Testimony of Daniel Symon,
Director of the Mayor's Office of Contract Services, and
City Chief Procurement Officer
Before the New York City Council Committee on Contracts
Budget and Oversight Hearing
March 26, 2019

Good morning Chair Brannan and members of the Contracts Committee.

My name is Dan Symon, and I am the Director of the Mayor's Office of Contract

Services (MOCS) and the City's Chief Procurement Officer. Thank you for inviting

me to update you on how MOCS is resourced to advance New York City's

procurement priorities.

As you know, MOCS is focused on reducing frustrating administrative burdens experienced today, and establishing game-changing technology-enabled processes to strengthen collaboration, increase transparency and speed procurement. MOCS drives adoption of newer practices to leverage best-in-class technology, so our service offerings are necessarily hands-on, tailored to various audiences, and designed to be scaled for our workforce.

The Fiscal Year 2020 Preliminary Budget provides MOCS \$29 million
including \$17.5 million for Personal Services to support 203 full-time positions
and \$11.5 million in Other Than Personal Services funding. Across the five-year
plan window, our Agency's budget peaks in Fiscal Year 2019 and levels off to a
baseline of \$24.3 million, while our budgeted headcount remains relatively flat.

Daniel Symon, Director and City Chief Procurement Officer

March 26, 2019
NYC Mayor's of Contract Services (MOCS)

The recent increase in MOCS' budget results from the administrative transfer of the PASSport project contract from the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DOITT) to MOCS. DOITT remains a critical partner on all our technology related initiatives.

Over the past year, we have continued our progress toward ensuring fairness in the procurement process. As part of these efforts, we continue to grow and adjust our organizational framework at the same time. As of today, there are 169 active employees across two office locations, a 17% increase from last year's 145 active employees, and last Fall, we moved staff from our office in Downtown Brooklyn to a new space blocks away from our headquarters in lower Manhattan. As we have grown, we have implemented several internal workforce development programs, such as a Mentoring Program and a Lunch-and-Learn series. While we continue with our traditional tasks and responsibilities, and simultaneously transform a major City business process, it is critical that MOCS is an agency that evolves with the changing dynamics of procurement as a whole. These activities also shape our ongoing work to deepen and enhance workforce development offerings for our agency clients.

We are already seeing results based on our double-pronged efforts, with our team capitalizing on every opportunity to make improvements and build on

promising practices. Here are a few examples of recent progress, even with the full transformation in development:

- jointly crafted and implemented a 25% advance policy which resulted in \$1.3B disbursed in FY19, putting money in the hands of nonprofit providers more-quickly;
- released The City of New York Health and Human Services Cost
 Policies and Procedures manual that sets forth new claiming
 procedures, standardized definitions and established updated
 indirect cost rate policies, creating clearer guidance and increasing
 flexibility for nonprofits;
- maintained a 6 day review for invoices managed in HHS Accelerator –
 enabled by use of a standardized budget format, streamlined
 workflow, and shared digital workspace for agencies and vendors to
 remedy issues; and
- codified a new PPB rule which enables agencies a larger discretionary purchasing threshold for goods and services exclusively from Citycertified M/WBEs, resulting in over \$60M in purchases.

These results move the needle and were achieved through partnerships with vendors and city agencies. But we know that significant challenges remain,

particularly in human services. The investments made by this administration of roughly \$600 million dollars per year in the human services sector has created a massive amount of contract amendments. Due to diligent work by city agencies and nonprofits, the vast majority of these amendments are now registered. In collaboration with Deputy Mayor Palacio's office, OMB, and MOCS, agencies are in the process of a surge on the remainder. The City is focused on timely registration, and we have established new accountability structures to ensure active monitoring of milestones toward submission of registration packages to the Comptroller's Office. Additionally, we implemented standardized project management guidelines for agencies renewing or extending contracts each year.

We are always working to capture actionable lessons from vendors in all sectors. Our public-facing help desk has fielded over 50,000 service tickets from vendors and agencies since the launch of PASSPort in August 2017. This channel is vital for operations and essential for documenting the experiences of vendors, leading to the creation of system enhancements and new policies for agencies.

Proactive vendor engagement remains a critical priority as we develop PASSPort Release 3. We look forward to continuing our partnership with sector leaders and building on the collaborative models we have established.

Our investment in PASSPort has already helped speed processes and relieve administrative burdens. Since going live, 11,489 vendors have completed the online disclosure process in PASSPort, transforming what was formerly a paper-based VENDEX process that could take some vendors weeks, if not months to complete. City agencies have completed 11,337 Responsibility Determinations in PASSPort. A process that would typically take six to seven weeks is now taking seven days because PASSPort allows agencies to share information collected on vendors for Responsibility Determinations.

While we continue to plan for and develop new system releases, our office constantly monitors the system's performance and takes feedback from endusers to prioritize enhancements between major releases. For example, we built an integration with the Department of Finance's (DOF) internal tax check system, allowing PASSPort to bring back a vendor's tax status. We have also added a one-year validity period to DOF's tax determination, removing the need for DOF to conduct a duplicative vendor review.

The decrease in cycle time for a key pre-registration agency activity provides a glimpse of what can be achieved as we stand-up new PASSPort functionality. Better management and oversight will also be reinforced by real-time status updates for user tasks, transparent views of process workflows, and

use of system-generated performance reports. We will build on the success of Release 1 in a few weeks by launching Release 2 in partnership with the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) and DoITT. This release will make agency operations easier and purchasing more strategic, helping roughly 3,000 city staff streamline management of requests, orders, receipts and invoices for City requirements contracts.

Our office is committed to realizing our vision of fair, responsible and timely procurement, and this will be achieved through standardization, automation, and radical transparency. We remain committed to collaborating with citywide and agency policy-makers to implement new strategies which ease the administrative hardships faced by City vendors, particularly nonprofits, small businesses and M/WBEs. We are excited with the progress we've made thus far in the design of Release 3 of PASSPort and invite all members of this committee to actively participate in this process. At this time, we believe that we are appropriately resourced and have great partners at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) who will ensure that we are sufficiently positioned to respond to any emerging needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am joined by Jeremy Halbridge,
Deputy Director of Administration, Victor Olds, General Counsel, and Danielle

Louis, Associate Director of Finance and Operations. We're happy to take any questions you may have.



