department of City Planning to make sure that the

1 buildings are looking at where are they being  
2 positioned and is it a neighborhood with increasing  
3 senior populations that should explicitly consider  
4 including a senior center, that would certainly be  
5 welcomed.  
6

7 Finally, I just want to add that Live On New York  
8 recognizes that NYCHA is one of the greatest  
9 affordable housing opportunities for seniors. So, we  
10 appreciate Council's continued efforts to support  
11 public housing in New York City. Thank you.

12 PETER KEMPNER: Good afternoon, my name is Peter  
13 Kempner; I'm the Legal Director at Volunteers of  
14 Legal Service where I oversee our elderly project and  
15 our veterans initiative.

16 Our elderly project; there is a number of things  
17 we do. Legal clinics at senior centers and at NORC's  
18 around the city as well as providing training in  
19 supportive services for many community based service  
20 providers for seniors and our core work is actually  
21 to do advanced directives and other life planning  
22 documents for low income seniors using our volunteer  
23 attorneys that work with us.

24 We thank the City Council's Committee on Aging  
25 and Housing and Buildings for holding this hearing

2 and aside from the need for advanced directives,  
3 which is our core work, the number one issue that we  
4 see from our clients is housing and security. Our  
5 clients are facing eviction, they have housing repair  
6 issues, rent overcharge issues, tenant harassment  
7 issues and so, we really do applaud and support  
8 Introduction 6.

9 Having access to Council and having universal  
10 access to council is only as good as people being  
11 able to find out about this program. And so, I think  
12 it is critically important to put seniors on notice  
13 when they are facing eviction that there is a  
14 potentially the availability of counsel to represent  
15 them in an eviction proceeding. But the counsel  
16 needs to recognize that there's real limitations to  
17 the universal access to counsel program right now.

18 Certainly, as it is being rolled out zip code by  
19 zip code, so many of the seniors that I meet just  
20 don't live in the right zip codes to be able to avail  
21 themselves of this program. And so, the door is shut  
22 to them to being able to receive counsel in housing  
23 court.

24 In addition, the 200 percent of the federal  
25 poverty level cap also cuts out many of the seniors

2 we see from being able to get free legal services in  
3 their eviction proceedings. And you know, when you  
4 look at those numbers, a senior who makes \$2,100 a  
5 month right now is over income to receive free  
6 counsel in housing court.

7 You know, and they do not look at whether this  
8 person is spending 50 or 70 or 80 percent of their  
9 income on their housing costs. And so, so many  
10 people that we see are being shut out are unable to  
11 access this program.

12 I will give you an example of a subset of the  
13 elderly population that it will be completely cut out  
14 of this program and that is elderly veterans. So, it  
15 somebody is a service connected veteran and right  
16 now, the youngest Vietnam era veterans are 64 years  
17 old. And that veteran population in New York City is  
18 rapidly growing and so, if you are 100 percent  
19 service connected disabled, you have sacrificed the  
20 most in service to this country and you receive those  
21 benefits from the VA, you get approximately \$3,100  
22 per month.

23 Those veterans who sacrifice the most and are  
24 facing eviction in housing court are not eligible to  
25 receive free counsel under universal access to



1  
2 counsel and so, I think that's a shame and there is  
3 actually a solution and that's a bill that's pending  
4 before the Council. I believe it has 30 co-sponsors  
5 currently, Introduction 1104 and that would increase  
6 the income cap for getting universal access to  
7 counsel in housing court to 400 percent of the  
8 federal poverty level.

9 That will bring in all of those disabled veterans  
10 to be able to make sure that they don't face  
11 eviction. It will bring in many other seniors who  
12 are just slightly over that \$2,100 per month cap to  
13 ensure that they have access to counsel as well under  
14 the program.

15 And so, that I think going hand and hand with  
16 informing seniors about their right to counsel is  
17 critically important because getting that list is  
18 only as good as being able to access the people on  
19 that list.

20 So, and in a position that also will bring  
21 universal access to counsel in line with the SCRIE  
22 program. The SCRIE income cap is \$50,000. When you  
23 look at what 400 percent of the federal poverty level  
24 is for an individual right now, it's \$49,500  
25 approximately. And so, those two numbers are very

1 much in line with one another and so, if we're  
2 recognizing that we want to preserve and keep down  
3 housing costs for people who are at or below \$50,000  
4 in income, why aren't we providing access to counsel  
5 for the same people in that situation. So, I think  
6 that is important as well.  
7

8 We are also concerned about some of the  
9 enforcement aspects of this law. I think there was a  
10 discuss about how do landlords know somebody is 60  
11 and over. But also, on the other side of things, how  
12 do we know whether or not a landlord has notified HPD  
13 that they have a senior tenant that they are bringing  
14 to housing court. There's no language in the statute  
15 that would require the landlord to put the court on  
16 notice that they informed HPD of a senior tenant.  
17 There will be no way for the court to check whether  
18 or not the landlord has complied with the statute.

