Mayor's Office of Management and Budget

TESTIMONY OF JACQUES JIHA, Ph.D.
BUDGET DIRECTOR

Fiscal Year 2026 Executive Budget
May 30, 2025

Good morning, Speaker Adams, Chair Brannan, and members of the Finance Committee and City Council. Thank you for the opportunity to testify here today about the FY26 Executive Budget.

I am Jacques Jiha, Director of the New York City Mayor's Office of Management and Budget. I am joined by OMB First Deputy Director, Kenneth Godiner, and Senior Deputy Directors Tara Boirard and Latonia McKinney.

The FY26 Executive Budget is balanced at $115.1 billion, with manageable out-year gaps of $4.6 billion, $5.8 billion, and $5.7 billion in FY27 through FY29. Our budget reserves remain at a record level of $8.5 billion.

Four fundamental elements shape the Executive Budget: a strong economy, significant savings, sound and targeted investments, and fiscal discipline.

First, the economy remains resilient. As a result, the labor market is strong, with employment at an all-time high and unemployment declining across all demographics. Notably, unemployment among Black and Hispanic New Yorkers has dropped by more than two percentage points since this administration took office.

The city's population is also rebounding from the pandemic-era dip, and tourism has returned to near-record levels.

Additionally, Wall Street posted a near-record performance in 2024. This strong economic growth led to an upward revision in tax-revenue forecast over the FY26 Preliminary Budget of $1.7 billion in FY25 and $1 billion in FY26. This represents growth of about 8 percent in FY25, but tax revenue is projected to grow by about 1 percent next fiscal year as the economy is anticipated to slow.

Achieving savings is a key administration priority. Total savings in this plan are $1.9 billion over FY25 and FY26, and were attained without service cuts, or layoffs. This includes asylum-seeker savings of $298 million in FY25 and $1.2 billion in FY26 to reflect the census decline. This brings the two-year savings total from all sources over the last three plans to nearly $6.8 billion.

As a result of the strong economy and savings program we were able to make critical upstream investments and reduce risks in the financial plan by baselining funding for many recurring programs that had been funded with short-term stimulus dollars or one-year at a time.

And despite our good fortune, we remain fiscally disciplined, we invested prudently. City funded expenditures within the FY26 Executive Budget grew just 1.3 percent over the Preliminary Budget. And it is 2.2 percent, or $2 billion, lower than it was at last year's Executive Budget.

We added nearly $900 million to protect critical services for the most vulnerable members of our community in the current fiscal year. This includes the city's

Medicaid contribution, CityFHEPS rental assistance, cash assistance, HIV/AIDS housing services, and housing vouchers and social services for seniors, and more.

We took steps to support human services providers and non-profits that partner with the city to deliver essential services to the community by funding indirect rate growth for NYC Aging, the New York City Public Schools, and our Human Resources Administration and making cost-of-living adjustments for criminal justice providers.

We have also invested $1.4 billion in public safety, cleanliness, affordability, education and childcare in FY26. And more than $675 million is baselined.

It is important to highlight that many of these investments are supported by members of this council. There is no end to what we can achieve together -- for our communities, for our city, and for our future.

To safeguard the constitutional right to counsel, we strengthened support for indigent defense providers. We also funded criminal justice initiatives, including alternatives to incarceration and enhanced supervision. And to promote successful reentry, we're helping decarcerated individuals secure housing, employment, mentorship, and healthcare.

And, we added support for Trauma Recovery Centers, which provide safe spaces and treatment to survivors of violent crime who have less access to traditional victim services.

We have also increased staffing at the Civilian Complaint Review Board.

Further, the funding in this financial plan keeps the city on the path to 35,000 police officers on the streets by the fall of 2026.

In this plan we are also deepening the mayor's commitment to his "Get Stuff Clean" and "Trash Revolution" initiatives by baselining support for litter basket pickup throughout the city, spaces that were frequently overlooked, historically not well kept, and trash pickup on the perimeter of parks and greenways.

This is on top of the investment we made in the Preliminary Budget to expand the Parks Department's second shift, bringing resources to 100 new "hot spots" in 64 parks across the five boroughs.

In this plan, we have added over $100 million annually to backfill expired stimulus dollars and restore savings to NYC Aging. This funding will help ensure dignity and quality of life for older New Yorkers through home delivered meals, older adult centers, and more.

And to fight food insecurity, we have included funding for over 700 food pantries across the city through the "Community Food Connection" program, and the popular "Groceries to Go" program.

And because cost should not be a barrier to getting to work, school, the doctor, or childcare provider, we will maintain funding for Fair Fares. And, once again Summer Youth Employment participants will receive free Metro Cards.

We restored nearly $100 million in funding for CUNY, and maintained support for the "Accelerate, Complete, and Engage," "Accelerated Study in Associate Programs," and the Brooklyn Recovery Corps at Medgar Evers College.

Further, we added $45 million in annual support for the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs' Cultural Development Fund and Cultural Institution Group. This is the first time in 20 years that this funding has been baselined.

We also added more than $15 million across the public library branch budgets next fiscal year.

Now, there is annual funding of nearly $200 million for education programs that had been supported with short-term stimulus. To ensure the continuity of these critical programs, we baselined resources for 3-K, arts education, teacher recruitment, Project Pivot, computer science education, and more. We have also baselined support for over 700 early childhood education seats for three- and four-year-olds in special education Pre-K.

Further, the Mayor has expanded the "After-School for All" program, which will strengthen and scale the program to achieve the mayor's vision of making the program "universal." This includes adding seats for 20,000 K-5 students by the fall of 2027. This is a baselined investment that grows to $331 million over the financial plan. In two fiscal years the city will work with community groups to conduct a needs assessment and gather input on further slot expansion.

Though there's much more to say on education and childcare, I'll highlight three other priorities. We've committed baselined funding for school nurses, new teachers to meet class size targets, and we're funding PromiseNYC in the year ahead.

Because reading, writing, and communication skills are crucial to social and economic mobility, we are investing in Adult Literacy Programming.

Although we have made robust investments and baselined many initiatives for the first time, we must acknowledge the significant challenges and risks that remain ahead

We are still caring for more than 38,000 asylum seekers on our own at a monthly cost of approximately $200 million, with total estimated costs since July 2022 totaling $7.7 billion.

In the Preliminary Budget, we had assumed that the state would provide $1 billion in resources in its FY26 budget to cover migrant expenses. Because we had to release the Executive Budget before state budget adoption, and it was apparent that the state would not meet this need, we backfilled this budget hole with city resources. We also reflected cost shifts of $166 million annually related to MTA Paratransit obligations and after 4pm school bussing.

To our disappointment, the adopted state budget shifted far more costs to the city than we had anticipated. This includes an $275 million annual increase in the city's annual contribution for childcare vouchers, which has grown to $328 million. Altogether, the state budget will cost city taxpayers an additional $550 million annually, bringing the total state budget impact to about $1.7 billion.

We also face risks related to funding cuts at the federal level and changes to grant requirements. In addition, the trade policy announced in early April and the subsequent impact on financial markets pose a potential threat to the city's economy as well as its tax base.

The federal administration is reviewing grants to ensure that they comply with the president's recent executive orders and has terminated funding for some entities. Additionally, several federal agencies have added grant certification requirements designed to force conformity with revised immigration and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policies.

Our office, in coordination with the Law Department, is closely monitoring grant cancellations and new grant requirements, and the city is actively engaged in litigation where appropriate, often in conjunction with other localities.

But at the end of the day, we may have to make very difficult decisions about the extent of our ongoing reliance on federal funding to support critical city services. Some may be tempted to apply budget reserves, but these funds would only provide temporary support. Once these reserves are used, they are gone. The reality is that no municipality has the resources to backfill federal funding.

Put simply, we have some serious challenges ahead of us. As we get closer to budget adoption, I look forward to working with the council to protect the city's interests in Albany and Washington and identify resources to fund our many joint priorities to support our recovery, promote public health and safety, expand opportunity, and improve the lives of everyday New Yorkers.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
BRAD LANDER

Testimony of New York City Comptroller Brad Lander
New York City Council Finance Committee
New York City's FY 2026 Executive Budget

May 30, 2025

Speaker Adams, Chair Brannan, members of the Finance Committee and of the City Council, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about the Fiscal Year 2026 Executive Budget. I am pleased to be joined by Executive Deputy Comptroller Francesco Brindisi and Deputy Comptroller for Budget Krista Olson, who prepared our Office's full analysis of the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget and accompanying Financial Plan.

When I came before you in early March, I noted that our city's need for strong fiscal management had never been more urgent. The threats posed by the Trump Administration to New York City – its people, its economy, and its finances – have only intensified since then. With its dizzying back and forth, and actual implementation of tariffs, the Trump Administration has introduced chaos into the national economy and created extraordinary levels of uncertainty. It has attempted to terminate, pause, or rescind hundreds of millions in federal grants already awarded to the City through its flurry of executive orders and policy changes. This is even before considering the potential devastation that the Congressional Budget Reconciliation Bill could have on federal aid flowing not only to the City government, but also to New York State, as well as directly to New Yorkers.

It was in this environment, that the Adams Administration blithely released its self-proclaimed "best budget ever," with little recognition of the grave reality the City faces from actions in Washington. The Executive Budget and May Financial Plan, while reflecting record-high revenues, adds nothing to the City's budgeted reserves or to its rainy day fund. When adjusted for pre-payments, spending budgeted for FY 2025 is $1.45 billion more than projected revenues, continuing a pattern of running a deficit for the third year in a row.

The May Plan also reflects larger outyear budget gaps than those projected by the Mayor in January, with no real savings program to address them. And, this is before accounting for the Mayor's practice of underbudgeting, which totals a whopping $4.05 billion in FY 2026 – $3.60 billion on average in the outyears – when including the costs of rental assistance, overtime, shelter, Carter Cases, MTA subsidies, and more.

At a time when the Mayor should be preparing New York City for a potentially more constrained fiscal reality, the May Plan, in many ways, reflects just the opposite.

My Office remains focused on protecting New York and preparing for the challenges that may come. Given the great economic uncertainty and the risks that changes at the federal level present, my Office has gone ahead and prepared two new economic and revenue forecasts – one that assumes we do not enter a recession and another that accounts for a mild recession. In the no recession scenario, my Office projects that City revenues will exceed OMB's estimates by $292 million this year and by $108 million in FY 2026, growing to $2.95 billion in FY 2029. Applying the formula my Office previously proposed to establish annual minimum deposits into the Revenue Stabilization Fund would, in this scenario, mean depositing $1.46 billion into the rainy day fund this fiscal year. In the case of a mild recession, where higher tariffs persist into 2026, my Office's tax revenue estimates fall by $225 million this year, by $2.33 billion in FY 2026, by $2.12 billion in FY 2027, and by $350 million in FY 2028, before rebounding in FY 2029. We would still be making a rainy day fund deposit of $1.34 billion this year bringing the fund balance to $3.30 billion, which could then be used in FY 2026 and FY 2027 if a recession transpires based on the guidelines proposed by my Office.

I am also again calling on the City to add $1 billion to the general reserve in the FY 2026 budget to establish the "Protecting New York City Reserve." As we brace for potentially devasting cuts not only to direct federal funding to the City but also to federally funded programs that keep millions of New Yorkers housed and fed, these funds would be set aside and could be deployed to mitigate the worst of the likely impacts. Already, the Federal government has announced cuts of hundreds of millions of dollars, and the House Republicans have approved nearly $15 billion in NY State cuts and cost shifts in healthcare and SNAP benefits alone. Together, if implemented, all of this could easily translate to a $10 billion reduction in services to NYC residents. Trump and the members of Congress effectuating his agenda have made no secret of the pain they intend to inflict on working-class people, and there is no reason we should be caught flat-footed. We should be equally uncompromising in our fiscal planning.

In either economic scenario, my Office estimates that budget gaps will be larger than those presented by OMB. In the no recession scenario, we project the City will end FY 2025 with a gap of $1.76 billion, growing to $5.77 billion in FY 2026 and totaling $8.82 billion in FY 2029. This is the result of higher spending estimates, including the deposit into the rainy day fund in FY 2025 and higher general reserve in FY 2026.

In the recession scenario, the FY 2025 gap would increase modestly by $112 million to $1.87 billion. With rainy day fund withdrawals of $1.65 billion in each of the next two years partially offsetting lower revenues, gaps would increase to $6.45 billion and $9.30 billion in FY 2026 and FY 2027, respectively. Gaps in FY 2028 and FY 2029 would be closer to the no recession scenario.

I want to turn now to an issue that perhaps exemplifies the Mayor's disregard for this political moment and what it means for New York more than any other: immigration. The detention of Dylan, a New York City public school student attending ELLIS Prep in the Bronx, underscores exactly what's at stake. Dylan did everything right—he followed all the rules, showed up to court as required, and was still arrested by ICE agents outside the courthouse. His case is a chilling reminder that even New Yorkers who play by the rules are vulnerable and need legal representation. It's exactly why we must invest in immigration legal services—so no unaccompanied minor has to show up to immigration court alone.

It is unconscionable that the Mayor's budget does so little to protect immigrant New Yorkers or to shore up the dedicated legal services organizations working under increasingly challenging circumstances to support them. While the Mayor has consistently failed to right-size resources for immigrant legal services, escalating anti-immigrant actions taken by the Trump Administration – and aided by Mayor Adams – make these omissions in the Executive Budget all the more shameful.

The City should begin to fill the holes in immigrant legal services in this year's budget. This includes $7 million for ICARE, so that immigrant children like Dylan have access to attorneys that will ensure their cases have a fighting chance. Thanks to Musk and DOGE, who abruptly terminated federal contracts funding legal representation for unaccompanied children in removal proceedings, more and more immigrant children are facing deportation alone. These children, some not even out of diapers yet, are left to navigate immigration proceedings alone in a foreign language. We can debate the relative merits of many worthy initiatives, but I hope we can agree that we cannot be a city that accepts this reality for our most vulnerable kids.

Funding should also be allocated to restore ActionNYC in schools, hospitals, and libraries and to support MOIA's Immigrant Rights Workshops. And while I commend the Council for providing funding to keep the Rapid Response Legal Collaborative going, full mayoral funding should be restored to match the growing demand. The administration must also increase funding for CCHR and DCWP to protect working New Yorkers and bolster resources for street vendors, including funding to support processing of permits and increased outreach and education.

Furthermore, I urge the Speaker to increase the Trans Equity Fund to $10 million using Council Discretionary funds and to work with the Mayor to increase funding for LGBTQ youth and young adult housing and ensure that New Yorkers can still access gender affirming care despite potential changes in federal policy.

The City budget must reflect our shared values. It should not be used as a tool to further one executive's apparent desire to collude with Trump, but rather should be used to invest in our families and children and protect our most vulnerable New Yorkers.

Yet resources for DOE, and 3-K in particular, continue to be among the casualties of the Mayor's perennial budget games. Although the May Plan included some additional funding for 3-K and Pre-K, my Office estimates that more than $150 million is needed annually in FY 2026 and forward to sustain programming at current levels. Meanwhile, the Executive Budget also fails to reckon with reality by leaving childcare vouchers, which enable tens of thousands of families to access affordable care, at risk. While the State encouraged the City to increase enrollment, it is now requiring the City to pay half of the bill. Poor planning and communication on the part of both the City and the State have led to families facing uncertainty. The State appropriated an additional $350 million for the program, but for State fiscal year 2026 only, and at the same time increased the City's minimum contribution – resulting in funding needs of at least $275 million for the program in FY 2026 and growing to at least $625 million in future years, unless additional funding is provided. None of which is included in the Executive Budget.