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Testimony of Public Health Solutions

Before the New York City Council

Committee on Contracts

March 25, 2019 at 11 a.m.

Good afternoon Chair Brannan and members of the Committee. I am Marla Tepper, General Counsel and Vice President of Legal Affairs at Public Health Solutions ("PHS"). Thank you for inviting us to testify before the Committee this morning.

Public Health Solutions, one of New York City's largest nonprofits, supports vulnerable New York City families and the communities that surround them in achieving optimal health and building pathways to reach their full potential. Our work is centered on reproductive and sexual health, maternal and child health, health insurance, food and nutrition, tobacco control, and HIV/AIDS.

Today, we are focusing on the critical contracting and other management services we provide on behalf of government— administrative services that allow over 200 community organizations to focus on program and service delivery. Our professional contracting work contributes to ensuring that New York City's innovative laws and policies are effective and implemented as envisioned.

Our History as Contract Managers

Our contracting work began in 1991 with the Ryan White authorization to fund human immunodeficiency virus ("HIV") or acquired immune deficiency syndrome ("AIDS") care. The Ryan White Program makes federal funds available to eligible metropolitan areas, states, and local community-based organizations to assist with health care costs and support services for individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS. New York City needed a partner to get the urgently needed funding out to the community quickly. We've managed the Ryan White contract since 1991; the current grant runs through 2020.

Ryan White appropriations contain restrictions on unexpended funds, essentially requiring return of those funds not spent or a waiver. With PHS' management, New York City has the best track record nationally for spending the entirety of the Ryan White grant award year after year, meaning that vitally needed services are delivered to those in need. Specifically, PHS annually commits 100% of Ryan White program grant dollars with less than 1/10th of 1% unspent. No other eligible metropolitan area in the country commits and spends this amount of their award.

As experts in the field, we participate at national conferences, such as the 2016 National Ryan White Conference on HIV Care and Treatment, in which we co-presented with DOHMH.

PHS' Current Contract Portfolios

Over the past several decades, the funding we manage has diversified. For example, on an annual basis, working in partnership with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene ("DOHMH"), we get close to \$200M in funding to about 200 unique HIV and other public health and human services agencies across the five boroughs. These include large public and private hospitals and healthcare provider networks, AIDS services organizations, universities, and community-based organizations of all types and sizes including faith-based organizations and peer-led grass roots programs

Beginning in 2006 and expanding significantly in 2016, PHS has administered City Council funding awarded through DOHMH's Bureau of HIV (BHIV), Bureau of Communicable Diseases (BCD), and Bureau of Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) for a number of City Council initiatives including: Anti-Poverty, Ending the Epidemic, HIV/AIDS Faith Based Initiative, Reproductive and Sexual Health Services, Viral Hepatitis Prevention, Speaker's Initiatives and individual Member Items. For fiscal year 2019, PHS manages over 200 unique awards though approximately 72 contracts totaling over \$15 million.

Beginning in 2015, PHS began to administer city tax levy (CTL) funds on behalf of DOHMH. These include management of several Thrive NYC initiatives, such as the NYC Well call center and mental health services for the aged; and contracts for maternal infant health, developmental disabilities, asthma and cancer prevention. The diverse portfolio of services PHS supports via contracts we administer includes:

- HIV Prevention and Care
- Cancer Prevention
- Emergency Preparedness
- Family Planning
- Food and Nutrition
- Harm Reduction
- Hepatitis Prevention
- Maternal and Infant Health Care
- Mental Health
- Provider Detailing

Our contracting and administrative services are "soup to nuts"—ranging from procurement to contract development and execution, contract monitoring, payment, fiscal management, administrative services, technical assistance and reporting.

Our knowledge and relationships with City government are deep, facilitating results:

- We have a non-voting seat on the NYC HIV Planning Council
- DOHMH representation on PHS' Contractor Community Advisory Group
- City government representatives serve on our Board

Challenges in City Contracting

Challenges in City contracting are well-documented and known to this Committee. Data released in May 2018 by NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer sheds light on just how late, unpredictable, and costly funding under NYC contracts can be and an August 2018 report by SeaChange Partners amplifies those findings. ¹This Committee heard powerful testimony on November 15, 2018 describing first-hand the impacts of late payments on nonprofits. Nonprofits described substantial outstanding receivables on their books, unhealthy reliance on lines of credit, possible negative audit findings resulting from delays, nonpayment of interest on lines of credit, and inability to secure private funding due to apparent risk, as well as concerns of nonprofit boards as fiduciaries due to late payments.

PHS' Readiness to Tackle City Contracting Issues

Contracting is not simply a back-office function for us. As a public health organization also engaged in service delivery, we perform our work with commitment to our subcontractors' missions. That commitment fuels our work and our excellent relationships with our subcontractors. Our subcontractors' success is our success.

Over the past 28 years, we have built our expertise in contracting and continue to innovate – from procurement and management to reporting and payment. We have robust systems and well-established processes in place to expedite our work. For example, we've developed a convenient online procurement portal, and have a sophisticated, state of the art data systems managing programmatic and fiscal performance. We use these systems also apply complex payability rules and calculate fee-for-service payment amounts. We meticulously plan and track each step of the procurement and contracting process and routinely report key performance indicators to a variety of stakeholders. We also gather and maintain a large amount of information regarding contracts (contact, service site location, target population, etc.), in addition to programmatic and fiscal data, all of which we query and analyze to create a variety of commissioned and ad hoc reports and dynamic/searchable maps. We are proud of our record:

- PHS executes contracts within 90 days of award compared to the average of about 1 year for city government agencies to execute contracts.
- We pay vendors within 30 days of complete documentation.
- In 2015, the City Council sought to ensure that the city tax levy funds for diverse programs reached the community immediately. PHS released15 RFPs within six months and executed \$43.7M in contacts within a few months after award.
- We consistently achieve high-levels of funding utilization (sub-contract spending) through pro-active spending management.
- We ensure subrecipient compliance with contract terms and the appropriate use of funds through comprehensive yet adaptable contract monitoring.

¹ "Running Late: An Analysis of NYC Agency Contracts", NYC Comptroller Scott M. Stringer, May 2018, "New York City Contracting Delays, the Facts", SeaChange Partners, August 2018.