19 And so, you know, we would recommend that there  
20 will some sort of requirement that the landlord file  
21 proof with the court, either saying that they believe  
22 that there is nobody over the age of 62 in the  
23 household or that they put HPD on notice and provide  
24 proof of that notice to the court when filing a  
25 proceeding. There is actually a very similar

2 requirement under the service member civil relief  
3 act. Currently where they have to notify the court  
4 whether or not there is an active duty service member  
5 in the household.

6 So, landlords and landlords attorneys are not  
7 unfamiliar with that kind of pre-process to say to  
8 the court, look we did this preliminary step. It  
9 also happens in proceedings against Section 8  
10 tenants, where they have to NYCHA on notice that  
11 they're bringing in an eviction proceeding against a  
12 Section 8 tenant under the Williams Consent Decree.  
13 So, this process could mirror what already happens  
14 with service members with Section 8 recipients. So,  
15 it doesn't create too much of a burden on landlords  
16 and it ensure compliance with the statute.

17 Lastly, I just want to — you know, we've spoken a  
18 lot about SCRIE today and in SCRIE is really Linchpin  
19 program in ensuring that seniors have affordable  
20 housing in the city. That they are able to age in  
21 place with dignity and respect. And recently the  
22 Administration actually put out a set of regulations  
23 that while some of them do further the purpose of the  
24 program, others actually work to undermine the  
25 program. And so, I know that there was a recent

2 public hearing about that and many of the service  
3 providers who serve this community put in comments  
4 showing you know, their concerns with the  
5 administrations regulations and I just want to make  
6 sure that the Council is on notice about these things  
7 and as ensuring that what the administration does in  
8 clarifying things with SCRIE also furthers the intent  
9 of the program and does not undermine it.

10 So, thank you again for the opportunity to  
11 testify today.

12 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you, thanks.

13 SUHALI MENDEZ: Good afternoon, thank you for  
14 allowing myself to testify on this matter. My name  
15 is Suhali Mendez and I'm an advocate in the  
16 Disability Justice Program at New York Lawyers for  
17 the Public Interest, otherwise known as NYLPI.

18 NYLPI is a Civil Rights organization with a  
19 robust disability rights practice and housing  
20 advocacy for people with disabilities is an important  
21 part of our work.

22 NYLPI represents tenants and matters involving  
23 the need for reasonable accommodations such as  
24 apartment and common areas retrofitting transfers to  
25 accessible apartments and protection and use of

2 service animals, as well as other housing  
3 discrimination issues. We appreciate the opportunity  
4 to provide testimony regarding the accessible housing  
5 in New York City.

6 So, I'm going to touch more on bill 225 and we  
7 commend Council Member Brannan's bill in ensuring  
8 that senior citizens and people with disabilities  
9 continue to live meaningful lives within their  
10 communities.

11 New York City housing stock is vastly  
12 inaccessible to people with disabilities. Landlords  
13 failures to provide reasonable accommodations for  
14 their tenants. For example, providing an individual  
15 who is deaf with a smoke alarm that flashes  
16 constitutes discrimination and impacts the resilience  
17 of our communities by causing displacement.

18 Landlords are responsible to comply with anti-  
19 discrimination laws in New York City and the city  
20 must enforce penalties for landlords who do not  
21 adequately address repairs. Or who otherwise  
22 discriminates against their tenants.

23 The installation of protected devices will allow  
24 people with disabilities to be able to live  
25 independently without a risk to their safety. It is

2 important to make tenants aware of this right as well  
3 as being able to request this through their landlord  
4 and management company directly without the fear of  
5 any form of discrimination or retaliation for those  
6 requests.

7 So, our organization has been around for more  
8 than 40 years and we advocate on behalf of New  
9 Yorkers who are otherwise marginalized and we utilize  
10 the community lowering model to bridge gaps between  
11 civil rights services and civil rights advocacy in  
12 order to fortify capacity for both individual  
13 solutions and long-term impact and we use tools of  
14 comprehensive organizing policy campaigns, impact  
15 litigations as well as individual legal services.  
16 And we're guided by the priorities of the communities  
17 that we serve, specifically the rights of people with  
18 disabilities.