To be clear: New York City families need and deserve City leadership that is working toward a vision of truly accessible universal childcare, not pointing fingers over the shortcomings in the existing system. Although the Mayor has failed to articulate a plan to overcome the funding gap, this budget can still – and must – take necessary steps to ensure that no families currently receiving subsidies lose them.

The Executive Budget for FY 2026 lacks even the most basic elements to guard against the risks we now face. By beginning to set aside critical reserves while protecting services that are a lifeline for the most vulnerable in our city, I believe we can deliver a budget that is closer to what New Yorkers expect of us and deserve.

Thank you.

New York City Independent Budget Office

Director Louisa Chafee

City Budget Overview

Analysis of the May 2025 Executive Budget And 2025-2029 Financial Plan

May 20, 2025

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Introduction

Amid a rapidly changing federal policy landscape, New York City's Mayor and City Council are heading into negotiations for the 2026 fiscal year budget, which begins on July 1, 2025. Since entering office, the Trump administration has implemented fast-moving, chaotic policy rollouts. Usually during economic downturns, the federal government works to smooth the economic cycle and help state and local governments navigate financially. Now, the federal government is the underlying cause of much of the turmoil. Meanwhile, despite New York City's status as a sanctuary city and the City Charter Preamble guiding the City to "remedy past and continuing harms ... to promote justice and equity for all New Yorkers," Mayor Adams remains largely silent. This is in contrast with many other state and local leaders who act as champions of and for their jurisdictions.

"Usually during economic downturns, the federal government works to smooth the economic cycle and help state and local governments navigate financially. Now, the federal government is the underlying cause of much of the turmoil."

In this report, the Independent Budget Office (IBO) presents its analysis of the Adams administration's Fiscal Year 2026 Executive Budget and 2025-2029 Financial Plan, as required by Chapter 10 of the New York City Charter. IBO observes ongoing structural budget gaps, assesses the status of the local economy, forecasts a larger surplus for the current year, and calls for more reserves to be added to weather a deeply unpredictable environment.

The Executive Budget was issued under challenging circumstances—during turmoil caused by the federal government, without a State Enacted Budget, and amid other ongoing budgetary challenges facing New York City. IBO recognizes that these challenges also fall in an election year.

Changing Federal Landscape and Late State Budget Cloud Budget Planning

Federal dollars play a direct role in both the State and City's ability to pay for planned expenses. New York State's fiscal year 2025 budget of $240 billion included $89.2 billion (37% of total State budget) in federal funding. The Adams administration's fiscal year 2025 budget of $119.8 billion includes $10.5 billion in federal funds in 2025 (9% of the total City budget) and $7.4 billion in 2026 (6%). It is not unusual for the City to budget conservatively for federal aid in the fiscal years following the current one. The Mayor's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) typically increases budgeted amounts for federal funding as awards or appropriations are announced. Although budget cuts are central to the Trump administration's agenda, the budgeted reduction in federal funding from 2025 to 2026 in the City's financial plan largely stems from the winding down of pandemic stimulus dollars.

Meanwhile, efforts to slash the size of the Federal government have abruptly cut off federal agency funding, grants, and staffing—at least temporarily. Furthermore, disbursements of federal funding already appropriated by Congress have been held back or reversed. Previously stable federal funding streams to the City and State, such as the Community Development Block Grant, Section 8 Housing Vouchers, expanded Medicaid coverage, and school funds to support English language learners are now uncertain. Additionally, the Federal Department of Transportation has demanded an end to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) congestion pricing program, which is a critical source of revenue for the MTA. Taken together, the Trump administration's actions indicate a new level of federal involvement in overturning existing state and local legislative and policy priorities. Many of these actions now hang in the balance of numerous legal challenges.

President Trump's proposed budget, released earlier this month, includes massive cuts to education, housing, medical research, health and human services programs such as food assistance and Medicaid, alongside many other areas. The House of Representatives recently released a bill that would incorporate the President's proposals, continue, and further expand the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Particularly relevant to states like New York with higher state and local taxes, there is ongoing debate around limits placed on the federal deductibility of state and local taxes. The House bill also proposes $880 billion in major cuts to Medicaid. If these federal policies are enacted, the State and the City would need to dramatically cut spending, identify new revenues, or both. Furthermore, many academic and public institutions, such as Health + Hospitals and the New York City Housing Authority, are also subject to federal funding reductions. New Yorkers may experience decreased levels of assistance, increasing poverty, unemployment and additional hardship as hospitals and nonprofit service providers face fiscal challenges.

Beyond federal spending, the policies and rhetoric of the Trump administration also impact the national and local economies. Tariffs—central to President Trump's economic policy—have been subject to chaotic shifts in timing, depth, and coverage. Stock and bond markets have responded with volatility, and businesses are starting to indicate a reluctance to expand payrolls and undertake new capital investments as the tariff policies continue to play out. Survey data suggest consumer optimism has declined, although spending has been buoyed by purchases made in anticipation of forthcoming higher costs for imported goods.[1] And on May 15th, Moody's downgraded the U.S. credit rating to Aa1, citing concerns about the federal debt.

Additionally, the Trump administration's actions to identify and rapidly deport people has implications for the fabric of New York City. According to 2023 U.S. Census data, almost 3.1 million of 8.3 million New Yorkers are foreign born (37%). IBO detailed the challenges of tariffs and immigration in its analysis of the January 2025 Financial Plan. Contrary to New York City's status as a sanctuary city, Mayor Adams has signaled support for federal attempts to detain and deport immigrants, including those in custody on Rikers Island. Further, in the context of the Trump administration's actions broadly targeting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, the City has delayed implementation of new City Charter requirements mandating the creation of a Racial Equity Plan and Office. This mandate was enacted by voter referendum in 2022, supported by 70% of voters.

Meanwhile, the New York State budget, due before April 1st, was not finalized when the Adams administration released its Executive Budget on May 1st. As a result, OMB had to rely on estimates of what the State budget would be.[2] The State has indicated that a special legislative session may be called in response to the federal budget. The City's tax revenue estimates and intergovernmental funding will change in subsequent financial plans as budget and policy decisions evolve.

State Budget Outcomes

New York State enacted its budget on May 8th, between the release of the Mayor's Executive Budget on May 1st and the publication of this report. IBO discusses details of two key items from the State Enacted Budget—State Foundation Aid formula changes and support for childcare vouchers—which will affect City finances in the coming fiscal year below. IBO provides further information about State Enacted Budget outcomes in the Appendix.

State Foundation Aid Formula and Other State Education Policy Changes

Foundation Aid is the largest single State revenue stream for school districts in New York. For the 2024-2025 school year, the State has committed to distribute a total of $24.9 billion in Foundation Aid. Of this total, $9.9 billion is for New York City (25% of the New York City Department of Education budget). This will increase to $10.5 billion for the 2025-2026 school year. The Foundation Aid formula is complex, but at the highest level is a per-pupil dollar amount multiplied by a pupil count. The formula accounts for some student need (poverty, English language learners, and students with disabilities), district fiscal capacity, and regional cost variations. However, the State has not updated the formula since its inception in 2007 and only fully funded Foundation Aid in the 2024-2025 school year.

Last year's 2025 State Enacted Budget included funding and guidance to the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government (Rockefeller Institute) to study Foundation Aid. The Rockefeller Institute held public hearings across the State in summer 2024, and IBO testified in July 2024. In December 2024, the Rockefeller Institute released proposed recommendations, which provided statewide estimates of the costs of some proposals. The Governor's Executive Budget included proposals related to updating the student need portion of the formula.

The Executive Budget recognized $287 million in additional State revenue, reflecting a conservative estimate by the Adams administration of New York City's expected increase in Foundation Aid. (See IBO's estimates for New York City revenue for the Rockefeller Institute's proposals and the State legislature proposals.) The State Enacted Budget includes changes to the Foundation Aid formula that resulted in less revenue for New York City than it would have received under the prior formula.

The $287 million in additional annual Foundation Aid anticipated by the Adams administration was dedicated to programs previously funded by COVID-19 funds (see "Newly Baselined Programs" section).

Changes to the State Foundation Aid Formula Affecting New York City

The State Enacted Budget updated formula measures following the Governor's Executive Budget proposals and Rockefeller Institute proposals. Changes include:

- Adjusting the 2000 census poverty measure to instead use a three-year average of the Small Area Income Poverty Estimates (SAIPE). As the new formula changes the City's poverty rate from 34% to 24%, IBO estimates this will cause substantial reductions in funding.
- Switching from the free and reduced-price lunch measure to the Economically Disadvantaged measure, which includes students whose families participate in a broader range of economic assistance programs.
- Increasing the weight for English language learners from 0.50 to 0.53, a modest increase compared with the Rockefeller Institute and State Assembly proposals.
- Not increasing the regional cost index (RCI) for New York City, even though this was included in the Rockefeller Institute report and both the Senate and Assembly budget proposals. The increase to RCI would have resulted in substantial additional revenue for New York City. Only Westchester County received an increased RCI.

The State Enacted Budget included other additions with fiscal and policy impacts for New York City's public schools. For example, by August 2025, New York City must produce a written policy that reflects the new State prohibition on students' use of internet-enabled devices during the school day, including during instructional and non-instructional time, with limited exceptions.

Insufficient State Funds for Childcare Vouchers

Childcare vouchers (administered by the Administration for Children's Services) serve as an important source of childcare for thousands of children ages 6 weeks through 13 years. These are critical to keeping childcare affordable and supporting working parents. The State Enacted Budget included $328 million for childcare vouchers, approximately one third of the $1.0 billion requested by the Adams administration. Further, the funding requires a City match to be paid first.

As of March 2025, the number of vouchers reached 100,000. (Generally, one voucher is used per child in care.) For cost estimate purposes, IBO assumes that this level will remain in 2026 and beyond—especially considering the City's announcement to not enroll any new applicants as of May 5th. IBO estimates that $720 million in City funds will be needed in 2026 to maintain current enrollment levels, rising to over $1.0 billion annually starting in 2027 (for a total program budget of $1.6 billion). If additional State funds are secured, the City will have to contribute less for 2026.

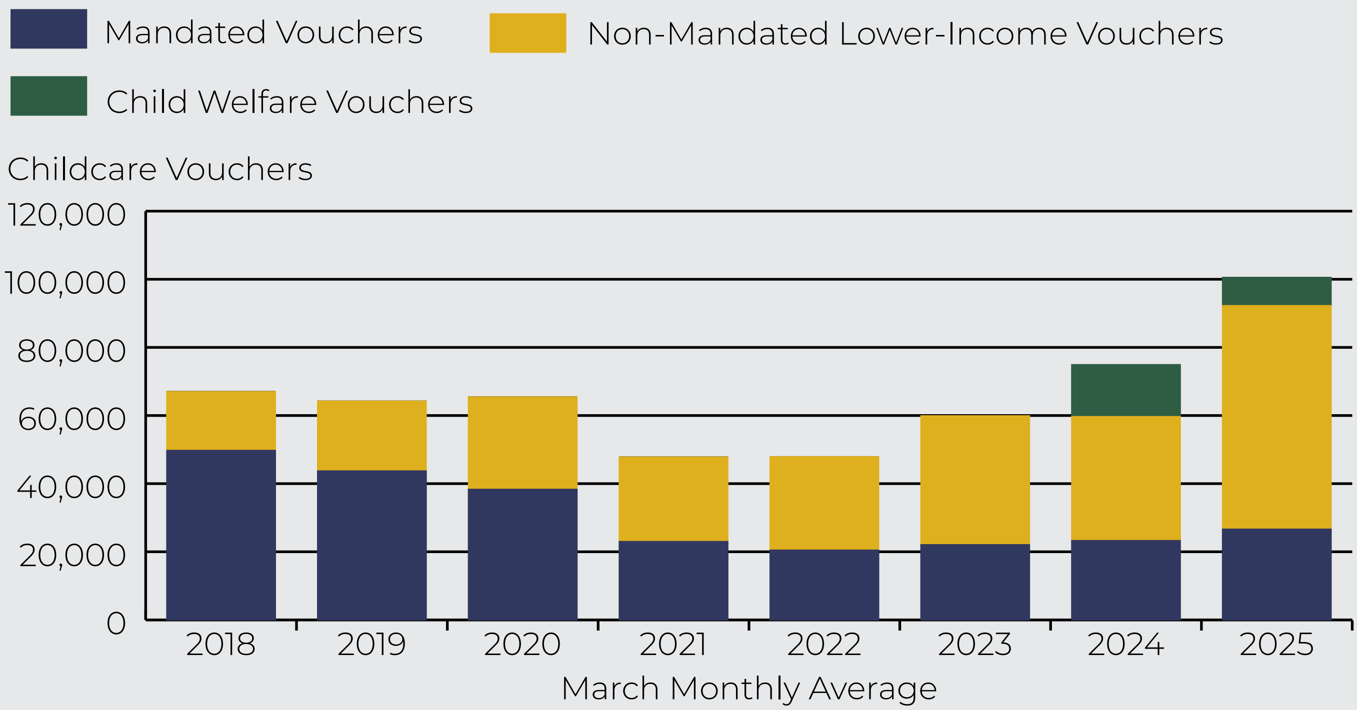
Growth in Number of Vouchers

The City is legally required to prioritize families who qualify for cash assistance (mandated) and families involved with the child welfare system. Separately, the City has also increased voucher usage among other lower-income families because of a New York State initiative and additional State funding (non-mandated lower-income).

Since 2020, when work requirements for cash assistance were suspended during the pandemic, voucher utilization shifted away from mandated vouchers towards non-mandated lower-income vouchers.

Figure 1

Average Number of Childcare Vouchers in March By Year



SOURCE: IBO analysis of Admnistration for Children's Services data
NOTE: March 2025 is the latest month of available data.

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IBO Estimates of Surpluses and Gaps Across Financial Plan Years

As part of its reporting on the Executive Budget, every year IBO examines budgeted revenue and spending levels and compares its estimates to those presented in the Mayor's Executive Budget. IBO based its expenditure estimates on historical spending patterns, caseload trends, and expected program or rule changes.

In the Executive Budget, the Adams administration assumes a surplus of $2.9 billion that it allocates towards prepaying next year's debt. IBO estimates that there will be an additional $1.7

FIGURE 2

IBO and OMB Estimates of Revenue, Expenditures, and Budget Gaps

Dollars in Millions

	Fiscal Year									
	2025		2026		2027		2028		2029	
	OMB	IBO	OMB	IBO	OMB	IBO	OMB	IBO	OMB	IBO
Revenue	$119,791	$119,302	$115,065	$116,590	$116,586	$117,473	$119,470	$120,753	$122,539	$124,251
Expenditures	$119,791	$117,637	$115,065	$119,909	$121,216	$124,708	$125,281	$128,604	$128,205	$131,315
Suplus/(Gap To be Closed)	**$0**	**$1,665**	**$0**	**($3,320)**	**($4,630)**	**($7,235)**	**($5,811)**	**($7,851)**	**($5,666)**	**($7,064)**

SOURCES: OMB and IBO May 2025 Forecasts

NOTES: When IBO's estimated $1.7 billion operating surplus from 2025 is used to pre-pay 2026 expenditures, IBO's estimated deficit for 2026 is $1.6 billion. Revenue and expenditure estimates do not include intra-city transfers.

New York City Independent Budget Office

> *IBO estimates that there will be an additional $1.7 billion available, mostly due to agency underspending, for a resulting 2025 surplus of $4.6 billion.*

billion available, mostly due to agency underspending, for a resulting 2025 surplus of $4.6 billion.