How can we help?

- We can continue to administer DOHMH contracts at our current volume or greater. Our
 understanding is that DOHMH is taking and intends to take back contracts that we effectively
 administer to manage in-house, reportedly as a cost savings measure. While the intent is good, this
 effort comes at a price tag. We know that we take less time to get contracts and funds to nonprofits
 that rely on government grants to deliver critical services to New Yorkers and do so less expensively.
- We can perform contracting and management services on behalf of other agencies. We can scale
 our contract management services to efficiently assume new projects. City contract administration
 would involve similar skills and established infrastructure.
- We can offer agencies technical assistance to improve contracting processes based on our practical experience.
- We can work with this Committee and others as partners to identify problems and solutions.

I will be happy to address questions. We look forward to meeting and working with the Committee to identify ways in which PHS can assist in the City's contracting process.

ABOUT US. Founded in 1957, Public Health Solutions (PHS) is the largest public health nonprofit organization focusing on New York City. PHS is improving health and creating opportunities to help NYC's vulnerable families and neighborhoods thrive. With two million New Yorkers living at or below poverty, PHS is at the forefront of tackling crucial public health issues including food and nutrition, health insurance access, maternal and child health, reproductive health, tobacco control, and HIV/AIDS prevention. Our approach is multi-pronged, innovative, and sustainable. We work directly in the community to provide health services to underserved families. We conduct groundbreaking research that informs the public health community and policy. Through our long-standing government partnerships, we are a critical link in providing financial support and management assistance to nearly 200 community-based organizations across the city's five boroughs. For more information, visit healthsolutions.org.



ADVANCING OUR Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc. (CPC) 150 Elizabeth Street New York NY 10012 (212) 941- 0920 fax (212) 966-8581 www.cpc-nyc.org

Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc. Testimony at the New York City Council Contracts Committee Honorable Justin Brannan, Chair March 26th, 2019

Good afternoon. My name is Carlyn Cowen and I am Chief Policy and Public Affairs Officer at the Chinese American Planning Council. I would like to thank Chair Brannan and the members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify before you today and for your leadership on issues that deeply impact human service organizations here in New York City.

The mission of the Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc. (CPC) is to promote social and economic empowerment of Chinese American, immigrant, and low-income communities.

CPC was founded in 1965 as a grassroots, community-based organization in response to the end of the Chinese Exclusion years and the passing of the Immigration Reform Act of 1965, which brought waves of Asian immigrants to New York City. Initially a provider of counseling services to low-income families referred by local schools, CPC has continued to expand its program offerings over the years to become the largest Asian American social service organization in the U.S., providing vital resources to more than 60,000 people per year through more than 50 programs at over 30 sites across the boroughs of Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. Our revenue is approximately half New York City funding.

CPC now employs a team of over 700 staff members, many of whom come from the same neighborhoods we serve. With the firm belief that social service can incite social change, CPC strives to empower our constituents as agents of social justice, with the overarching goal of advancing and transforming communities.

CPC offers holistic services that target both individual and family needs. Our programs are available for community members of all ages and backgrounds, and span five key service areas:

- Early Childhood Education: child care for children of ages 1-5 and workshops for parents.
- School-Age Child Care Services: after-school programming for children in grades K-5.
- Education & Career Services: ESOL classes, youth development, and workforce trainings.
- Senior Services: wellness, recreation, meals, and workshops for adults aged 60 and older.
- Community Services: family resources, public benefits, counseling, advocacy, and referrals.

Our affiliate, CPC Home Attendant Program, also offers care for homebound individuals

We thank the City Council for your commitment to the human services sector and ensuring that contracted human services are adequately funded to run their programs. Last year saw an important investment in human services provider organizations that hold City contracts. With your help, we secured \$300m of our \$500m ask to help nonprofit provider organizations cover the cost of delivering essential services to New Yorkers.

These investments will better allow for human services workers across the city to provide critical services to New Yorkers in need. In particular, CPC will now be able to address the gap between our senior center programs costs and reimbursement rate through the model budget process. We have also received a 2% increase in several contracts' indirect rates, which will help us close the gap. However, there is still 7% gap between our indirect rate and the average reimbursement we receive from the city, which means that we have to make up approximately \$1 million in indirect each year. CPC received a notification of an increase on indirect rates from some of our DFTA contracts, but have not received notification on the status of increasing the indirect cost rate the remainder of our contracts. We have seen no actual disbursement of indirect rate increases. The delay in disbursing indirect funds has required CPC to delay planned hiring of mission-critical staff as well as some key technological upgrades that would allow more efficient programming. At a time when federal uncertainty has led to a sharp increase in demand for our services, chronic underfunding of city contracts and delay in disbursement of increases has led to us being unable to meet that demand.

The sector is united in asking the City Council to include in their budget response a call on the Mayor to invest \$250 million to fill in the gap between provider's indirect costs and the contract reimbursement rates from the City. This investment would help fully implement the new Health and Human Services Cost Policies and Procedures Manual, which was developed as part of the Nonprofit Resiliency Committee. This number is an estimate based on the FY18 investment of \$100 million in indirect rates to raise them an average of 2% to achieve rates of 10% across contracts. Providers real indirect rates vary, but assuming an average of 15%, based on provider feedback and the Stanford Innovation Fund review of nonprofit finances, would require a 5% increase equal to approximately \$250

CPC has gotten COLA funds on some of our DYCD contracts, but not all, as well as some of our DFTA contracts. They have only begun to disburse, with the others being delayed or providing no updates. Because of the uncertainty around COLAs, we had to add increases to salaries for some staff but not others, which has led to low staff morale, and increased turnover. Our organization tried to see if it would be possible to fund the increases for other staff internally, but it was not possible due to the high cost. Indeed, we had to front the increases for many of our contracts, which has led to reduced cash flow.

Finally, the City must clean up the backlog of all contract action registrations and ensure a transparent and timely registration system going forward. Human services contracts are registered late by city agencies 89% of the time, forcing organizations to make impossible decisions to bridge massive gaps in their funding. This is important because providers are paid once the contracts are registered, creating a risky situation where we have to start the work without a registered contract and payment, or delay in starting the contract, which affects the communities dependent on the services of providers. Many of the late contracts are also renewals, so there isn't really an option to suspend services while we wait for a registered contract; the City's delays cost us real money and jeopardize the quality of services by diverting funds away from programs to pay interest on lines of credit. Last year, CPC paid \$157,000 in interest in loans taken out to cover late payments. These payments are not reimbursed by the city agencies that held up our money in the first place.