19 And with equal access to healthcare, immigration  
20 opportunity, integrated local nonprofits, environment  
21 justice for low income communities of color.

22 And again, I thank you for the opportunity to let  
23 me speak on behalf of bill 225. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you.  
25

1  
2 STACY BLIAGOS: Good afternoon, thank you Chairs  
3 Council Member Chin, Council Member Cornegy and the  
4 other Council Members present for the opportunity to  
5 testify today. My name is Stacy Bliagos; I am the  
6 new Executive Director of HANAC.

7 HANAC is a multifaceted social service  
8 organization that has served vulnerable populations  
9 for over 45 years touching the lives of over 35,000  
10 individuals with a wide range of programs.

11 Before I begin my testimony, I would like to  
12 thank Speaker Johnson and the Members of the Council  
13 for their steadfast support of HANAC's programs  
14 throughout the years.

15 With our partnership, we have been able to serve  
16 thousands of individuals and families with  
17 programming such as senior centers, youth development  
18 and workforce training. Today, I would like to speak  
19 in support of increased funding for affordable  
20 housing for our ever growing aging population. As  
21 you know, New York City is home to more than one  
22 million adults over the age of 60.

23 In Queens, we provide significant services for  
24 our aging population where there is over a quarter  
25 million older adults. The need for affordable

2 housing and related services is a critical issue the  
3 entire country is facing. The demand in New York  
4 City for sustainable, affordable housing continues to  
5 grow and unfortunately, supplies extremely limited.

6 I am happy to report with the support of the City  
7 Council and the Administration, we opened a new  
8 senior affordable housing complex, HANAC Corona  
9 Senior Gardens in the fall of last year in Corona  
10 Queens. It a 68 unit housing development which  
11 includes a ground floor pre-kindergarten program and  
12 will be one of the first passive house certified  
13 buildings in New York for older adults.

14 Passive house buildings use up to 90 percent less  
15 energy for heating and cooling of residents compared  
16 to a traditional construction. The residential units  
17 were quickly occupied and the community is still  
18 clamoring for more affordable housing.

19 Overall, HANAC operates four senior housing  
20 buildings, totaling over 600 units and we have well  
21 over 45,000 seniors on our housing wait list. HANAC  
22 also operates four senior centers across queens and  
23 overall serves over 3,500 older adults annually  
24 through various services such as congregate lunches



1  
2 and breakfast, exercise classes, and mental health  
3 counseling.

4 Over the years, we have witnessed a growing need  
5 for older adult programming and housing. We at HANAC  
6 have also seen a high demand for employment, while  
7 older adults are less likely to be employed, the  
8 number of working older adults is growing  
9 dramatically.

10 We believe this is due to a lack of retirement  
11 savings, limited government support and overall  
12 economic inflation, especially in housing, which is  
13 driving many older adults to the work force again.

14 While we are here to discuss the senior housing  
15 crisis, I would be remised if I didn't also address  
16 the need for senior employment training and support  
17 needed for those in the workforce. We are grateful  
18 for the City Council's leadership in taking on this  
19 issue and support that it already gives us for these  
20 services. We look forward to continuing to work  
21 closely with your committees and your colleagues on  
22 the council to help discover new and innovative  
23 solutions to house all older adults in quality  
24 affordable housing. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you very much for your  
3 testimony and your suggestions and we really  
4 appreciate all the great work that all of you do in  
5 your day to day work and supporting our seniors. So,  
6 we look forward to continuing to work with you to  
7 make sure that you know, these important legislation  
8 will be better and we will be able to pass them, but  
9 also some of the programs that HPD talked about, that  
10 we can make it better and so that we can make sure  
11 that our seniors continue to age in New York City  
12 with dignity and in the neighborhood that they helped  
13 to build.

14 So, I really appreciate all your great work and  
15 your suggestions for us.

16 CO-CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: So, I would like to echo  
17 the sentiments of my Co-Chair and just add that your  
18 advocacy and on the groundwork on the daily basis  
19 with our seniors makes us able to do a relatively  
20 effective job. So, without you, this work would be  
21 much more difficult. So, I personally want to thank  
22 you on behalf of the seniors that I represent. We  
23 seem to be aging faster than everyone else in the  
24 city in Bed Stuy and Crown Heights. And  
25 consequently, are in very much need of your services

2 and appreciate the work that you do every single day  
3 on their behalf. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you all for being here  
5 today. I think that's all the testimony. So, thank  
6 you to my Co-Chair Council Member Cornegy. This  
7 hearing is now adjourned. [GAVEL].

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date April 1, 2018