The Adams administration's prepayment of $2.9 billion follows a pattern of shrinking pre-payments year-over-year since 2022, when the prepayment was $6.1 billion. (See IBO's report on the Preliminary Budget for more details). Over that time, the pre-payment has shrunk from 9% of year-end tax revenues in 2021 to 4% this year. This means that the Adams administration's practice of spending more than the revenue it brings in is unsustainable with the City's requirement to maintain a balanced budget.

IBO's estimated gaps increase to $7.2, $7.9, and $7.1 billion in 2027, 2028, and 2029, respectively. These gaps are on average 7% of City tax revenues. This is minimally larger than the gaps the City has closed in recent years, which were around 4% to 6% of City tax revenues. IBO's revenue, expense, and gap estimates are presented in Figure 2. (Also see Figure A2 in the Appendix for further details.)

Executive Budget Increases Spending Without Adding to Reserves

The Adams administration has increased its total tax revenue estimates in every year of the financial plan. City total planned spending increased by even more in every year of the financial plan, with gaps growing between $400 million to nearly $600 million from 2027 through 2029. Particularly notable is $2.3 billion in additional City expenses in 2025 (now totaling $86.6 billion in City funds). The spending increases follow last year's three rounds of planned spending cuts from agencies, of which two were implemented. Most of those cuts have since been reversed.

Much of this funding is slated for key areas that consistently have been underbudgeted. The Adams administration relies on stronger than anticipated tax collections and "savings" (stemming from overly high initial cost projections) in services for asylum seekers to cover these expenses.

Last month, IBO testified that the Adams administration should more accurately reflect expected expenditures that are perennially underbudgeted and overbudgeted. The Executive Budget moves in that direction, although some spending projections are still out of line with where costs are likely to land.

The Adams administration proposes significant increases in current spending, rather than adding funds to reserves, despite its acknowledgement that major economic and intergovernmental headwinds are coming.

Not All Budget Risks Addressed

Newly Baselined Programs

The Adams administration added City funds to key areas that have consistently been underbudgeted, which has brought its spending projections more closely into alignment with IBO's. As specified below, this includes multiple annually baselined additions to the Department of Education (DOE) budget, which now totals $33 billion:

- $199 million in State funding was added to baseline DOE programs previously funded with federal COVID-19 relief funds. One example is for 3-K programs, with total funding for 2026 now at $744 million.
- $194 million for DOE staffing of school nurses. Separately, the Adams administration added over $100 million in baselined funding for school health positions in the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's budget.
- $25 million for the expansion of early childhood education extended-day services.
- $150 million in 2026 and $200 million starting in 2027 to meet new State class size mandates.

IBO Estimates of Additional Education Costs Over and Above Baselined Adds

Notably, some DOE programs that were previously funded with federal COVID-19 relief funds were not baselined, such as Summer Rising and Learning to Work. IBO estimates additional funds of $145 million will be needed for 2026 and $256 million for 2027 and annually thereafter, including $80 million for Summer Rising.

Beyond additions in the Executive Budget to meet new class size mandates, IBO estimates that additional funding will still be required—$103 million in 2027, growing to $346 million in 2028 and annually beyond.

Federal Support for Arts, Museums, and Libraries

The City's arts, cultural, and library funding additions come at a critical time for artists and arts organizations. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) have notified grantees of termination or withdrawal of grants. As of March 2025, IBO estimates that in New York City:

- Nearly $8 million in NEA grants was awarded to 268 recipients in 2025.
- Almost $9 million in NEH grants was awarded to 35 recipients in 2024.
- About $7 million in IMLS grants was awarded to 27 recipients in 2024.

The Adams administration added funding for multiple areas that usually are a part of Adopted Budget negotiations between the Mayor and City Council. This includes:

- $45 million annually combined for both Cultural Development Fund grants and Cultural Institutions Group subsidies in the Department of Cultural Affairs, bringing the budget total for these grants and subsidies to $52 million and $152 million, respectively.
- Around $31 million annually in the Department of Sanitation baselined for litter basket pickup.
- $21 million for 2026, $297 million for 2027, and $331 million for 2028 and annually thereafter for afterschool programs in the Department for Youth and Community Development. This brings the total budget for 2026 to $465 million, growing to $767 million in 2028 and beyond.
- $16 million across the three library systems for 2026 only, bringing next year's subsidies to $497 million total.

Risks to the Nonprofit Sector

In 2024, City contracts with nonprofit organizations to deliver critical human services accounted for $8 billion in spending.[3] IBO has testified multiple times on the risks of chronically delayed payments. The Adams administration recently announced $5 billion in contract advances for 2026. This change does not address the core issue of late contract registration and payment delays.

> *The Adams administration recently announced $5 billion in contract advances for 2026. This change does not address the core issue of late contract registration and payment delays.*

In March 2024, the Administration announced a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). Across five agency budgets, the financial plan includes COLA funding additions of:

- $28 million 2025 (including $6 million in City funds).
- $41 million in 2026 (including $6 million in City funds).
- $48 million annually starting in 2027 (with no City contribution).

The majority of these new adds rely on State and Federal funds.

Budget Areas with Funds Added for Only 2025

For several areas in the Executive Budget, the Adams administration added funding for 2025 only, leaving funding cliffs for future years. In Figure 3, IBO estimates the additional funding necessary to carry current spending trends forward.

FIGURE 3

IBO Estimates of Funding Need in Addition Budgeted Amounts in Major Areas

Dollars in Millions

		Fiscal Year					
		2026			2027		
City Agency	Budget Area	OMB Budgeted Amount	IBO Estimated Addition	IBO Estimated Total	OMB Budgeted Amount	IBO Estimated Addition	IBO Estimated Total
Departments of Police, Fire, Correction, and Sanitation	Uniformed overtime costs	$1,183	$653	$1,836	$1,197	$280	$1,477
Department of Education	Due Process Cases	935	258	1,193	1,005	188	1,193
Human Resources Administration	CityFHEPS Rental Assistance	633	639	1,272	616	657	1,273
	Cash Assistance	875	597	1,472	1,255	247	1,502
Department of Homeless Services	Shelter Costs (Non-Asylum Seekers)	1,180	211	$1,391	1,186	149	1,335

SOURCE: IBO; OMB

NOTES: Due process cases, formerly known as "Carter Cases," refer to when parents place their students with disabilities in private schools and seek reimbursement from the Department of Education. CityFHEPS estimates are based on continuing 2025 levels of voucher service and cash assistance estimates are based on maintaining the budget at 2025 levels.

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FIGURE 4

Differences in Expense Estimates: IBO Compared With OMB

Dollars in Millions

Numbers in parentheses represent IBO estimates of lower spending.

Numbers without parentheses represent IBO estimates of higher spending.

	Fiscal Year				
Expenditures-City Funded	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**
Fringe Benefits & Pensions	($125)	($178)	($181)	($184)	($187)
Asylum Seekers	(292)	(212)	(368)	-	-
City-wide Personal Services	(437)	-	-	-	-
City-wide Other Than Personal Services	(40)	-	-	-	-
Debt Service	-	(35)	-	-	-
Youth and Aging	(93)	-	-	-	-
General Government	(14)	67	144	133	127
Public Safety and Judicial	(14)	623	314	183	175
Education	(272)	531	624	830	830
Social Services, Homeless Services	(456)	2,256	2,216	1,950	1,951
Environmental Protection and Sanitation	5	91	56	51	51
Transportation Services	(29)	141	198	79	79
Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Activities	(7)	2	5	7	7
Housing and Buildings	(8)	41	47	44	44
Health	(76)	40	82	82	84
Total City Expenditure Differences	**($1,858)**	**$3,367**	**$3,136**	**$3,176**	**$2,962**

SOURCES: IBO; OMB

NOTES: Totals may not sum due to rounding. The categorization of agencies in IBO's chart generally mirrors the presentation of agencies in the Comptroller's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. Dashes represent areas where IBO did not re-estimate expenses.

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Areas of Overbudgeting

The Adams administration also routinely overbudgets, effectively setting aside funds within the budget. IBO highlights two examples.

IBO examined City employee staffing levels. IBO has reported on changes in City staffing levels. Currently there are about 286,000 City employees, up from around 280,000 in 2023. However, the City still has roughly 5% of its authorized headcount vacant, which is over double the pre-COVID-19 average of 2%. These vacancies will yield savings of $561 million this year for citywide civilian employee payrolls and $363 million for DOE pedagogical employee payrolls, including fringe benefits savings.

IBO also analyzed services for asylum seekers. The asylum seeker population has declined 46% since January 2024, from 29,360 households to 15,836 households at the end of April 2025. This has led to the closure of 50 shelters in 2025, including several operated by Health + Hospitals. Most remaining asylum seekers are now housed in shelters run by the Department of Homeless Services (DHS).

The Adams administration reduced projected costs for asylum seekers by a total of $3 billion across the financial plan (a 32% reduction from the January Plan). IBO's population projections follow similar trends to the Adams administration. However, IBO assumes reduced daily cost rates over the next two years, given lower shelter costs per household in DHS shelter compared with shelter costs in Health + Hospitals. Despite shelter closures and population changes, the Adams administration estimates that daily cost rates will remain the same through 2026. The Adams administration budgets a total of $3.2 billion for 2025, $1.5 billion for 2026, $1.2 billion for 2027, and $500 million for 2028. IBO projects savings of $292 million in 2025, $212 million in 2026, and $368 million in 2027 beyond those set forth in the Executive Budget.

For the past year, the Adams administration's financial plans projected State revenues of $1 billion for 2027 and $350 million for 2028. These were never indicated in State budget materials or public documentation of negotiations. This State funding in the City's budget has been removed in the Adams administration's 2026 Executive Budget and referred to as "savings."

Differences in spending estimates—both overbudgeting and underbudgeting—between IBO's projections and the Adams administration's financial plan show net savings in 2025 and additional spending starting in 2026. These differences across all areas of the City budget are presented and totaled in Figure 4.

Economic and Revenue Forecast

IBO's Forecasting Approach and Recent National Macroeconomic Developments

IBO reports on current conditions and the outlook for the local economy, informed by a consensus view of national trends. IBO uses its local economic model to estimate the City's major tax revenues.[4] National indicators used in the model include:

- Gross domestic product (GDP).
- Labor force considerations such as the unemployment rate and employment and wages by sector.
- Consumer indices (including prices and inflation).
- Key interest rates.
- Construction activity.
- Government and personal debt.

The underpinning of IBO's forecast—how trends in the national economy translate to New York City's economy—is extremely murky. Many hard economic indicators, such as GDP growth, unemployment rates, and job growth lag behind soft economic indicators like business and consumer sentiments. For example, while consumer confidence indices represent sentiment in the current month, employment figures become available the following month, and quarterly estimates of GDP growth are revised for up to three months after the close of the quarter.

Many indicators have been evolving more rapidly than normal in response to changing federal economic policy, including tariffs, tax code debates, federal employment cuts, and concerns over the national debt. There is lack of clarity—both as to what the federal government might consistently do and how households, businesses, and state and local governments might respond. The other government forecasters in New York City (OMB, the City Comptroller, and the Council Finance Division) are using similar indicators and are also subject to similar challenges in interpreting the rapidly changing economic environment.

Nevertheless, an assessment of current and likely future economic conditions are requirements of the budgetary process. IBO has used the most up-to-date information available to inform its economic and revenue forecasts. Current macroeconomic signs point to:

- A slowing economy with lower GDP growth (IBO's model reflects 1.3% in 2025 and 0.8% in 2026).[5]
- Higher and more persistent inflation than previously anticipated.
- The increasing possibility of a recession.
- If employment begins to weaken, the Federal Reserve responds by accelerating the pace of interest rate cuts to prop up the economy.[6]

New York City Economy and Revenues

IBO, like most state and local governments, has focused on generating revenue estimates based on where the economy appears to be right now. IBO's April 2025 local economic model assumes:

- Substantially slower job growth but no mass layoffs.
- Personal income remains stable, with the weakest employment growth concentrated in lower wage sectors.
- Heightened trading activity in volatile markets bolstering capital gains.

IBO's estimates provide an outlook of where employment across sectors and tax revenues could be in a relatively stagnant economic scenario. A sluggish local economy, even without a sustained downturn, represents fewer employment opportunities and greater economic challenges than the stable, steady growth seen in recent years.

> *IBO's estimates provide an outlook of where employment across sectors and tax revenues could be in a relatively stagnant economic scenario.*

There are differences between IBO's estimates of local economic indicators and tax revenues and OMB's estimates. (See Figure A3 in Appendix for a detailed comparison of IBO and OMB economic forecasts.)

Timing

OMB bases its economic forecast for the Executive Budget on March 2025 indicators. IBO uses April 2025 indicators for its response to the Executive Budget. While in some years there is little difference, in the current fast-changing environment, indicators one month later look different, and May indicators are likely to further shift the economic picture. IBO has incorporated as much of this new outlook into its modeling as possible.

Job Growth

According to the New York State Department of Labor, 9,800 jobs have been added in New York City through April of this year. In contrast, the City added an average of 29,900 jobs per quarter in 2024.[7] IBO estimates tepid job growth throughout the year and reduced its employment growth forecast for the year compared with its January 2025 forecast. IBO now expects New York City to add only 31,900 jobs (measured on a Q4-to-Q4 basis). The Adams administration projects job growth of 58,200.

Much of the difference between the two forecasts stems from OMB's higher estimates of job growth in the leisure and hospitality and retail sales sectors, both of which are closely related to the tourism industry. IBO's estimates for weak job growth in these sectors reflect the most recent downturn in tourism, particularly from international visitors. Meanwhile, the Adams administration's forecast anticipates tourism to reach record levels in 2025, despite also listing numerous risks to the tourism industry.

Business Income Taxes

IBO's 2025 estimates of Corporate and Unincorporated Business Taxes are $190 million lower than OMB's estimates. Two reasons contribute to the difference. First, business income taxes are volatile and therefore challenging to predict in general. Second, accrual accounting rules mean that collections through August are included in the current fiscal year. Because of this, IBO's projection factors in more of its expectation of pronounced economic weakening over the coming months, compared with the Adams administration's stronger economic outlook.

Total Tax Revenue Forecast

Consistent with its economic forecast, IBO projects tax revenues to grow slowly in 2026, from $79.7 billion to $81.0 billion. This represents a growth rate of 1.5%, much slower than the 7.4% growth rate seen so far in 2025. IBO's and OMB's overall revenue projections are very similar in 2026. This is despite OMB's notably more robust economic outlook, with OMB anticipating stronger real GDP growth nationally and stronger employment growth locally. OMB has previously presented forecasts with economic and revenue projections that seem incongruous. (A comparison of IBO and OMB total forecasts by tax revenue source is presented in Figure A4 of Appendix.)

Figure 5 presents differences in IBO's and OMB's revenue forecasts.

FIGURE 5

Differences in Revenue Estimates: IBO Compared With OMB

Dollars in Millions

Numbers in parentheses represent IBO estimates of lower tax revenue.

Numbers without parentheses represent IBO estimates of higher tax revenue.