We also call on the Council to commit to refuse to support cuts to human services programs as part of the mandated budget reductions.

If you have any questions, please contact Carlyn Cowen at ccowen@cpc-nyc.org



Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation (NMIC) Contracts Committee Maria Lizardo, Executive March 26, 2019

Good day, Mr. Chairman and Members of the New York City Council Committee,

My name is Maria Lizardo and I am the Executive Director at Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation (NMIC).

NMIC is a settlement house serving 14,000 community members annually who reside in upper Manhattan and the Bronx. I am here today to speak about the crisis that the human services sector is facing as a result of the late contract registration system. Human services providers continue to face late contracting issues, which have a detrimental effect on both the organizations themselves and the communities that we serve. According to NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer's analysis of NYC Agency contracts, in Fiscal Year 2017, 90% of human services contract arrived at the Comptroller's Office after the start date. This is important because providers are paid once the contracts are registered, creating a risky situation where we have to start the work without a registered contract and payment, or delay in starting the contract, which affects the communities dependent on the services of providers. Many of the late contracts are also renewals, so there isn't really an option to suspend services while we wait for a registered contract; the City's delays cost us real money and jeopardize the quality of services by diverting funds away from programs to pay interest on lines of credit.

NMIC has experienced extreme hardships as a result of this broken process. At one point, NMIC was six months behind on the rent and the landlord served us with an eviction notice. Imagine the embarrassment had we been evicted when NMIC was founded on the very premise of preventing evictions? NMIC currently has 10 unregistered contracts. One contract from FY 17, four contracts from FY 18, and five contracts from FY 19. The City currently owes NMIC \$997,202 dollars, we are two months behind on our rent (soon to be three as we enter the month of April 2019), and continue to struggle to gather the funds to cover payroll, and pay the health insurance coverage for our staff. We spend a great deal of time reviewing our accounts receivables, reaching out to contractors, and tracking down payments. It is imperative that the contracting system be fixed sooner rather than later since it's killing the human services sector that serves New York's most vulnerable community members.

Maria Lizardo, LMSW

Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation (NMIC)

Executive Director

TESTIMONY

New York City Council Committee on Contracts Fiscal Year 2020 Preliminary Budget Hearing Tuesday, March 26, 2019

Submitted by:
Michelle Jackson
Deputy Executive Director
Human Services Council of New York

Introduction

Good afternoon, Chairperson Brannan, and members of the New York City Council Committee on Contracts. My name is Michelle Jackson and I am the Deputy Executive Director of the Human Services Council. Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the preliminary New York City budget for Fiscal Year 2020.

HSC serves our membership as a coordinating body, advocate, and an intermediary between the human services sector and government. We take on this work so our members can focus on running their organizations and providing direct support to New Yorkers. These are the nonprofits that support our City's children, seniors, those experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, individuals who are incarcerated or otherwise involved in the justice system, immigrants, and individuals coping with substance abuse and other mental health and behavioral challenges. We strive to help our members' better serve their clients by addressing matters such as government procurement practices, disaster preparedness and recovery, government funding, and public policies that impact the sector

The nonprofit human services sector plays an essential role in the daily lives of millions of New Yorkers. These vital community services, ranging from homeless services, senior care, to employment training, assist approximately 2.5 million New Yorkers annually. Nonprofits are government's partner in delivering services to New Yorkers from all walks of life, and the procurement process, substantially defined in the New York City Charter, is the prime mechanism for creating, funding, and awarding contracts to human services providers. The contracting system is complex, and a lack of collaboration and transparency in the development of request for proposals, coupled with this complex process creates an inadequately funded set of programs and extensive delays in contract registration and payment.

The gap between what the City funds on human services contracts and what providers can supplement with private and philanthropic dollars has grown too wide. It is vital that no cuts are made to human service programs as part of the mandated budget reductions and the chronic underfunding of the sector is rectified.

The sector is united in asking the City Council to include in their budget response a request for the Mayor to invest \$250 million dollars to fill the gap between provider's indirect costs and the contract reimbursement rates from the City. The new *Health and Human Services Cost Policies and Procedures Manual*, which was developed as part of the Nonprofit

Resiliency Committee lays out standardized indirect costs for our sector. However, without increased funding to address the gaps this manual displays in our contracts, the fiscal crisis we are facing remains unaddressed. Based on numbers provided by the Office of Management and Budget, \$250 million should cover the costs to fully implement this manual.

We need this core investment this year and to work with the Council to create a better partnership for the procurement of human services, where providers are trusted as experts who have worked for decades in their communities and are brought into the room from the start on contracts to ensure they create the most cost-effective and impactful programs.

Delays in Procurement

The New York City Comptroller's report, *Still Running Late: An Analysis of NYC Agency Contracts*, demonstrates that much more needs to be done - and quickly - to improve the timeliness of human services contract registration.

This is the second report, and overall contracts are registered late 80 percent of the time across the City, and human services contracts are registered late 89 percent of the time, with the percentage going down slightly when discretionary awards are removed. I am sure every industry could tell the Commission how delays adversely affects them, and what I can tell you is that there is a real, detrimental impact on providers. First, providers cannot wait to begin services, like other contractors. A construction project could potentially be delayed until documents are in order, but a summer youth program has to start in the summer, and parents rely on a particular start date. For contract renewals, which are also delayed, providers cannot close a program while waiting for renewal documents; closing a domestic violence shelter for 2-3 months each year would be extremely problematic. This means providers take enormous fiscal and legal risks by signing leases, hiring staff, and starting programs without a contract, or continuing to operate services on the verbal agreement that things will get sorted out. Retroactivity also creates cash flow issues for providers, who have to put off paying vendors, take out lines of credit that they must pay interest on or utilize the loan fund, because providers cannot get paid until the contract is registered.

There are organizations that paid over \$100,000 of interest on a line of credit or had to secure bridge financing to prevent layoffs due to contract delays. Delays in payment have even forced providers to use other programmatic grants to pay regular bills. Since many contracts do not allow funds to be rolled over to the next fiscal year, when payments are delayed, organizations try to spend as much of the funding as possible and leave money on the table, but are framed for being underutilized. Therefore, we support Councilman Brannan's legislation to take firm action on late payments to nonprofits, especially requiring City agencies to pay interest on late payments. This will compel the City to make timely payments to nonprofits while making the City accountable for any delays.

The City and its residents ultimately bear the brunt of these problems, when highly qualified providers cannot afford to take on City contracts, or when those providers must close programs or go out of business altogether because of the financial strains imposed by the City's late payments.

The result is that communities lose access to cherished neighborhood institutions and essential services, and the City is unable to carry out its human services programs.

Chronic Underfunding of the Sector

Nonprofits provide a myriad of services on behalf of the government - many of them mandated - and the sector is able to leverage private and philanthropic dollars and funding from the City, State, and federal government, to create dynamic programs at a bargain. Providers are experts who are uniquely qualified to create cost-effective and impactful programs directly catered to their communities. But elected officials must not take that knowledge for granted or keep trying to cut back costs by refusing to listen to providers and undervaluing the services they provide.

The City is not getting a deal by chronically underfunding homeless shelters, foster care agencies, food pantries, and senior centers; it is directly harming those who rely on government for help. These issues must be addressed:

- 1. Contracts are generally underfunded for the program, asking for an outright match from providers, or with a low rate per service unit, where providers must make up the difference.
- 2. Contracts do not provide an appropriate indirect cost reimbursement rate. The Stanford Innovation Fund estimates that the average nonprofit indirect cost rate is between 15-25 percent still substantially lower than the private sector, where the lowest rates start at 30 percent but the City pays around ten percent, and that new rate and investment to ten percent has only recently been put in to place.
- 3. Contracts neither provide for cost escalations on the OTPS (other-than-personal services) side, nor cost-of-living increases on the PS (personnel services) side. Contracts with government are often for five to seven year terms, and even longer when RFPs are delayed, but providers are unable to account for unforeseen rising costs, such as a spike in electricity and water prices or an exceptionally cold winter, nor is there a mechanism to accommodate rising rent, health insurance, or other costs when contracts need to be extended.

These are not new issues, nor is government unaware that these are real concerns with which nonprofits grapple each month. A string of recent reports outlines this underfunding clearly, with survey data, anecdotal information from the sector, and by looking at the numbers in actual contracts and financial reports.

One of the most alarming pieces of information comes from the SeaChange Capital Partners/Oliver Wyman report, which found that 18 percent of New York City human services providers are insolvent, based solely on IRS 990 data. This means that their liabilities exceed their assets, and many have less than a month of cash on hand. Fifty percent of New York City human services nonprofits have less than two months of cash on hand and operating reserves, meaning that one late payment can impact payroll, and one unforeseen event can put the provider out of business. Government relies on these providers to ensure that our communities have programs that promote wellbeing.

The *SeaChange* report also points out that the financial health of the sector is government's problem. Eighty percent of the largest human services organizations have budgets that are 90 percent or more dependent on government funding. The largest five percent of nonprofits provide almost 50 percent of services in New York City, and are also mostly dependent on government funding. If these organizations fail, it will be difficult for the network of providers to pick up these contracts; government is uniquely responsible for the fiscal viability of these organizations.

Providers report that underfunded contracts are the main driver of their financial struggles. Fifty-two percent of New York nonprofits report that local contracts do not cover the full cost of the services they are required to provide, and 56 percent report receiving indirect rates at 9 percent or less, with 91 percent reporting receiving 15 percent or less.

In the child welfare sector, a study of over 80 child welfare providers in New York offers a stark picture that resonates across the full human services sector.

"Ninety-five percent of respondent organizations reported receiving a government contract that fails to pay the full cost of providing the contracted services. Eighty-six percent of respondents stated that they use their private fundraising to offset the deficits their government contracts create. In addition, 83% report that they cut program costs to make up the deficits of government contracts. Even while taking these measures, 69% of the organizations in our sample stated that they simply run these programs at a deficit; presumably, they are hoping they will be able to raise necessary private funds eventually and are loathe to cut off their needy clients. Finally, the organizational impact of running chronic program deficits is both widespread and widely acknowledged among New York's child welfare nonprofits: 67% report they anticipate a year-end organizational deficit that can only be made up with private fundraising." III

With a number of high profile nonprofits merging or closing in recent years, the sector itself came together in the *Call to Action* report, citing government underfunding as the main obstacle in planning for risk, and finding that government contracts were themselves a great risk to human services providers. The report drew upon the experience of sector leaders, and concluded that the underfunding of government contracts, including inadequate overhead, lack of cost-escalators, and low rates per unit, were main drivers to unstable organizations.^{IV}

Cross-Sector Program Collaboration

Government-funded programs intended to build human potential and social welfare are too often developed without consulting the human services providers who will be responsible for implementing them, resulting in ineffective and unworkable programs. The Nonprofit Resiliency Committee has developed a Guide to Collaborative Communication with Human Services Providers which outlines the many ways City Agencies can solicit feedback and collaborate with providers in the development of an RFP. We would like to see this guide incorporated in to the planning process of every RFP, so that there is real collaboration before the RFP is released. The City should leverage the on-the-ground experience of service providers—who truly know their communities—when

creating programs and developing performance metrics. It is imperative that there are partnerships among the public sector, private funders, and human services providers to develop effective programs.

Indirect Manual

Through the Nonprofit Resiliency Committee, the new *Health and Human Services Cost Policies and Procedures Manual*, is set to be released soon. This manual standardizes indirect rate definitions across human services contracts and creates a standard approach for providers to calculate an individualized rate. This is a step forward in allowing providers to understand and apply real indirect costs to City contracts and create a streamlined approach across agencies. The manual does not provide funding for providers who have rates higher than the rates currently allowed on contracts, nor does it allow for a reduction in services.

The City does not adapt to the real costs of doing business, and asks providers to move money around when there are cost increases outside of the control of providers. Contracts are already underfunded and providers cannot keep moving a finite amount of money around; at some point these rising costs will negatively impact programs. The implementation of this manual needs to come with additional dollars so that providers can apply their real indirect rates, and to the extent that resources are limited, providers should be able to decrease service levels.