	Fiscal Year				
City Taxes	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**
Property	($22)	($11)	$115	$380	$720
Personal Income	12	394	453	657	542
General Sales	(22)	(102)	0	(3)	5
Corporate Taxes	(111)	(236)	(34)	128	345
Unincorporated Business	(79)	(39)	(13)	30	78
Real Property Transfer	24	(15)	(15)	(45)	(84)
Mortgage Recording	(45)	22	(18)	(68)	(116)
Commercial Rent	(10)	(8)	(4)	2	13
Hotel Occupancy	12	(3)	1	6	10
Utility	0	0	0	0	0
Cannabis	(2)	(5)	(3)	(1)	2
Other Taxes and Audits	50	50	50	50	50
Total City Tax Differences	**($193)**	**$48**	**$531**	**$1,136**	**$1,564**

SOURCES: IBO; OMB

NOTE: Totals may not sum due to rounding. Corporate taxes comprise three separate taxes: the business corporation tax for C corporations, the general corporation tax, and the banking corporation tax for S corporations. Personal income tax is inclusive of revenue generated from the Pass-Through Entity Tax (PTET). Other taxes includes the utility tax and small tax revenue sources including cigarette, liquor, off-track betting, taxi medallion, motor vehicle taxes, and payments made in lieu of taxes.

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Potential Federal Tax Changes Expected to Impact Tax Revenues and Filers

Beyond federal economic policy that changes daily, major federal tax changes also have the potential to impact New York City's tax revenues. President Trump and Congress are gearing up to make permanent and expand many of the expiring tax provisions in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA). Further, they plan to enact other tax cuts, such as exemptions for tips and overtime earnings.

New York State and City tax policies track to ("couple with") the federal tax code, so tax reform at the national level would have direct implications for State and City revenues. Proposed changes to the federal tax code could result in State efforts to decouple from federal tax definitions. It may be exceedingly difficult to operationalize this, such as if tip income is no longer reported on federal income tax returns.

Some filers in New York State and City have a particular interest in the elimination or expansion of the cap TCJA placed on the federal deduction of state and local taxes

(SALT). Legislation put forth in the House of Representatives proposes to increase the cap from $10,000 to $30,000; prior to TCJA, there was no cap. New York State and several other higher-tax states created a workaround to the cap, with New York State's called the Pass-Through Entity Tax (PTET). PTET allows filers to shift personal income tax liability through a closely held corporation to avoid the cap on federal deductions. PTET plus personal income tax payments generate the same amount of total tax revenue for New York State and City. The House of Representatives bill seeks to eliminate New York's use of PTET. While this change would not affect revenues collected by the State and City, it would impact the federal tax liability of individual tax filers.

FIGURE 6

Reserves Balances as of May 2025 Financial Plan

Dollars in Millions

	Annual, 2026-2029
Reserve Fund Balances	
Revenue Stabilization Fund (Rainy Day Fund)	$1,950
Retiree Health Benefit Trust	5,000
Subtotal–Reserve Fund Balances	**$6,950**
General Fund Reserves	
General Reserve	$1,200
Capital Stabilization Reserve	250
Subtotal–General Reserve Funds	**$1,450**
Total Reserves Available	**$8,400**

SOURCE: OMB

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Reserves

In the Executive Budget, the Adams administration did not increase reserves, which currently total $8.4 billion, including $2.0 billion in the Rainy Day Fund (Figure 6).

New York City is required to have a balanced budget for the current and upcoming fiscal years. The City maintains several reserve accounts, which allow funds to be set aside outside of the current or upcoming fiscal year that can be drawn down when unforeseen circumstances place the City in a tighter financial position. While different reserve accounts have different rules around their purpose and use, they are all flexible in how they can be used. The City does not have a target benchmark for the size of reserves, nor specific rules on when it would be appropriate to draw down reserve funds.

For the Rainy Day Fund, the City is allowed to draw down 50% of the balance at a time, or more if the mayor declares a "state of emergency" certifying a compelling fiscal need to tap this reserve fund.

The general reserve and capital stabilization reserve are intended to deal with unexpected expenses or make up for lower than anticipated tax revenues in the current fiscal year. These funds are appropriated in the budget but remain unallocated, and generally unused portions of these funds become part of the surplus used to prepay expenses for the next year.

The Retiree Health Benefits Trust fund is used to pay retirees' health benefits.

"In the Executive Budget, the Adams administration did not increase reserves, which currently total $8.4 billion, including $2.0 billion in the Rainy Day Fund."

The fund must have a balance sufficient to cover the cost of retiree health benefits for one year; when the fund's balance exceeds the estimated cost of benefit for that year, the City can generate budget relief by appropriating less.

Conclusion

The fiscal realities outlined in this report behoove the leadership of the City to consider the future. IBO encourages the City Council and the Adams administration's negotiations to weigh the merits of two options: placing funds into reserves or using them to prepay next year's expenses as they negotiate the budget. While pre-payment may offer short-term flexibility and offset existing costs, it will not address the root causes of those costs and increases the Adams administration's control of where funds are spent. Strengthening reserves provides more ability to address future shocks. Since resources are limited, adding to the reserve fund will require the City to control near-term expenses, such as uniformed overtime.

Some against increasing the reserve funds are concerned that federal cuts may be informed by the size of the reserves. The Trump administration has cut programs without obvious regard for whether states or local governments can otherwise cover the funding. This indicates that putting money into City reserves has no impact on funding decisions by the Trump administration.

Appendix

Additional State Enacted Budget Impacts on New York City's Budget

The State Enacted Budget included a mix of outcomes for New York City. Some funding choices were anticipated and already reflected in the Executive Budget, while others will need to be addressed in revisions to the City's financial plan.

Further Funding for MTA, But With Costs to the City

The State Enacted Budget introduced several new sources of funding for the MTA. Overall, these changes are expected to increase annual operating contributions from the City to the MTA.

Paratransit

Since July 2023, the State has required the City to cover 80% of paratransit operating costs, after accounting for paratransit fares and dedicated tax revenues. This obligation is capped at no more than 50% of net costs plus $165 million. Paratransit cost $718 million in calendar year 2024; the City's contribution was $490 million. The State budget extended the 80% subsidy level through City fiscal year 2027. The MTA currently estimates an average 5% growth in Access-A-Ride operating costs per year. Given the cost-sharing requirements, the City's subsidy payments will grow as the overall cost of paratransit operations grows. The Adams administration has added $165 million per year to the Executive Budget to reflect the subsidy extension but does not account for other growth in paratransit costs.

Payroll Mobility Tax

Each year, the MTA receives several billion dollars in operating revenue from the Payroll Mobility Tax on employers and self-employed individuals in the MTA service region. The State Enacted Budget:

- Entirely exempted the smallest employers (those with quarterly payroll under $312,500 and self-employed individuals earning less than $150,000 a year).
- Decreased rates on small employers (those with quarterly payroll between $312,500 and $437,500).
- Kept the same rate for employers with quarterly payroll between $437,500 and $2.5 million).
- Introduced a new, higher rate for the largest employers (those with quarterly payroll of $2.5 million or more).

The tax has separate rate schedules for New York City (Zone 1) and the surrounding counties (collectively Zone 2).[7] Payroll tax rates were adjusted for both zones. Rates are the same for the lowest payroll brackets, but New York City employers in the two highest payroll brackets will face higher rates than the surrounding counties. The State budget was generous to local governments: those in the counties surrounding New York City are now exempt from the tax, while New York City will continue to pay the same rate as before on its employee payroll (0.6%) instead of the new highest rate (0.895%).

"Fully Funding" the MTA 2025-2029 Capital Plan

As IBO has analyzed previously, the MTA faced a $33.4 billion funding gap in its $68.4 billion 2025-2029 Capital Plan (Plan). State officials have declared that the Plan is fully funded, following three changes in the State Enacted Budget:

- The State and the City will each dedicate $3 billion to the Plan.
- The State will redirect $1.2 billion in Penn Station renovation funds to the Plan.
- Starting in September, the State will direct 28.5% of Payroll Mobility Tax revenues to the Plan.

IBO identified several areas of concern:

- Given federal policy changes, the Plan's expected $14 billion in federal funding might be optimistic.
- The MTA is expected to find an additional $3 billion in yet-to-be-defined efficiencies.
- If all funding sources produce revenue as planned by the MTA, IBO estimates that the Payroll Mobility Tax would need to finance $31.2 billion in capital projects. Based on past MTA financing estimates for congestion pricing, $1 billion in recurring revenue (such as the congestion pricing tolls) pays the debt service on approximately $15 billion in bonds. This would require the new Payroll Mobility Tax rates to produce approximately $2.1 billion in new revenues per year dedicated to the 2025-2029 Plan, to cover the remainder of the $33.4 billion gap.

State Enacted Budget Includes Cost Sharing for Overnight Subway Policing Initiative

In January 2025, Governor Hochul announced an increase in police patrols on New York City subway platforms and trains overnight for at least six months, coupled with the installation of barriers on subway platforms and enhanced station lighting. The State and City would split the total cost evenly, and the State Enacted Budget includes $77 million, half of the State's estimated total cost of $154 million. IBO estimated that this cost largely reflected the use of more senior police officers working overtime. If more junior officers were used, IBO estimated the total cost to be around $61 million. The Adams administration has not specifically added funds to reflect this initiative, although the additional cost to the City may be captured in the broader overtime spending within the Police Department budget.

State Support for City of Yes and New York City Affordable Housing

The State Enacted Budget includes $1 billion for New York City housing initiatives. Governor Hochul announced this funding in November 2024 to indicate State support for the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity local legislation that was passed by the City Council in December 2024. This State funding is for a variety of initiatives related to City of Yes and existing New York City housing needs, presented in Figure A1. The timeframe for these

FIGURE A1

State Enacted Budget Funding for City of Yes and Other New York City Housing Intiatives

Dollars in Millions

Program Area	Funding
New Construction and Preservation of Affordable Housing	$500
New York City Public Housing Authority	200
Mitchell-Lama Housing Preservation	80
Mixed-Income Revolving Loan Fund	50
Supportive Housing	30
Older Adult Supportive Housing	20
Mold and Asbestos Abatement	30
Lead Abatement	20
Housing for the Future Rental Program	25
Housing for the Future Co-op Program	25
Preservation of Regulated Affordable Housing	20
Total	**$1,000**

SOURCE: New York State 2026 Enacted Budget

New York City Independent Budget Office

State capital investments has not been presented.

Medicaid Risks for Health + Hospitals

Health + Hospitals (H+H), is the largest public municipal health system in the country. Through its 45 locations (11 hospitals and 34 community health centers and long-term care centers), it serves over one million New Yorkers each year and employs about 45,000 health care professionals.

H+H's 2026 Executive Financial Plan projects approximately $13 billion in operating revenues in 2025, of which $3.7 billion is attributed to the City operating subsidy. H+H also relies on Medicaid funding. There are two areas of funding contained in the State Enacted Budget that rely on federal approvals. Absent federal approval for the proposed State actions described below, the City may need to increase its H+H subsidy.

The State Enacted Budget reflects the funding switch from indigent care pool (ICP), a program to help pay for lower-income individuals, to directed payment template (DPT), which allows states to direct managed care organizations to pay providers on set fee schedules or at increased rates. If the federal government denies the request, the State may revert to the ICP payment model.

The federal government also has threatened to revoke existing approval of New York State’s Managed Care Organization tax—included in last year's State Enacted Budget—which allows the State to draw down additional federal funds.

IBO also continues to monitor funding for distressed hospitals.

Adams Administration Requests for the State Budget

The Adams administration saw the passage of its announced “Axe the Tax” initiative, which was already incorporated into the City’s financial plan in January. (IBO’s analysis found that this tax break will impact fewer than 4% of filers.)

The following initiatives were excluded or deferred, although it is still possible for the legislature to pass bills to address some of these areas outside of budget negotiations.

The State Enacted Budget did not renew the Relocation and Employment Assistance

Program (REAP), and the business tax credit is set to expire on June 30, 2025. The new job relocation tax incentive proposed by the Adams administration called Relocation Assistance Credit for Employees (RACE) was also excluded. RACE set incentive goals that appeared to be at odds with the goals for REAP. Read IBO's report for more details.

The State Enacted Budget also excluded a proposed solution to reset or initialize a "Fresh Start" to the amortization schedule for three of the City's five pension systems (New York City Employees' Retirement System, New York City Teachers' Retirement System, New York City Board of Education Retirement System). This change would have addressed a contribution cliff in 2032. See IBO's report for more details.

Supplemental Tables

FIGURE A2

IBO Total Revenue and Expenditure Projections

Dollars in Millions

	Prior Year Actuals 2024	Projections 2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Annual Average Change 2024-2029
Total Revenue, Less Intra-City	**$113,130**	**$119,302**	**$116,590**	**$117,473**	**$120,753**	**$124,251**	**1.9%**
Taxes	74,049	79,742	80,957	83,318	86,576	89,827	3.9%
Other City & Interfund Revenue (Less Intra-City)	7,570	7,489	7,113	6,970	7,011	7,047	(1.4%)
State, Federal, and Other Categorical Grants	31,510	32,071	28,520	27,185	27,166	27,376	(2.8%)
Total Expenditures, Less Intra-City	**$111,355**	**$117,637**	**$119,909**	**$124,708**	**$128,604**	**$131,315**	**3.4%**
IBO Additional Operating Surplus/(Deficit)		**$1,665**	**($3,320)**	**($7,235)**	**($7,851)**	**($7,064)**	
IBO Prepayment Adjustment 2024/2025		($1,665)	($1,665)	$0	$0	$0	
IBO Surplus /(Gap) Projections		**0**	**($1,655)**	**($7,235)**	**($7,851)**	**($7,064)**	
Adjustments for Prepayments and Non-Recurring Expenses							
Net Prepayments	$1,082	$1,447	$2,950	$0	$0	$0	
FY23 Budget Stabilization	5,479	0	0	0	0	0	
FY24 Budget Stabilization	(4,397)	4,397	0	0	0	0	
FY25 Budget Stabilization		(2,950)	2,950				
General Fund Reserves	0	50	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	
Other Adjustments	0	(816)	0	221	324	409	
Total Expenditures Incurred in Fiscal Year	**$112,437**	**$119,850**	**$121,409**	**$123,037**	**$126,830**	**$129,456**	**2.9%**
City-Funded Expenditures Incurred in Fiscal year	**$84,319**	**$89,290**	**$93,557**	**$93,020**	**$96,412**	**$99,782**	**3.4%**

SOURCES: IBO; OMB

NOTES: Totals may not sum due to rounding. Net prepayments include payments for debt service. Total Expenditures Incurred in Fiscal Year is the sum of Total Expenditures and Net Prepayments, less General Fund Reserves and Other Adjustments. Total Expenditures Incurred in Fiscal Year removes the effect of prepayments and other adjustments to present the total expenditures incurred in a given fiscal year, rather than the cash paid for expenditures.

New York City Independent Budget Office

FIGURE A3

Economic Forecasts: IBO Compared with OMB

	Calendar Year				
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
National Economy					
Real GDP Growth					
IBO	1.3	0.8	2.1	2.4	2.5
OMB	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.8	1.7
Inflation Rate					
IBO	3.3	3.1	2.2	2	1.9
OMB	3.2	2.6	2	2	2
Personal Income Growth					
IBO	5.4	5	5	4.7	4.7
OMB	4.7	5.2	5	4.7	4.4
Unemployment Rate					
IBO	4.2	4.8	4.8	4.5	4.2
OMB	4.3	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.5
10-Year Treasury Bond Rate					
IBO	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.2
OMB	4.4	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.9
Federal Funds Rate					
IBO	4.1	3.2	3	3	2.9
OMB	4.3	3.7	3.1	3.1	3.1

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FIGURE A3 CONTINUED

Economic Forecasts: IBO Compared with OMB

	Calendar Year				
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
New York City Local Economy					
Nonfarm New Jobs (thousands)					
IBO (Q4 to Q4)	31.9	52.2	51.8	41.6	39.6
OMB (Q4 to Q4)	58.2	79.2	84.3	86.8	97.3
Nonfarm Employment Growth					
IBO (Q4 to Q4)	0.7	1.1	1.1	0.8	0.8
OMB (Q4 to Q4)	1.2	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.9
Inflation Rate (CPI-U-NY)					
IBO	3.6	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.4
OMB	3.9	2.8	2.2	2	2.1
Personal Income ($ billions)					
IBO	840	880	920	958	996
OMB	819	855	896	937	978
Personal Income Growth					
IBO	3.6	4.7	4.6	4.1	3.9
OMB	4.1	4.4	4.8	4.6	4.4

SOURCES: IBO; OMB

NOTES: Rates reflect year-over-year percentage changes except for unemployment, 10-Year Treasury Bond Rate, and Federal Funds Rate. The local price index for urban consumers (CPI-U-NY) covers the New York/Northern New Jersey region. Personal income is nominal. IBO and OMB measure New York City income differently, making data and forecasts not directly comparable.