The City needs to pay the full costs of the services they contract with, just like in other industries. This manual outlines a clear policy on indirect, but without funding providers will continue to have unfunded portions of their contracts and struggle to fill those gaps.

Unfunded Mandates

The nonprofit human services sector suffers from cash flow problems and chronic underfunding largely because government contracts and philanthropic grants rarely cover operating costs—and payment is often late and unpredictable. Contracts and grants must fully cover indirect costs such as information technology, compliance, building maintenance, program evaluation, accounting, human resources, and employee training. Agreements should include cost escalation clauses that accommodate increases in the cost of doing business and/or allow for the surrender of contracts when they become unsustainable due to unforeseen circumstances. In a city where the already skyhigh rent steadily increases—on top of unrelenting increases in health care and other insurance costs—it is unreasonable to hold a provider to the same level of funding for the life of a multiyear contract.

The City does not adapt to the real costs of doing business, and asks providers to move money around when there are cost increases outside of the control of providers. Contracts are already underfunded and providers cannot keep moving a finite amount of money around; at some point these rising costs will negatively impact programs. The implementation of this manual needs to come with additional dollars so that providers can apply their real indirect rates, and to the extent that resources are limited, providers should be able to decrease service levels.

On December 31, 2018, the Administrative Employee Overtime Exemption rose to \$58,500 in New York City. This labor law change impacts many programs – either by having to track and pay for overtime or by bringing salaries up to \$58,500 for some positions, which cause fiscal, administrative, and programmatic burdens for nonprofits. There is confusion on how to best address this labor law change because programming would not be able to allocate the additional expenses that would come from salary increases or overtime pay. Some positions require work beyond a 40 hour week because programming could occur on weekends, staff conducts outreach for recruitment and enrollment so that city agencies do not penalize providers for underenrollment, and frontline managers supervise staff on weekdays and weekends, monitor overtime, and manage casework, which all require additional time.

Since government agencies have not incorporated these additional costs into contracts, organizations are eliminating positions and using the salaries to bring staff up to the \$58,500. Because of the increase in costs, providers are determining whether they would have to decrease services. Nonprofits would have to invest in additional resources and increased costs in technology to acquire an overtime tracking system. This law also impacts fringe benefit rates where a higher payroll results in a higher workers compensation premium and defined contribution plan costs. For some nonprofits, this law affects almost 300 employees and incurs an additional expense of up to \$1,000,000 a year to uphold this labor law. The City needs to pay the full costs of the services they contract with, including these mandates. Without funding, providers will continue to have unfunded portions of their contracts, seek private dollars for funding, and struggle to fill those gaps.

Conclusion

Providers play the essential role in the City's complex human services delivery system, and they face many challenges in the contracting process. They operate in the context of a broken contracting system. Only if we address the underlying causes of contractor instability—problems at the government level—will we be able to ensure a robust nonprofit community that can continue to deliver quality services to our community.

The City leans on our sector's programs and expertise both in times of economic crisis and in times of growth, but the fiscal health of these important institutions has been overlooked. We cannot wait another year for investments, and also for fundamental changes to fix decades of underfunding. This year we are asking for an investment in indirect funding to coincide with the new Health and Human Services Cost Policies and Procedures Manual. This is a crucial investment in the sector millions of New Yorkers rely on every day, and also essential for this manual to appropriately address the indirect issues the sector has raised.

We look forward to continuing our work with the City Council to address the decades old systems and practices that result in underfunded programs and slow processes that do a disservice to our communities and limited resources.

Thank you for your continued support and providing me with this opportunity to testify about the state of the human services sector.

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[&]quot;http://survey.nonprofitfinancefund.org/

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iv http://www.humanservicescouncil.org/Commission/HSCCommissionReport.pdf



Testimony by the New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) Regarding Preliminary Budget Hearing - Contracts Before the New York City Council Committee on Contracts March 26, 2019

Chair Brannan, Council Members, and staff, good morning and thank you for the opportunity to speak to the Committee on Contracts at today's preliminary budget hearing. My name is Beth Goldman, and I am the President & Attorney-in-Charge of the New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG). NYLAG uses the power of the law to help New Yorkers in need combat social and economic injustice. We address emerging and urgent legal needs with comprehensive, free civil legal services, impact litigation, policy advocacy, and community education. NYLAG serves veterans, immigrants, seniors, the homebound, families facing foreclosure, renters facing eviction, low-income consumers, those in need of government assistance, children in need of special education, domestic violence victims, people with disabilities, patients with chronic illness or disease, low-wage workers, low-income members of the LGBTQ community, Holocaust survivors, as well as others in need of free legal services.

NYLAG has testified several times in the last couple of years, before this Committee and other Council committees, as well as the Charter Revision Commission, about the need for City government to address the problem of extensive delays in registration of New York City contracts and the resulting delays in payment on those contracts to the detriment of the nonprofit organizations who provide services to New Yorkers in need. We hope this will be the last time we need to do so.

NYLAG's contracts with New York City allows us to provide free legal services to tens of thousands of New Yorkers in crisis including immigrants facing deportation, tenants facing eviction, seniors requiring homecare, domestic violence survivors trying to escape their abusers, among many others. NYLAG has contracts with numerous City agencies, including the Human Resources Administration, the Department of Youth & Community Development, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, and Health + Hospitals, and our working relationship with them, and the Mayor's Office of Contract Services, is excellent. We know that those who we work with at these agencies support our work and often try to help us navigate the contracting system. Unfortunately, all too often, we face obstacles in the contracting process that can lead to serious, even dire, consequences for nonprofit contractors.

We have all seen the numbers. According to a recent report from Comptroller Scott Stringer, 80% of FY18 contracts arrived at the Comptroller's office for registration after the start date of the contract. This number remained steady from the previous year, despite the attention that has been brought to the issue by elected officials and nonprofit organizations. Many contracts are not even registered until the year in which the services were provided is over. We often provide services for many months, even a full year, before we are paid a single dime for our services. While our contracts are moving through the opaque registration process, we are still, of course, responsible for paying our staff, forcing us to float the cash up front. This cycle is incredibly harmful to nonprofits, which operate on small margins, with limited resources, and limited access to cash to pay the bills and the staff members who are providing critical services for the City.

¹ "Still Running Late: An Analysis of NYC Agency Contracts in Fiscal Year 2018." NYC Comptroller's Office. 30 January 2019. https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/annual-analysis-of-nyc-agency-contracts/

When contracts are not registered, NYLAG must borrow to make payroll. For a larger nonprofit like NYLAG, we are fortunate to have access to a line of credit through our bank; many smaller nonprofits, however, do not have this option. Still, a line of credit is not a solution – when we borrow against it, we are forced to pay interest on the amounts borrowed. Nor do we have reserves sufficient to cover extensive delays. . To the extent a nonprofit has reserve funds, they are for use in case of an unanticipated event or one-time investment – we should not have to use them for routine delays caused by the City. Using lines of credit and reserve funding just to make payroll puts the City's nonprofit partners at great, and unnecessary, risk.

The underlying problem, as we see it, is that there is no one entity responsible for ensuring that contracts are registered and funds disbursed in a timely manner. While the full process has never been made completely clear to us, we understand that between the time a nonprofit provider signs a contract with a City agency and its registration with the Comptroller's Office, the contract needs to move through five separate agencies, including the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS), Corporation Counsel, the Department of Investigation, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Division of Labor Services at the Department of Small Business Services. We understand and support the need to ensure that the City is partnering with appropriate and trustworthy agencies, but requiring sign off from this many agencies is clearly slowing down the process to an unacceptable rate. Nor do we understand why this long and unwieldy process must be applied for every separate contract or renewal entered into with the same contracting party. If a nonprofit is approved to enter into a contract with one City agency, it is not clear why it can take 6-18 months for another contract between NYLAG and the City to be registered.

To address the myriad issues that make it difficult for nonprofits to continue taking on City contracts, NYLAG strongly supports the goals behind Intros 1448, 1449, and 1450, introduced by Chair Brannan and Council Member Levin. Increased accountability and transparency are paramount to improving the contracting process between nonprofit agencies and the City of New York.

Creating a specific division within MOCS dedicated to coordinating contracting, as Intro 1448 does, is an excellent idea. It is critical for nonprofit organizations to have a point person they can call to receive updates on contracts, and when payment can be expected. This transparency will give nonprofits an ability to plan for the future that we simply do not have with the current system. More clarity is needed on what causes delays in contracting, and having a division within MOCS specifically responsible for reporting on these complications would shed light on and, hopefully, allow quicker solutions to these problems.

We also support Intro 1449, which provides bridge loans to cover smaller contracts that are delayed, as well as Intro 1450, which requires interest payments on late contracts. I note, however, that the importance of the interest payments is the deterrence factor – deterring the City from delaying the registration of contracts. While interest payments will defray the costs of borrowing money, they do not fully address the underlying issue. For example, if the City delays on registering a \$2 million contract and NYLAG needs to find \$2 million to pay its employees for a month, interest payments will not cover the shortfall. It may cover the costs of borrowing from our line of credit – but that is a small amount relative to the amount of money we need to find to keep operating.

We would also like to see legislation or charter revision that requires all City contracts to be sent to the Comptroller within 60 days of the contract start date. We have seen that these

types of rules, such as the one in the City Charter giving the Comptroller's Office 30 days to approve contracts, work – in fact, last year, the Comptroller's office registered 96% of contracts within the given timeframe. Requiring agencies to pay interest to contractors when registration of contracts is delayed would be an effective enforcement mechanism for the deadline structure, and interest payments would help cover the costs of borrowing that many of us must do in order to pay our bills while we await payment from the City. We hope to see more details on exactly what the interest payment process would entail, including whether the penalty would increase in parallel to the length of the delay or the amount of the contract.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on this issue that is so critical to the health of New York City's nonprofit community. We hope to continue working with the Council and the Contracts Committee to streamline the contracting process to allow nonprofits to provide necessary services to vulnerable New Yorkers throughout the five boroughs. I am happy to answer any questions, and look forward to continuing this conversation.

Respectfully submitted,

New York Legal Assistance Group



New York City Council Committee on Contracts, Chair, Council Member Justin Brannan March 26, 2019 Preliminary Budget and Oversight Hearing

Thank you Chair Brannan and the Contracts Committee for the opportunity to testify on how we can work together to make New York a fair city for all ages. LiveOn NY also thanks Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Johnson, DFTA Acting Commissioner Caryn Resnick, Aging Committee Chair Margaret Chin and the entire City Council for their consideration of needs of older adults in the FY20 budget.

With a base of more than 100 community-based organizations, LiveOn NY's members provide core services that allow older adults to thrive in their communities, including senior centers, congregate and home-delivered meals, affordable senior housing, elder abuse prevention services, caregiver supports, transportation, NORCs and case management. DFTA's network provides services to over 50,000 older adults daily. Let's be clear, these services aren't just nice to have: studies have shown that services such as senior centers, home delivered meals and others are key to positively affecting health impacts and preventing isolation.

LiveOn NY recognizes and is encouraged by initial investments in senior services by the de Blasio Administration and ongoing investments by City Council. That said, the DFTA budget still accounts for less than 1% of the total city budget, a point that is only exacerbated by the fact aging New Yorkers are the now fastest growing demographic. Further, New York City spends 20% below the national average on senior meals — that means they are only paying for 4 out of every 5 needed meals. This does not reflect fairness for older New Yorkers, senior service staff and nonprofits that serve older New Yorkers. In order for New York to truly be the fairest big city, it must be a #FairCity4AllAges. Fairness does not have an age cutoff.

LiveOn NY's priorities are attached to our testimony, and are briefly highlighted them below.

No PEGs for DFTA

Across the board reductions through the recently announced Program to Eliminate the Gap (PEG) disproportionally and unfairly affect small agencies, such as DFTA, which receives such a small portion of the city budget to begin with. To avoid cutting direct services to older New Yorkers and the staff that serve them, DFTA should not be subject to PEGs.

Invest \$20 million in Senior Center Meals and Kitchen Staff

WHY:

- Senior centers provided 7.6 million senior center meals in FY17¹
- 30,000 seniors visit seniors centers daily
- 56% of seniors report that meals eaten at the center makeup ½ or more of their daily food intake
- NYC currently funds senior meals on the average at 20% below the national average funding 4

¹ New York State Office of the State Comptroller congregate Meal Services for the Elderly study, 2018



out of every 5 meals, with nonprofits picking up the rest of the costs. 2

• In 2008-2013 alone, the cost of food increased by 11% according to the Consumer Price Index while nonprofits struggle to keep pace.