New York City Independent Budget Office

FIGURE A4

City Tax Projections: IBO Compared with OMB

	Prior Year Actuals	Financial Plan Projections By Fiscal Year 2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Annual Average Change 2024-2028
Property							
IBO	$32,859	$34,412	$35,349	$36,700	$38,044	$39,498	3.8%
OMB		34,434	35,360	36,585	37,664	38,778	3.4%
Personal Income							
IBO	15,671	18,241	18,078	18,733	19,836	20,525	5.6%
OMB		18,229	17,684	18,280	19,179	19,983	5.0%
General Sales							
IBO	9,914	10,266	10,588	11,041	11,481	11,916	3.8%
OMB		10,288	10,690	11,041	11,484	11,911	3.7%
Corporate Taxes							
IBO	6,886	7,200	7,230	6,912	7,091	7,500	1.7%
OMB		7,311	7,466	6,946	6,963	7,155	0.8%
Unincorporated Business Taxes							
IBO	2,789	3,254	3,231	3,315	3,418	3,540	4.9%
OMB		3,333	3,270	3,328	3,388	3,462	4.4%
Real Property Transfer							
IBO	1,130	1,324	1,319	1,377	1,408	1,432	4.8%
OMB		1,300	1,334	1,392	1,453	1,516	6.1%
Mortgage Recording							
IBO	597	725	834	843	846	845	7.2%
OMB		770	812	861	914	961	10.0%
Commerical Rent							
IBO	918	921	943	962	981	1,005	1.8%
OMB		931	951	966	979	992	1.6%

Table continues on next page

FIGURE A4 CONTINUED

City Tax Projections: IBO Compared with OMB

	Prior Year Actuals	Financial Plan Projections By Fiscal Year 2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Annual Average Change 2024-2028
Hotel Occupancy							
IBO	$706	$767	$780	$812	$844	$ 876	4.4%
OMB		755	783	811	838	866	4.2%
Cannabis							
IBO	4	17	22	28	33	39	58.8%
OMB		19	27	31	34	37	57.1%
Other Taxes & Audit							
IBO	2,165	2,615	2,582	2,596	2,594	2,652	0.6%
OMB		2,565	2,532	2,546	2,544	2,602	0.2%
Total Tax Revenue							
IBO	$74,049	79,742	80,957	83,318	86,576	89,827	3.9%
OMB		79,935	80,909	82,787	85,440	88,263	3.6%

SOURCE: IBO; OMB

NOTES: Totals may not sum due to rounding. Corporate taxes comprise three separate taxes: the business corporation tax for C corporations, the general corporation tax, and the banking corporation tax for S corporations. Personal income tax is inclusive of revenue generated from the Pass-Through Entity Tax (PTET). Other taxes includes the utility tax and small tax revenue sources including cigarette, liquor, off-track betting, taxi medallion, motor vehicle taxes, and payments made in lieu of taxes.

New York City Independent Budget Office

FIGURE A5

IBO Revenue Projections Fiscal Years 2024-2029

Dollars in Millions

	Prior Year Actual 2024	Financial Plan Projections 2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Annual Average Change 2024-2028
City Tax Revenue	**$74,049**	**$79,742**	**$80,957**	**$83,318**	**$86,576**	**$89,827**	**4.0%**
Other City Revenue	9,188	8,867	8,200	8,030	8,062	8,096	(2.5%)
State Categorical Grants	19,231	20,500	19,790	18,675	18,727	18,879	(0.3%)
Federal Categorical Grants	11,294	$10,453	$7,588	$7,373	$7,306	$7,366	(7.6%)
Other Categorical Aid	985	$1,118	$1,142	$1,138	$1,133	$1,131	(2.9%)
SUB-TOTAL REVENUE	**$114,748**	**$120,680**	**$117,677**	**$118,534**	**$121,804**	**$125,299**	**1.80**
Interfund Revenue	742	783	797	795	796	799	1.5%
Intra-City Revenue	**$2,360**	**$2,161**	**$1,884**	**$1,856**	**$1,847**	**$1,847**	**(4.6%)**
TOTAL REVENUE, Less Intra-City	**$113,130**	**$119,302**	**$116,590**	**$117,473**	**$120,753**	**$124,251**	**1.9%**

SOURCES: IBO; OMB

NOTES: Totals may not sum due to rounding. Other City Revenue refers to STAR reimbursements, miscellaneous revenue, unrestricted intergovernmental aid, and disallowances.

New York City Independent Budget Office

Endnotes

[1] See University of Michigan Consumer Sentiment Survey, presented by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis and Brian Scheid (May 1, 2025), "US consumer spending rises in anticipation of tariffs," S & P Global.

[2] Two expected State policy changes were reflected in the 2026 Executive Budget—increases to the City's contributions for the MTA for paratransit costs and transportation costs for elementary school students attending school until 4pm. Elsewhere, OMB budgeted State dollars in the Executive Budget based on what Governor Hochul proposed in the Executive Budget, released in January.

[3] See Robert Callahan and Dan Roboff (April 29, 2025), "Nonprofit, Nonpayment: An Analysis of Payment Delays for the City's Human Service Contractors," New York City Comptroller's Office.

[4] IBO uses projections of national indicators in a simultaneous equations model to estimate what might happen in the local New York City economy over the period covered by the financial plan.

[5] IBO's economic report is presented in calendar years. Tax revenue forecasts reflect City fiscal years.

[6] Comments made by Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland President Beth Hammack in CNBC interview on April 24, 2025.

[7] The surrounding counties subject to the Payroll Mobility Tax (officially the Metropolitan Commuter Transportation Mobility Tax) include Dutchess, Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk and Westchester.

IBO's mission is to enhance understanding of New York City's budget, public policy, and economy through independent analysis.

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CAMBA
Testimony Before the New York City Council
Committee on Finance
May 29, 2025
Valerie Barton-Richardson

Council Member Brannan and Members of the Committee, my name is Valerie Barton-Richardson, and I am the President and CEO of CAMBA, Inc. I want to thank you for holding today's hearing and affording us the opportunity to testify. CAMBA has been providing high quality services to our City's most vulnerable residents for nearly 50 years. For decades, CAMBA has been dedicated to enhancing the well-being of New Yorkers through various programs, including economic development, education and youth development, family support, health, housing, and legal services. We now serve more than 80,000 individuals and families each year.

Today, I would like to highlight four key areas of concern. First, there is the matter of delays in providing funding for indirect costs. While CAMBA received approval in FY23 to increase our indirect cost rate, we have not received any of the associated funding which for us is about $15 million. Second, there is the ongoing need to address payment delays through procurement reform. While the City has added staff to MOCS, payment delays continue to strain nonprofit providers' operations and cashflow. Third, we are concerned that the long-awaited COMPASS RFP may not be released this month as planned. Finally, many longtime and effective adult literacy programs were not renewed under the existing RFP.

Indirect Cost Rate and Infrastructure Support

Indirect costs—such as IT, building maintenance, program evaluation, accounting, HR, and staff training—are essential to effective service delivery. CAMBA underwent the process to increase our indirect cost rate in FY23 under the Indirect Cost Rate Initiative. As we near the end of FY25, however, we have yet to receive the approved funds. This amounts to roughly $15 million of our $50 million funding backlog.

Cashflow Challenges

We appreciate the City's $5 billion investment in advance payments to nonprofit providers. This investment has the potential to significantly alleviate the financial strain that nonprofits routinely face. However, contract amendments and budget modifications can take months for approval, sometimes overlapping fiscal years. This lag in the procurement process perpetuates the sector's cashflow challenges and hampers service delivery.

We also commend the City's decision to add 20 new positions to the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS) and to implement system improvements. MOCS plays a pivotal role in reforming the procurement process, and these additional resources are urgently needed. Streamlining approvals and payments is not only an operational necessity, but also a matter of equity and sustainability for nonprofits citywide.

COMPASS Afterschool Programs

CAMBA has been a proud COMPASS provider for many years. In the last fiscal year, we operated seven COMPASS programs serving 1,745 students. Our offerings include physical recreation, literacy, STEM, homework help, and enrichment clubs—all embedded with positive youth development, social-emotional learning, and youth leadership principles. Our sites consistently exceed DYCD's enrollment benchmarks.

As we approach the end of the current contract term, we are concerned by the timing of the release of the RFP for the next term. Its release was initially scheduled for May, and while we are grateful for DYCD's efforts to release it soon, continued delays are cause for concern. A further delay—particularly beyond FY25—could lead to a disruption in services, leaving thousands of children without high-quality afterschool options and families without essential childcare support. We strongly urge the Council to ensure that the release of the COMPASS RFP is not delayed.

Adult Literacy Programs

CAMBA's Education Center has served as a lifeline for adult learners and immigrant communities for nearly 40 years. Our ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) program offers instruction at six levels and served 875 students in the most recent fiscal year. With a 72% progression rate—far exceeding DYCD's benchmark of 58%—our program has proven its effectiveness.

Our approach blends collaborative, text-based instruction with self-directed learning, all contextualized to support students' goals in digital literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, and career readiness. These literacy services are not just academic—they are pathways to employment, higher education, and full civic participation. Yet, many adult literacy programs, including ours, are currently unfunded under last year's RFP based on their Neighborhood Tabulation Area (NTA), leaving communities that have benefited from DYCD-funded literacy classes for years without such resources. This must be addressed if we are to meet the city's equity and workforce goals.

Thank you for your time and attention to these critical issues. CAMBA is committed to partnering with the City to deliver effective, equitable, and life-changing services to vulnerable New Yorkers. I hope this testimony proves helpful to your deliberations, and I welcome any questions you may have.

Submitted Testimony of Con Edison to the New York City Council Committee on Finance on the Proposed FY 2026 Executive Budget
May 30, 2025

Con Edison is pleased to submit testimony regarding Mayor Adams' proposed FY 2026 Executive Budget for the City of New York.

For more than 200 years Con Edison has delivered safe, reliable, and resilient energy to run New York City. Today, Con Edison plays a leading role in transitioning New York City to a clean energy future. Through our Clean Energy Commitment to meet City and State clean energy laws, we are investing in, building, and operating, reliable, resilient, and innovative energy infrastructure, the electrification of heating and transportation, as well as building a grid capable of delivering 100% clean energy to our customers by 2040.

For this submitted testimony, we would like to bring attention to the growing property tax burden that our customers bear to meet these clean energy laws. The City's Tax Class 3 taxes are assessed on Con Edison's utility infrastructure and are passed on to our customers in the "delivery" charge on our bills. Because of this assessment, Con Edison is the single largest taxpayer in New York City. As a result of the current property tax structure, approximately a third of every Con Edison customer's bill is allocated to taxes. Of the $3.3 billion in revenue we provided to NYC in 2024, over $2.5 billion were property tax payments alone. This accounts for nearly 8% of NYC's total property tax collection. Since 2021, the property tax bill on our infrastructure has grown by $400 million. Without intervention, we anticipate that next year the property taxes paid by our customers may increase by nearly $500 million, bringing the property tax bill to nearly $3 billion by 2026.

According to a 2024 Independent Budget Office report, Tax Class 3 (Utility Tax Class) is increasing at a higher rate than any other tax class. The IBO projects a 4.2% annual increase in Class 3 taxes 2024-2027 compared with 3.2% growth rate on average across classes. In the past five years, the rate of increase of utility property taxes has increased twice the rate of other classes.

Con Edison is committed to ensuring that the energy that we deliver to our customers is as affordable as possible and the fact cannot be ignored that the outsized, escalating property tax burden that is levied on customers through their utility bills is a significant driver of the escalating utility bill affordability concerns in New York City.

Each year, Con Edison makes investments in our infrastructure to maintain the most reliable electric service in the nation, employing our dedicated highly skilled and fully unionized workforce, and providing world-class service to our customers. However, every infrastructure investment made by Con

Edison increases property valuation and therefore tax burden, as the existing NYC Real Property Tax Law and Class 3 definition subjects virtually all of our infrastructure investments, from substations to underground pipes and above ground poles to taxation. Few other companies in the City's more traditional Business Tax Class (Class 4) pay property taxes on the equipment they own or operate, instead they only pay property taxes on the real estate and land that they own.

Con Edison applauds the NYC Council's public call earlier this year for the implementation of comprehensive property tax reform and we ask NYC and NYS government to collaborate with both private and public stakeholders to devise creative ways to provide property tax relief to customers' bills, and to reduce ratepayer burden.

Con Edison is proud to call New York home, and prouder still to power the New York Metro region and the people and businesses that make up our thriving economy. We generate billions of dollars in economic activity and provide quality, family-sustaining jobs for our diverse, local workforce. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding Mayor Adams' proposed FY 2026 Executive Budget.

URBAN JUSTICE CENTER | Freedom Agenda

Testimony to the City Council Committee on Finance

Submitted March 30, 2025 by Sarita Daftary, Co-Director, Freedom Agenda

Chair Brannan and Council Members,

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Freedom Agenda. We're one of the organizations leading the [Campaign to Close Rikers.]

We're calling on the City Council to ensure that the adopted budget paves the way to strengthening our communities and closing Rikers Island. **Instead of allocating $150M to hire 1,100 more correction officers, the City should invest:**

- **$70.6M more to meet critical mental health and housing needs** through investments in Justice Involved Supportive Housing, Intensive Mobile Treatment, Forensic Assertive Community Treatment, and Crisis Respite Centers
- **$2.4M more for alternatives to incarceration and reentry programs**
- **$8.1M more for the Board of Correction's to conduct jail oversight**
- **$3M to begin a masterplan for Renewable Rikers**

As we set budget priorities for our City, Rikers Island stands out as the worst possible use of our dollars. Recently, the *Nunez* federal monitor pointed out what our members know far too well – that the *"enormous resources—that the City devotes to a system that is at the same time overstaffed and underserved—are not being deployed effectively."* Incarcerating one person at Rikers Island for a year costs over $507,000 – equivalent to providing supportive housing for ten people, or engaging ten people in quality mental health services like Intensive Mobile Treatment. A recent survey of crime survivors in New York City showed that 3 of 4 prefer alternatives to incarceration and mental health treatment instead of jail.

The plan to close Rikers Island approved by the City Council in 2019 marked a commitment to take a more effective approach to public safety. That shift requires spending our money differently. But Mayor Adams has refused to align our City's budget with the legal and moral obligation to close Rikers Island by 2027. The Independent Rikers Commission has estimated that the maximum number of staff needed to operate the borough-based jails is 3,240. DOC's uniformed headcount was less than 5,900 as of January 1, but the administration is budgeting for 7,060 uniformed officers – a headcount they cannot and should not meet.

While taking extraordinary measures to hire more correction officers – like slashing training time, loosening eligibility requirements, and committing $5 million this year to an advertising campaign - the mayor has been willing to let hundreds of people sit on waiting lists for evidence-based programs like community-based mental health treatment teams, and Justice Involved Supportive Housing. Compare this to the City's approach to jail capacity. DOC recently added beds to already-crowded dorms at Rikers Island out of concern they would exceed capacity. What if the City treated preventive investments with the same urgency? What if they took emergency action to ensure that anyone who needs a supportive housing unit or a placement with a mental health treatment team could get one immediately?

We are grateful that the City Council, in your budget response, has emphasized so many priorities that are necessary for improving community health and well-being. And yet we know OMB is going to tell you "There's no money for that." The Council can and should point to the $150 million the mayor plans to spend to hire 1,100 more correction officers and tell them to get their priorities straight. We cannot allow this administration to continue budgeting for more harm and incarceration, instead of making investments that could prevent it.

We will submit along with this testimony a full budget analysis that outlines the amendments needed in the FY26 budget to pave the way to closing Rikers and passing a People's Budget.

Thank you,

Sarita Daftary

Co-Director, Freedom Agenda

Sdaftary@urbanjustice.org

[attached – FY2026 Campaign to Close Rikers Budget Analysis]

FY2026 Budget Analysis & Priorities

At a cost of over half a million dollars per person per year, Rikers Island is the most expensive and least effective tool our City has to create safety. In addition to exposing people to rampant abuse and violence, Rikers Island wastes resources that are desperately needed for housing, treatment, education, and other investments. It's time to use our precious resources to fund the things that work.

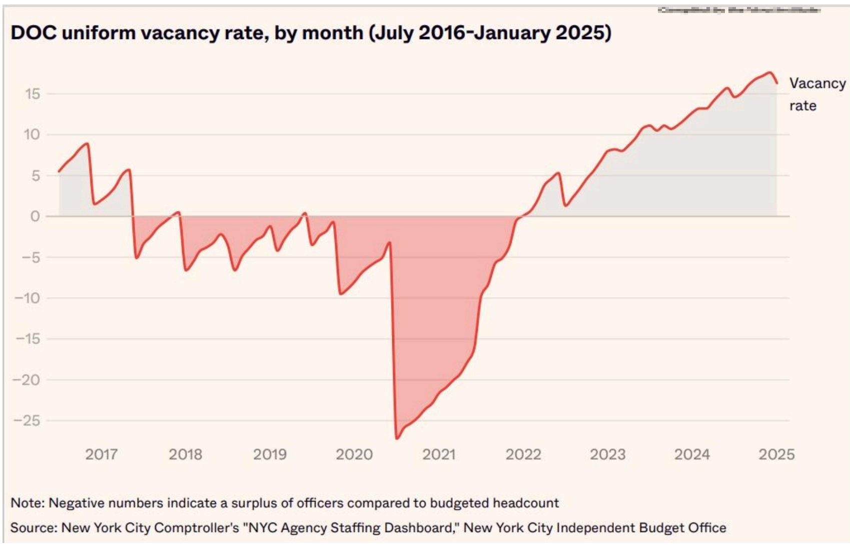
Priorities for this year's budget to advance the closure of Rikers:

- **Allocate at least an additional $70.6M to meet housing and mental health needs,** and fulfill commitments in the Close Rikers plan, including:
  - Building on the City Council's investment last year, the administration must **appropriate $26.6 million more in annual funding for Justice Involved Supportive Housing**, and reissue the RFP for 380 new units with service funding levels in line with those of similar supportive housing programs. This will enable the City to deliver on the Close Rikers Points of Agreement to expand JISH to 500 units.
  - **Allocate $24.7M more to create 15 more Intensive Mobile Treatment (IMT) teams, and pilot step-down teams**. The waitlist to access this evidence-based program is over 400 people. Resources are needed for both full-service teams, and to pilot a step-down version. The Executive Budget allocates $5.3M for IMT, but far more is needed to eliminate the waitlist.
  - **Allocate $7M more to create more Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) teams,** and to pilot ACT step-down teams in order to cut the long wait times (average of 6 to 12 months) to access this service.
  - **Allocate $6M more to open four new crisis respite centers,** in compliance with Local Law 118-2023.
  - **Allocate $6.3M to open 250 more residential treatment beds** for people with serious mental illness and with co-occurring addictions
- **Increase investments in Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) and Reentry Services.** While the Executive Budget fully restores ATI and reentry programs to their FY2025 funding levels, the budget should also go further, and increase discretionary funding for these programs by $2.4 million to enhance and support the scaling of ATIs citywide as requested by the ATI/Reentry Coalition.
- **Increase the Board of Correction budget to at least 1% of DOC's budget.**[1] While the Executive Budget restores proposed cuts to BOC's budget, their capacity still falls far short of what's needed to provide sufficient oversight for the City's jails. Establishing a minimum

[1] Other oversight agencies like CCRB and IBO have minimum budgets linked to the size of the agency they oversee. Further outlined here.

budget would increase BOC's headcount from about 33 currently to approximately 100, but would add only $8.1M to the overall expense budget.[2]

- **Eliminate vacancies for DOC uniformed staff.**
  - The Department of Correction is budgeted for 7,060 uniformed officers, but as of January 1, 2025 they employed 5,908 and 1,152 positions were vacant.[3] OMB has not made a plan to rightsize this agency in alignment with reducing the number of people in jail and closing Rikers. By eliminating uniformed vacancies (which have been growing since 2022 - see chart below), DOC could realize cost **savings of $149.6M annually.**[4]



- **Reduce overtime spending** by consolidating operations and permanently closing jails on Rikers, starting with the vacant Anna M. Kross Center, where 109 officers are still assigned.[5]

Preliminary Budget Analysis

Mayor Adams' proposed budget continues to misappropriate funds that are needed for real public safety investments, by maintaining DOC budget bloat while cutting funds to alternative to incarceration and reentry programs, and failing to adequately fund supportive housing and community-based mental health treatment. In order to follow through on the legal and moral obligation to Close Rikers, City Council must secure a budget that will improve community safety and reduce our City's overreliance on incarceration.

DOC's budget is still bloated:

- The Mayor has proposed spending **$2.87 billion**[6] **on jail operations in FY2026**.
- The administration is budgeting for 7,060 uniformed DOC officers through FY2029.[7] By that time, New York City is required to close Rikers Island and shift to a borough jails system, which the Independent Rikers Commission has estimated will require only 3,240 uniformed staff. Uniform headcount reductions are consistent with and necessary for a lower jail population and

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[2] The FY2026 Executive Budget allocated $4M to BOC. One percent of DOC's $1.2B budget would give BOC a budget of approximately $12M.
[3] Per Independent Budget Office
[4] Based on $129,897 per officer, as calculated by the Vera Institute.
[5] The City of New York. Departmental Estimates. January 2025. p 1368
[6] Including expenses, associated fringe benefits, pensions, and debt service. "A Look Inside the NYC FY 2026 Preliminary Budget." Vera Institute of Justice. February 2025.
[7] Financial Plan of the City of New York. Fiscal Years 2024 - 2028. Full time and full time equivalent staffing levels.

closing Rikers - in fact, these reductions should have started years ago when the jail population started to decline.
- DOC is on track to spend roughly $300 million on overtime for uniform staff in FY25, 136% above their adopted budget.
- An analysis by the New York City Comptroller showed that the **cost of incarcerating a person at a Rikers on an annual basis reached $507,317** in FY 2023.
- Most of DOC's costs are driven by overstaffing. The FY2026 budget projects that 87% of DOC expenses will be staff salaries, overtime and benefits.
- **The administration is planning either to continue overusing incarceration or to employ almost twice as many correction officers as people in custody by FY2028**. Neither option makes sense, morally or financially.

Commitments in the Close Rikers plan are still inadequately funded:

- In the Points of Agreement on Closing Rikers, the administration agreed to establish 380 more units of Justice Involved Supportive Housing, a model that has been hugely successful in reducing jail, shelter, and hospital stays, and generating substantial cost savings. But funding rates proposed in the RFP issued were so low that qualified providers have not applied, and operators of the existing 120 units have been struggling to provide the quality services they are committed to because of funding rates that were drastically lower than other similar supportive housing programs. In FY2025, the City Council included $6.4M in their discretionary budget to increase funding rates, but without a commitment from the administration to scale up this investment, these funds could only be applied to increase funding rates for the 120 existing units for 3 years.
- The Close Rikers Plan also promised "A new community-based mental health safety net." This administration has clearly fallen short of that goal - the number of people in Rikers diagnosed with a serious mental illness has increased by more than 60% since January 2022 without sufficient investments in community-based interventions and care.
- The preliminary budget includes increased investments in the Supervised Release Program, which will be greatly beneficial if applied to expand the Intensive Case Management pilot program. The budget also includes increased investments in transitional housing, which must be brought online immediately, must have the lowest possible barriers to entry, and must be paired with an increased investment in permanent housing (like JISH, 15/15 supportive housing, and other deeply affordable housing).

Jail oversight cuts are proposed:

- DOC continues to violate minimum standards established by the Board of Correction, including continued illegal use of solitary confinement; revelations of sexual abuse claims on Rikers spanning decades; and recent disclosure of DOC officers "deadlocking" people with severe mental health needs. Strong oversight is crucial. BOC needs more staff to fulfill its mandate, but the Mayor's Executive Budget proposes reducing their staff from 35 to 33 positions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does the Department of Correction have a staff shortage?

No. In fact, they are overstaffed. In "*A Shrinking System with Similar Spending,*" the Independent Budget Office reported that between 2014 and 2023 "DOC staffing declined by 24%, while the jail population fell by 45%." In her contempt order issued in November 2024, Judge Laura Swain noted that *"enormous resources—that the City devotes to a system that is at the same time overstaffed and underserved—are not being deployed effectively."* Reducing their headcount now is an important first step to rightsizing the department.

If they are not understaffed, why is there a shortage of officers to cover posts and provide services?

Multiple investigations and reports from the *Nunez* federal monitor have documented widespread mismanagement of DOC's enormous workforce, including officers failing to fulfill their duties and falsifying tour records, improper assignment of officers to non-jail posts (including over 700 uniformed officers assigned to civilian posts), and likely abuse of medical and personal leave (as reported in November 2024).

Does DOC need to replace officers who are retiring?

Eliminating vacancies would not prevent DOC from replacing officers who quit, retire, or are terminated. It could push DOC to more effectively supervise and manage their very large staff. In 2024, over 500 uniformed staff left, but DOC was able to hire only 290 officers, despite launching a broad recruitment campaign and lowering eligibility requirements.

How does NYC's jail spending compare to other cities?

DOC's budgeted headcount of more than one uniformed officer for each incarcerated person is more than 4 times higher than the national average. NYC's is the only jail system among the nation's 50 largest cities that has nearly as many officers as people in custody.

What will we do about those jobs? Aren't a lot of correction officers people of color, and women?

The choice to invest so much of New York City's budget in incarceration has meant that DOC has become a path to the middle class, including for many women and people of color.[8] New York City could and should make a different choice - to invest in and raise salaries, for example, for EMS workers, green jobs that can help us meet our goals for a vibrant and climate resilient city, and human services jobs that address community needs. Black and Brown workers deserve jobs with good wages and benefits that aren't dependent on the incarceration of their neighbors and families. We must invest in a just transition to expand and better compensate jobs outside of law enforcement - for example, in sectors like human services, where more than 80% of workers are women of color, and where constant budget cuts currently result in lost jobs and depressed wages.

[8] New York City correction officers are paid $92,000/year after 5.5 years on the job, and receive generous benefits. https://www1.nyc.gov/site/jointheboldest/officer/salary-benefits.page

New York City Council
Committee on Aging jointly with
the Committee on Finance
Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2026 and
the Executive Capital Plan for Fiscal Years 2025-2029
May 23, 2025

Thank you, Chairs Branan and Hudson, and members of the Committee on Aging and Committee on Finance, for the opportunity to submit testimony on the FY26 Executive Budget.

JASA is a not-for-profit agency that honors older New Yorkers as vital members of society, providing services that support aging with purpose and partnering to build strong communities. For over 50 years, JASA has served as one of New York's largest and most trusted agencies serving older adults in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens. JASA has a comprehensive, integrated network of services that promotes independence, safety, wellness, community participation, and an enhanced quality of life for New York City's older adults. These programs reach over 40,000 clients of diverse backgrounds and include home care, case management services, senior centers, NORC supportive services, home-delivered meals, caregiver support, continuing education, licensed mental health, senior housing, advocacy, legal services, adult protective services, and guardianship services. JASA also has an extensive history of providing information and referral services and benefits and entitlements assistance to ensure older New Yorkers are aware of and take advantage of the vast array of services available.

JASA's mission is to sustain and enrich the lives of the aging in the New York metropolitan area so that they can remain in the community, with dignity and autonomy. Inherent in our mission is embracing an age-friendly New York, identifying the needs of older adults, and working with the City to foster an environment where older adults are integral and thrive.

Investment in the Human Services Workforce and Resolution of Fiscal Barriers

To meet the complex and growing needs of older adults in New York City, organizations like JASA must be equipped with a fully staffed, stable, and supported workforce. These professionals—social workers, case managers, legal advocates, mental health counselors, home care aides, and many others—are the backbone of the City's safety net. They are not only educated and deeply skilled, but also profoundly dedicated to the well-being of vulnerable older adults.

During the height of the COVID-19 crisis, these workers consistently prioritized their clients' needs over their own, navigating risk and uncertainty to deliver life-sustaining services. Their value to New York City is undeniable—yet their compensation does not reflect that reality.

Despite being essential, human services workers remain some of the lowest-paid employees in New York City. Many earn wages that fall near or below the city's poverty threshold. This is a direct result of government contracts that fail to reflect the true cost of delivering services—particularly the cost of recruiting, retaining, and fairly compensating a qualified workforce. High turnover and persistent vacancies are inevitable outcomes of this underinvestment, and service quality suffers as a result.

This workforce is predominantly composed of women of color, who are paid substantially less than their counterparts in the public and private sectors. These wage disparities are rooted in structural inequities that devalue care work and perpetuate systemic injustice. If we are to build a sustainable human services system that reflects our City's values, we must address these inequities head-on. This requires not only adjusting salaries, but also implementing true salary parity with City workers, and enacting annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) to keep pace with inflation.

Late Contracting and Unresolved Fiscal Obligations

Nonprofit providers are also facing unsustainable fiscal pressures caused by delayed contracting and outdated reimbursement structures. These are not minor administrative inconveniences—they directly erode our ability to deliver critical services.

At JASA, we are currently experiencing approximately $3.2 million in delayed funding due to the City's failure to implement our approved indirect cost rate of 20.89% for FY23–FY25 period. Instead, we are still being reimbursed at the lower, pre FY23 rates:

- 10.89% for elder justice, legal services, mental health programs, and home-delivered meals
- 13.60% for case management and caregiver support
- 17.83% for NORCs and Older Adult Centers

These outdated rates do not cover essential operating costs—salaries, rent, utilities—forcing nonprofits to scale back services, defer hiring, and delay critical investments in infrastructure and care delivery. The result is a fraying safety net at a time when older New Yorkers need more support than ever.

Our home care program is also under severe financial strain, with reimbursement delays often exceeding $1 million. These delays, largely due to staffing shortages at HRA, would be less catastrophic if interest were paid on late payments—something required of Managed Care Organizations, but not of HRA. The burden is unfairly shifted to nonprofits, many of whom are forced to take on debt or draw down reserves just to meet payroll. In some cases, organizations are resorting to high-interest loans, diverting resources away from clients and toward banks.

This is not just poor fiscal management—it is a moral failure.

Recommendations

If the City is serious about sustaining a strong, equitable human services infrastructure, it must take urgent action to:

1. Fully fund contracts at levels that reflect the real cost of services, including approved indirect cost rates.

2. Ensure timely contract registration and reimbursement across all city agencies.

3. Require interest payments on overdue reimbursements, including those from HRA.

4. Invest in workforce stabilization by funding COLAs and achieving salary parity with comparable public sector positions.

The future of aging services—and the dignity and safety of thousands of older adults—depends on it.

We are grateful to the City Council and the Speaker for your leadership and partnership. As you finalize the FY26 budget, we urge you to continue prioritizing older adults and the organizations and staff that serve them—especially in this time of growing community need and federal uncertainty.

Thank you.

Molly Krakowski
Senior Director Government Affairs, JASA
mkrakowski@JASA.org
www.JASA.org

Jumpstart
Children first.

May 20, 2025

The New York City Council
City Hall Park
New York, NY 10007

Re: FY26 Executive Budget Testimony, Support for City's First Readers

Dear Speaker Adams and Distinguished Members of the New York City Council,

On behalf of Jumpstart for Young Children, we are writing to share our fiscal year 2026 (FY26) budget priority to address the early literacy needs of the youngest learners in New York City.

At Jumpstart, we aim to ensure that all children enter kindergarten ready to succeed. To achieve that mission, we strive to tackle the civil rights issue of our time—literacy. In the current academic year, we are doing this by collaborating with four higher education partners (Brooklyn College, Lehman College, New York University, and Pace University) and 195 AmeriCorps service members to deliver high-quality, evidence-based early literacy programming in 43 preschool classrooms across New York City.

Jumpstart for Young Children is one of 17 partner organizations that comprise City's First Readers (CFR). Together, we deliver early childhood education programming across every Council district, ensuring families can access critical early learning opportunities. Our work is not just about books—it's about building strong foundations for children's academic success, social-emotional learning, and long-term economic stability in our growing knowledge economy.

Jumpstart applauds President Adams and the New York City Council for your continuous investments in early literacy through the CFR initiative. Since 2014, CFR has brought together various nonprofit organizations to provide free, community-driven, culturally relevant programs and resources to build a strong foundation in early literacy across all NYC neighborhoods.

To give every child in New York City a fair start, we must fully fund and expand early childhood education and literacy. Research confirms that 90% of a child's brain development happens by age five, making this the most significant time horizon to realize the long-term return on investment for early childhood literacy. In addition to the long-term return on investment, we already see these vital investments' short-term impact.

Jumpstart
Children first.

At Jumpstart for Young Children, we monitor language and literacy gains using the Test of Preschool Early Literacy (TOPEL). Last year, nearly two-thirds of Jumpstart children made gains on the TOPEL, and 96% of Corps Members observed growth in their partner children. We also use innovative data collection methods, like Language ENvironment Analysis (LENA) "talk pedometers," to measure conversational turns between children and adults, enhancing our understanding of early language development.

To sustain the evidence-based work of Jumpstart for Young Children, this year, City's First Readers is requesting a $1 million enhancement—a modest but critical increase that will be shared with Jumpstart and the other 16 partner organizations. A significant portion of this funding will go toward maintaining and expanding our capacity to serve communities and families in an uncertain external environment, as we have seen the cost of books and printed materials has skyrocketed due to inflation, tariffs, and supply chain disruptions, all while we confront the realities of frozen and decreased federal funding. We need this local investment to ensure that books and educational resources remain accessible to all children and families in New York City.

New York City is a world-renowned leader in education. That is why we respectfully urge the Council to continue to invest in early childhood literacy by fully funding City's First Readers in FY26 and approving this critically needed enhancement to provide stability and sustainability to the program in the face of federal uncertainty.

Respectfully,

Crystal Rountree

Crystal Rountree
Chief Executive Officer
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Testimony of Alia Soomro, Deputy Director for New York City Policy
New York League of Conservation Voters
City Council Committee on Finance and
Environmental Protection, Resiliency, and Waterfronts
FY26 Executive Budget Hearing
May 30, 2025

My name is Alia Soomro and I am the Deputy Director for New York City Policy at the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV is a statewide environmental advocacy organization representing over 30,000 members in New York City. Thank you, Chairs Brannan and Gennaro, as well as members of the Committees on Finance and Environmental Protection for the opportunity to comment.

With numerous fiscal challenges facing the City, including the uncertainty of federal funding, NYLCV stresses that the City must not lose sight of important climate deadlines and goals. It is imperative that we pass a City budget that is not only bold on climate, but paves the path towards a just and equitable future. **For FY26, NYLCV urges the City to provide robust funding for the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) programs and staffing, as well as the Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice (MOCEJ), in order to fully implement climate and environmental justice laws and programs.**

<u>Eliminate the Proposed Water Rental Payment</u>

First, NYLCV strongly opposes DEP's water rental payment that the Adams Administration has implemented starting in FY25. The Administration reintroduced the full water rental payment in 2024, taking a $289 million rental payment for FY25 and adding that to the City's general fund, for unspecified, non-water-related purposes. From 2026 through 2029, the City plans to charge the Water Board more than $1.3 billion in rent over four years to lease the water system from the City, including $303 Million in FY26.

Under the 1985 lease agreement between the City and the Water Board, the City—at the mayor's discretion—may request a rental payment from the Water Board for use of the city's water lines. Originally, this rental payment was used to pay off the principal and interest payable on general obligation bonds issued by the City for water and sewer purposes.[1] Although those bonds have been paid off since 2004, mayoral administrations have continued to take a rental payment at the expense of water ratepayers.

[1] Paige, J., Gudino, V., Defelice, G., & Mendez, J. L. (2024). (rep.). New York City's Water and Sewer System: Examining Rate Setting and Billing Structures. Retrieved from https://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/new-york-citys-water-and-sewer-system-examining-rate-setting-and-billing-structures-october-2024.pdf.

After a pause from 2017 to 2023, the Adams Administration reintroduced the full rental payment in 2024 purportedly to fund rising costs of caring for asylum seekers. This means DEP's water payment revenue will be handed over to the City general fund for non-water-related purposes instead of staying with DEP, where they can direct it towards capital infrastructure projects.

In 2024 alone it was estimated that the rental payment taken by the Adams Administration resulted in a 3.1% increase in water rates for everyday New Yorkers. Looking ahead to May 2025, and through at least 2028, New Yorkers can expect continued yearly impact on their water rates as a result of this rental payment.

While the City has done this in the past, NYLCV believes this is a poor policy decision, especially given the urgency of the climate crisis. Capital funding for water infrastructure is urgently needed to address critical stormwater flooding, support coastal resiliency, improve water quality and strengthen drinking water infrastructure in New York City. By taking billions of dollars in the form of a rental payment, the Administration is raiding desperately needed funds and threatening the long term resilience of the city.

Diverting funds dedicated for water infrastructure also makes it harder for the City to access State clean water funding by sending the message that investing in clean water infrastructure is not something we value. This especially impacts parts of the City that have historically been neglected and will suffer the brunt of more frequent extreme weather events due to the ongoing climate crisis. DEP needs to keep this revenue to make essential infrastructure upgrades, especially in parts of the City that have historically been neglected and will suffer the brunt of climate change. **We strongly encourage the City Council and Mayor's Office to reject the $1.3 billion water rental payment in the City budget.**

<u>Fund the Implementation of the Unified Stormwater Rule</u>
Along with many advocates, NYLCV urges the Administration and the City Council to support a **$4 million request in the FY26 budget for DEP to support implementation of the Unified Stormwater Rule**. Passed in 2021, the Unified Stormwater Rule provides a comprehensive, citywide stormwater management policy for public and private development, expanding a program that had previously operated in only separately sewered areas to include combined sewer areas of the city as well. The Rule mandates that newly-developed or redeveloped properties disturbing 20,000 square feet or more of soil, or creating new impervious surfaces of 5,000 square feet or greater, must effectively manage stormwater from a 1.5-inch rain event on-site.

The Unified Stormwater Rule is absolutely critical to tackling inland flooding from extreme rainfall and meeting the city’s non-negotiable regulatory requirements to reduce CSOs into waterways, but the Rule is slowing down sustainable development due to a lack of staffing at DEP to support its implementation. In order for the city to prepare communities for future extreme rainfall, and meet its regulatory requirements to reduce CSOs, additional funding is needed to ensure the Unified Stormwater Rule program is operating effectively. This $4 million funding request includes $3 million for 15 additional staff at DEP to support implementation of the Rule, including permit processing and site inspection to ensure compliance, as well as $1 million for the development of a new application platform and 2 IT staff to maintain it.

Fund DEP Infrastructure Projects

NYLCV urges the City to continue taking long-term climate projections into account as the City adapts its existing sewer and wastewater infrastructure, especially with regards to the City's wastewater treatment plants' vulnerability to sea level rise, extreme weather events, and rising groundwater. We appreciate the Administration's recent announcement as part of the "City of Yes for Housing Opportunity" plan to invest $390 million in critical infrastructure upgrades to alleviate chronic flooding in Bushwick, Brooklyn and help keep New Yorkers safe.

As stated in our 2025 NYC Policy Agenda, the City must continue to explore ways to reduce Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) through green infrastructure projects such as rain gardens, bioswales, water squares, green and blue roofs, river daylighting, and permeable pavement that help absorb stormwater, purify the air, and mitigate the urban heat island effect. Moreover, the City must continue updating and modernizing our sewer system and wastewater treatment process to prevent CSOs from dumping unregulated contaminants in our waterways. Both of these goals are aligned with initiatives in *PlaNYC: Getting Sustainability Done*, such as reducing CSOs by more than 4 billion gallons per year by 2045 and developing a strategy to end the discharge of untreated sewage into the New York Harbor by 2060.

It is more urgent than ever to ensure the City takes a comprehensive approach to tackling climate change and advancing environmental justice. This includes sustained and robust funding for DEP's Green Infrastructure and Bluebelt Programs to manage stormwater runoff and reduce the risk of flooding, especially with increasingly worsening climate impacts. Green infrastructure, which uses vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage water and reduce the risk of flooding, such as rain gardens, green roofs, bioswales, and bluebelts that use natural drainage corridors, should all be considered. These projects should be expanded and implemented equitably so that all neighborhoods can receive the environmental benefits that come with them, with priority for frontline communities that have borne the brunt of environmental racism and climate injustices, including NYCHA campuses. Additionally, we appreciate DEP's leadership on the Bluebelt program and we urge the City to continue expanding the city's bluebelt program to reduce stormwater flooding with careful design and coordination for bluebelts on city parkland. The bluebelt program preserves natural drainage corridors such as streams, creeks, and ponds, and reconstructs them to help control, storm, or filter stormwater runoff. Bluebelts also provide open green space and a habitat for wildlife.

Cloudburst infrastructure is designed to manage extreme rainfall events too intense for traditional stormwater infrastructure, such as stormwater retention basins and permeable pavements. As DEP is set to formally launch the Cloudburst Management program in 2025, the City must ensure there is dedicated and sufficient funding and staffing for the program. Together, these programs can not only help to reduce stormwater runoff and complement existing stormwater infrastructure, but can also help to improve air and water quality, enhance biodiversity, and reduce urban heat island effects.

The City also needs to strengthen the coordination of planning and maintaining our parks and green infrastructure systems. Unlike traditional types of playgrounds and pavements that contribute to flooding and the urban heat island effect, parks and playgrounds with green infrastructure features help absorb or hold large volumes of stormwater, especially as storms and extreme rainfall become more frequent and severe with climate change.

Moreover, as a member of the New York City Coalition to End Lead Poisoning (NYCCELP), we urge the City to enforce its commitment to eliminating lead poisoning by ensuring robust resources are available to City agencies. As outlined in NYCCELP's 2024 Lead Agenda, we urge the City to continue allocating funding for DEP's water monitoring program and Lead Service Line Replacement Program. While these programs are important, we need the City to go further and pass legislation to establish a mandatory lead service line (LSL) removal program within ten years *at no cost to residents*. This legislation should allow for occupants of a residence to consent to the work. This legislation should be coupled with long-term funding by the city (i.e., as a capital expense, just like other major water projects such as replacing water mains).

Implement and Fully Fund Climate and EJ Laws and Policies

NYLCV urges the City to prioritize environmental justice and equity in all of its climate and environmental planning, implementation, and policies. We support DEP's prioritization of areas that have been historically overburdened and underinvested in and urge the City to provide robust funding for DEP's mitigation efforts to combat odors and truck traffic problems from treatment plants located in EJ areas. As advocated by other advocates, we urge the City to adequately fund and timely implement the Renewable Rikers Act (Local Laws 16, 17, and 31 of 2021), which could pave the way for installing a wastewater treatment facility, community composting facilities, and a solar farm on the island, potentially generating as much as 14 megawatts of renewable energy, and the City's Environmental Justice for All laws (Local Laws 60 and 64 of 2017) in order to meet these important deadlines.

Additionally, we urge the City to advance the Climate Strong Communities program, which will implement projects that address critical climate risk needs, including street cooling features, solar energy, raised shorelines, and resilience hubs. Complimenting this, the City must also fully implement Local Law 122 of 2021, which requires MOCEJ to develop and implement a citywide climate adaptation plan, prioritizing long-term resilience in vulnerable, frontline communities and for critical infrastructure along our waterfronts, including airports, wastewater treatment plants, NYCHA campuses, and marine transfer stations that are vulnerable to sea level rise, power outages, and storm surge. This law is critical because it will not only increase the transparency of the City's climate risks for residents and officials, but will prioritize comprehensive adaptation strategies and emergency planning to reduce the risk of damage and loss of life. As other advocates have called for, this plan must take a multi-hazard approach to adaptation planning and establish publicly available milestones for its implementation.

Fund PlaNYC Initiatives
We urge the Administration to fund and commit to *PlaNYC* initiatives to ensure our City prioritizes sustainability, resiliency, and equity. This includes, but is not limited to, implementing a multilayered strategy for flood resilience such as developing a minimum flood resilience standards for shoreline assets by 2026 and creating nature-based stormwater management solutions that provide multiple functions, including shade, water and air quality improvement, and wildlife habitats.

Another initiative that is a priority in *PlaNYC* and is aligned with NYLCV's 2025 NYC Policy Agenda is for a voluntary buyout program. Going forward, we urge the City to leverage funding from the New York State Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022 to develop a citywide long term, equitable, and voluntary buyout program for at-risk homes in the most vulnerable areas of the city. The city must begin working with residents, and regional, state, and federal officials to identify funding and proactively begin stakeholder engagement and education. The city should also consider what happens to the land post-buyout, such as wetland and open space restoration, as well as site remediation if the land was contaminated.

Prioritize Agency Staffing
Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, NYLCV stresses the importance of providing sufficient funding for DEP and MOCEJ hiring and retention. With numerous climate-related laws, policies, and programs these agencies must develop and implement, it is vital they have robust resources to carry them through. According to the Environmental Protection Committee Preliminary Budget Report, DEP has 792 vacancies as of January 2025, an increase from 686 vacancies as of January 2024. We urge the Administration to continue prioritizing DEP staffing and retention in order to meet its regulatory obligations. NYLCV also supports the call for $8.5 million in funding for the Bureau of Coastal Resiliency, which was established in October 2023 as part of a commitment in *PlaNYC* to establish a dedicated bureau within the NYC DEP to lead and coordinate the planning, implementation and operation of the city's coastal resilience infrastructure. This funding would fully staff up the office to support coastal resilience citywide, including 20 new positions.

Budgets express priorities and we must make our priorities clear: climate change is here and we must be doing everything in our power to fight it and protect New Yorkers, especially for frontline communities. NYLCV urges the City to prioritize funding for DEP and MOCEJ staffing to fully implement a coordinated and unified approach to the City's climate and environmental justice efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

NYC Council Executive Budget Hearing - April 16, 2025

Joneé Billy, Director of Strategic Partnerships & External Affairs at PowerPlay

TESTIMONY

Good afternoon Chair Brannon, Chair Reistler, and esteemed Committee members,

My name is Joneé Billy, and I am honored to serve as the Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships & External Affairs for PowerPlay NYC. On behalf of our executive team, I want to express our sincere gratitude for your leadership and continued support of youth-serving organizations across the city.

For 27 years, PowerPlay NYC has remained steadfast in its mission: to empower girls—primarily BIPOC youth from under-resourced communities—through sports-based youth development. Each year, we serve over 1,000 girls across all five boroughs of New York City, helping them grow stronger physically, emotionally, and academically. Our free programs—offered in partnership with Title I schools and community-based organizations—serve as lifelines for many young people who would otherwise have no access to safe spaces for physical activity, mentorship, or leadership development.

Play equity is at the heart of our theory of change. Research confirms what we see every day: when girls—particularly Black and brown girls—have access to high-quality, trauma-informed, culturally relevant sports programs, they are more likely to thrive in school, graduate, pursue college, lead with confidence, and serve as changemakers in their communities. Yet, when girls are not engaged in sports by age 14, the door often closes for good. This moment is make-or-break—and PowerPlay stands in that gap.

Unfortunately, a growing wave of anti-DEI rhetoric and policy at the federal level is threatening our ability—and the ability of countless peer organizations—to continue this critical work. Nearly half of PowerPlay's budget is supported by federal grants. But the chilling effect of these directives is not limited to public dollars. Private funders are following suit. In the past year alone, we've seen a foundation specifically supporting Black girls rescind a $25,000 pledged grant—citing a sudden and widespread pullback from their own funders. Corporate donors have halted DEI-driven giving. Foundations have quietly dismantled their equity commitments. And all of this has happened with no roadmap, no transparency, and no warning.

We are navigating an increasingly volatile philanthropic landscape, not because our work is less effective or less needed, but because it is explicitly rooted in equity.

Let me be clear: this is not just a funding crisis. It is a moral crisis. Efforts to defund or delegitimize DEI initiatives jeopardize decades of progress made on behalf of marginalized communities. They send a dangerous message to our young people that their identities, experiences, and futures are political liabilities.

Now more than ever, we need the City Council's partnership to sustain this work. Restoring and expanding local investment is not only vital to PowerPlay's operations—it is an unequivocal statement that New York City will not waver in its commitment to equity, justice, and the well-being of its young people.

We cannot afford to lose momentum. We cannot afford to lose another girl to the margins.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and for your ongoing commitment to uplifting New York City's youth.

Respectfully,
Joneé Billy

Dear New York City Council,

On behalf of Voters For Animal Rights (VFAR), **I am requesting the inclusion of $1.5 million for Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs and $1 million for pet food pantries in the upcoming city budget.** The Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs are aimed at humane reduction of the stray cat and dog population, while the pet food pantry program is intended to support low-income residents in caring for their pets and reduce shelter surrenders.

Why This Funding is Necessary:

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Program – $1.5 Million

The city continues to face challenges with overpopulation of free-roaming and feral cats. TNR is a proven, humane, and cost-effective solution to managing these populations. Through TNR, cats are humanely trapped, spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and either placed in foster homes or returned to the streets. This prevents further breeding, reduces nuisance behaviors, and stabilizes colonies. This funding will provide spay and neuter surgeries to thousands of animals every year. The funding will also support veterinary services, equipment, training, outreach, and coordination with local rescue partners.

Benefits include:

- Long-term reduction in feral cat populations
- Lower intake and euthanasia rates in city shelters
- Reduced public health risks associated with unvaccinated animals
- Strong community support and volunteer involvement

Pet Food Pantry – $1 Million

Economic instability has left many families struggling to afford pet food, leading to increased shelter surrenders. A city-supported pet food pantry within the Humane Resource Administration's Community Food Connection (CFC) Program would provide essential assistance to these families and keep pets in loving homes. This funding will cover food supplies, storage, transportation, staff coordination, and partnerships with local pantries and animal welfare organizations.

Benefits include:

- Reduction in pet abandonment and shelter overpopulation
- Enhanced community support for vulnerable residents
- Promotion of responsible pet ownership and public health

These two initiatives address urgent animal welfare and public service needs with long-term impacts. By allocating $2.5 million to these efforts, New York City can demonstrate its commitment to humane, sustainable solutions that benefit both animals and residents.

I respectfully urge the Council to include this funding as part of the upcoming city budget.

Thank you.

Best Regards,

Richard Fox

New York City Council
Committee on Finance, Honorable Justin Brannan, Chair
Committee on Children and Youth, Honorable Althea Stevens, Chair

Testimony of YMCA of Greater New York
Submitted Chelsea Baytemur, Director, Policy and Advocacy

New York City Council Fiscal Year 2026 Executive Budget Hearing
March 19, 2025

I respectfully submit the following testimony on behalf of the YMCA of Greater New York.

The YMCA of Greater New York is committed to empowering youth, improving health, and strengthening community. With 24 YMCA branches and more than 100 community sites across New York City, the YMCA is among the largest providers of human services spanning from infancy to older adults and an important anchor, convener, and catalyst for transformational change in underserved communities.

The YMCA is also a proud member of the Campaign for Children (C4C) and the New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy (NYCCAL). As members of these coalitions, we support their policy and budget agendas.

We thank Chair Brannan, Chair Stevens, Speaker Adams, and the entire City Council for their continued partnership and advocacy in securing critical investments in the Fiscal Year 2026 budget. We are pleased that the Executive Budget includes a long overdue investment to support the city's after-school system, however the city must prioritize strengthening existing after-school programs before expanding.

The YMCA Afterschool program, which includes seven Beacon, eight SONYC, twenty-six COMPASS, ten Community School, and two Cornerstone sites, empowers nearly 15,000 children and teens each day. The YMCA plays a vital role in helping young people build on the academic knowledge they gain during school hours while also fostering social-emotional growth, strengthening peer relationships, and boosting confidence. These critical skills empower youth to thrive both within our program sites and beyond. For countless New York City families, after-school programs like ours are not just an enrichment opportunity, they are an essential part of their support system. High-quality after-school programs combat learning loss, promote social-emotional development, prepare youth for the workforce, and provide reliable care that working families depend on.

For decades, DYCD and its provider partners have demonstrated the power of flexible, community-centered programming through initiatives like Beacon, Cornerstone, Community Schools, and COMPASS. These programs have consistently adapted to meet the evolving needs of local communities. Yet, they remain constrained by outdated and chronically underfunded contracts, dating back to 2014. We are encouraged that the Administration's Fiscal Year 2026 budget includes a $21 million investment to create 5,000 new K–5 afterschool seats, along with a commitment to increase total funding to $331 million by Fiscal Year 2027. This would enable the system to serve more than 20,000 additional elementary students by Fiscal Year 2028, a meaningful step toward achieving universal after-school access.

However, we remain deeply concerned that this funding still falls short of covering the true cost of running high-quality programs. Both SONYC and COMPASS have been severely underfunded for years. Providers are being asked to extend contracts that lock in unsustainable rates that undervalue the workforce and jeopardize the long-term stability of the entire afterschool ecosystem. Under the current proposal, the only new investment in Fiscal Year 2026 is for 5,000 additional elementary school seats—funded at existing, inadequate rates. Critically, there is no commitment to increase funding for SONYC middle school programs, leaving a significant gap in support for older youth.

The YMCA, in partnership with the Campaign for Children, strongly urges the city to raise rates for COMPASS and SONYC providers, beginning with a phased approach in Fiscal Year 2026. We recommend an immediate halfway increase in base rates, bringing COMPASS Elementary to $4,900 per participant and SONYC Middle School programs to $4,150. This phased increase is a critical first step toward the goal: fully funding elementary and middle school programs in a new procurement process in Fiscal Year 2027. This investment would strengthen provider capacity, support a stable workforce, and enrich the experience for young people who rely on these critical programs.

We also urge the City Council to work in close collaboration with the Administration to ensure the timely release of the long-promised COMPASS RFP and concept paper, as referenced in the administration's recent announcement. Importantly, we call on the Administration to release a fully funded Concept Paper that reflects the true cost of high-quality service delivery. This process must include meaningful engagement with afterschool providers, youth workers, and community stakeholders. Their input is essential to shaping a shared vision for equitable, robust afterschool programming—and to developing a cost model that meets today's needs while building long-term capacity to support the city's growing demand for childcare and youth development services.

Summer Rising

In addition to our school-year programs, the YMCA also plays a central role in summer youth development through our Summer Rising partnership. At the YMCA, summer camp is one of our most cherished and successful programs. Last summer alone, over 17,000 children participated across our 67 camp sites, including 5,641 Summer Rising participants. To support this effort, we employed 1,200 camp counselors and 685 participants from the Summer Youth Employment Program. These numbers represent more than just data—they represent children learning, growing, and thriving in safe, supportive environments. While Summer Rising is a well-intentioned effort that began to address the learning loss incurred by students during the pandemic, we believe that the future success of the program lies in addressing the operational challenges faced by community-based organizations in implementing the model.

First, while we appreciate the restoration of $19.6 million to the DYCD portion of Summer Rising in the Preliminary Budget, we are deeply concerned that this funding is only secured for Fiscal Year 2026. Without a long-term, sustainable funding stream, the future of this critical program remains uncertain. Safe and reliable summer programming is not a luxury—it is a necessity. Any instability in funding jeopardizes not only the well-being of children but also the ability of families to access the care they depend on.

Second, beyond funding, greater coordination between New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) and DYCD is urgently needed, particularly regarding related service requirements. Over the past few years, many participants have been unable to access the paraprofessionals they require as part of their mandated services during the non-academic portion of Summer Rising. As providers, we are not privy to the sensitive details outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), making it imperative that NYCPS improves communication with DYCD, and ensures necessary accommodation as to guarantee all students receive the services they are entitled to. \

Third, community-based organizations (CBOs) have long been the trusted bridge between families and summer programs. We have built deep relationships within our communities, and for years, we have successfully handled student enrollment. The shift away from CBO-led enrollment has created significant challenges—delayed rosters, inadequate planning time, and disruptions to the continuity of care for families throughout the summer. To best serve students and families, CBOs must be allowed to re-assume their role in enrollment, ensuring a smoother, more effective process. Sustained funding, stronger collaboration, and a return to community-driven enrollment are all necessary to ensure Summer Rising remains a high-quality, accessible program for the youth who depend on it.

Budget Recommendations for Youth Services:

- Restore and baseline $6.9 million for COMPASS after school
- Baseline funding for early childhood education programs that are only funded through FY 2025:
    - $5 million for outreach for early childhood and education programs; and
    - $70 million for Special Education Pre-K evaluations and services.
- Increase and Baseline $60 million for Promise NYC to provide additional seats for infants and toddlers ages 0-2 without eligibility requirements.

- Invest $160 million to begin a phase-in process for higher per participant rates in the FY 2026 COMPASS and SONYC contract extensions, committing to a halfway increase of base rates to:
  - $4900 per participant for COMPASS Elementary and $4150 per participant for SONYC Middle School Programs

Adult Literacy
The YMCA has worked with newcomers to NYC since 1908, back when we had a YMCA on Ellis Island. Based on the success of our English Language and Employment Services for Adult Immigrant and Refugees program, which was established in 1978, we launched the New Americans Initiative in 2008. Pre-pandemic the initiative was operating out of seven New Americans Welcome Centers at various YMCA branches. We currently offer services at four sites – Chinatown, Flatbush, Flushing, and Harlem, as well as online classes, serving over 1,000 students.

The YMCA's New Americans Initiative is committed to actively raising the quality of life for all immigrants and refugees in New York City through vital trauma-informed support, services, learning opportunities, and more. We offer instructional, vocational, recreational, and wrap-around services to all and programming is adapted to meet the individualized needs of our participants. Our comprehensive case management services support entire families to ensure that they have the tools and resources necessary to be successful, contributing members of NYC's communities. As we aim to remove any barriers hindering progress, we support individuals and families with access to food, health and mental health resources, childcare, education, immigration services, and other resources.

Through a case management approach, our New Americans Initiative provides comprehensive, trauma-informed services including education, training and employment, civic engagement, community bridge building and other learning opportunities for participants and their families. Our strength-based intake process identifies specific needs—which may include food, housing, medical and mental well-being, access to public benefits, post-secondary education, citizenship preparation, English Language learning, job readiness, training and certification, employment or simply access to a single meal.

More than 2.2 million adults in New York City have limited English proficiency or lack a high school diploma. Yet, despite this urgent need, city and State funding for adult education remains so inadequate that fewer than 3% of New Yorkers can access Adult Basic Education (ABE), High School Equivalency (HSE), or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes each year. The vast majority of those in need—low-income and working-class immigrants, women, and people of color—are being denied a fundamental opportunity to advance their education and improve their lives.

We are an active and proud member of the New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy (NYCCAL), a coalition comprised of adult literacy teachers, program managers, students, allies from over 40 community-based organizations, CUNY campuses, and library programs across the five boroughs. In line with NYCCAL, we support **the call for the Administration to double the baseline funding for adult literacy programs funded through DYCD from $12 million to $24 million**, restoring the cuts from last year and enabling programs to bolster and stabilize their services in a time of increased need and continuous threats to our communities.

According to the Preliminary Mayor's Management Report, over 18,000 adults were served in DYCD-funded adult literacy programs in Fiscal Year 2024. However, with only $12 million allocated for Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026, the number of students served is projected to drop to just 9,118—half of what was previously supported under a fully funded budget. We deeply appreciate the City Council's discretionary funding, which has helped bridge the gap this year, but discretionary funding is not a reliable long-term solution. We strongly urge the administration to increase and baseline its investment in adult literacy by an additional $12 million.

At the federal level, the Trump administration dismantled the Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy, raising concerns about possible cuts or restructuring to the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title II). This federal program currently provides approximately $24.6 million annually for ABE, GED, and ESOL in NYC. According to the Literacy Assistance Center, losing this funding would eliminate over 20,000 seats for students in dire need of these services. The YMCA has WIOA IET programs at our Flushing and Chinatown Branches, where a loss in funding would result in a loss of 200 seats.

Adult literacy is not just an education issue, it is a matter of racial, social, and economic justice. Literacy empowers individuals to understand and advocate for their rights, access vital resources and opportunities, engage in civic life, and uplift their communities. Investing in adult literacy is an investment in equity, economic mobility, and the future of New York City. Now is the time to take bold action and ensure that every adult can learn, grow, and thrive.

Budget Recommendations for Adult Literacy:

- Double the baseline funding for adult literacy programs funded through DYCD from $12 million to $24 million.
- For the City Council to maintain its Discretionary funding (i.e., the Adult Literacy Pilot and Adult Literacy Initiative funding) at its current total level of $16.5 million.

If you have any questions, please contact Chelsea Baytemur, Director of Policy and Advocacy, at cbaytemur@ymcanyc.org.

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