• Food costs, raises for kitchen staff and kitchen equipment and maintenance costs were specifically **excluded** from the model senior center budget funding last year, leaving a void in budgets despite the fact that kitchens are core to a senior center.

- Over 50% of older New Yorkers are foreign born according to a recent Center for an Urban Future study, reflecting a significant need for meals that are culturally appropriate to an array of backgrounds, which brings an underfunded fiscal impact. In 2015, DFTA stated that, "in DFTA's HDML network, each catered Kosher [meal] is on average \$1.38 more than non-Kosher catered meals." Similar to Kosher meals, Halaal, gluten free, vegetarian, vegan, or other cultural or nutritional needs have an associated cost-increase.
- A citywide RFP for senior centers is expected in the near future.

\$20 MILLION WILL FUND:

- Increase for raw food costs, including funding for culturally competent meals
- Increase in costs for disposables to serve food
- Increase in funds to support fair salaries for kitchen staff and to fully staff kitchens to address
 numerous responsibilities including food preparation, cooking, serving meals, menu planning
 and submissions, inventory, ordering, accounting, managing volunteers and numerous other
 responsibilities required to operate a kitchen.
- Repairs and maintenance for critical kitchen equipment including ovens, refrigerators and HVAC systems. These costs and needs are heightened in NYCHA senior centers and programs, which have critical additional infrastructure and repair needs.
- Funding for critical **inspections and services** that are required annually or several times a year, including extermination, grease trap cleaning and grease removal, hood cleaning, fire suppression systems, maintenance of HVAC systems and refrigerators and freezers as well as treating sewage back up problems and security alarm service and maintenance.
- All DFTA senior centers, including the 38 additional programs were not evaluated in the "model senior center" budget process last year³, should receive funding for meals.

Expedite the Additional \$10 million "Promised" for Senior Center Staff and Programs

DFTA allocated the first \$10 million in model senior center budget funding late in FY19 and the second

²In FY117, NYC reimbursed nonprofits an average of \$9.06 compared to the 2015 national average rate of \$10.69 for congregate meals. For home delivered meals, DFTA reimbursed providers on the average \$8.24 compared to the national average rate of about \$11.06.

³ 38 centers were not evaluated in the model senior center budget process. In that group are former discretionary funded sites that are now under DFTA (11 centers), former NYCHA (4 centers), "social clubs" (17) and other social service programs (6). Many, if not all, of the sties not evaluated in the "model senior center" budget process are held to the same standards as the sites that were evaluated, yet were not given funding as the others were. The appropriateness of this decision must be evaluated and reconciled moving forward.



\$10 million is "promised by FY21." As noted, this funding specifically excluded meals and meal staff. We see no reason for the city to hold this funding. It should be expedited as soon as possible.

Invest \$15 Million in Home Delivered Meals

WHY:

- This year, providers will distribute over 4.6 million home delivered meals
- The majority of seniors utilizing the program are women, living alone, receiving meals that on average account for ½ or more of their total food for the day
- Nationally, 59% of meal recipients live alone and the person delivering the meal is often the only person they will see that day ⁴
- Seniors are underenrolled in SNAP among those living with hunger, the under-enrollment rate of SNAP benefits is around 40%
- NYC reimbursed providers 20% below the national average for home delivered meals⁵
- A citywide RFP is expected for home delivered meals in the near future

\$15 MILLION WILL FUND:

- Increase for raw food costs, including culturally competent meals
- Increase in costs for disposables to serve food
- Critical increase in funds to support **fair salaries** for home delivered meals staff, who are critical to the human interaction for home delivery
- Funds for equipment, kitchen needs and food preparation

Invest \$10 Million for Repairs, including funding for NYCHA Senior Programs

Senior Centers have infrastructure and repair needs, often that arise in an emergency, however there is not set funding or process to request these funds and centers are often confused and unaware of how to address such needs. These issues are exacerbated in the nearly 100 DFTA programs that operate in NYCHA community spaces which offer critical programs for older adults. The city should invest \$10 million to provide funding for DFTA senior center and program infrastructure needs, and for accessible funding for emergency repairs and conditions, particularly in the 100 DFTA NYCHA Senior Centers and Clubs.

Invest \$5 Million for Service Coordinators in Senior Housing

87% of senior of seniors would prefer to age in their homes. Research has shown a service coordinator located in a senior building is a proven cost-effective way to support seniors in their community, reducing hospital & nursing home costs. Seniors at Selfhelp Community Services were found to have significant healthcare savings: Selfhelp residents were 68% less likely to be hospitalized compared to seniors in the same zip codes, representing an average savings of \$3,937 per person, per hospitalization.

Investing \$5 million in a citywide Service Coordinators Program would would provide one full

⁴ Meals on Wheels of America, Delivering So Much More than Just a Meal Fact Sheet, United States, 2018

⁵ For home delivered meals, in FY17 DFTA reimbursed providers on the average \$8.24 compared to the national average rate of \$11.06.



time and one part time service coordinator at nearly 40 new or existing affordable senior housing buildings to provide culturally competent information and support. Promotion of overall health and wellness the interconnection of services through the co-location of services can mean the difference between successfully aging in place verses experiencing costly hospitalizations or a move to a nursing home. Service coordinators provide culturally and linguistically competent opportunities for seniors in affordable housing buildings. Qualified social workers in these buildings can help older adults to access benefits, provide referrals to other services as needed, including home care, and combats isolation by connecting residents to socialization opportunities and other local resources, all of which promote healthy aging in the community.

Invest \$1 Million for Case Management

There are over 1,000 seniors on case management waitlists citywide. LiveOn NY greatly appreciates the investments in FY18 which are beginning to address waitlists, as well as funding added by Council in FY19, but the need continues to grow. We must continually build this system to serve today's need and the needs of the future. Additional funding is needed to reduce caseloads, which already very high at an average of 65. Funding is also needed to serve frail, homebound seniors on waiting lists so that a social worker is available to visit them at home, assess their needs and provide ongoing services. MSW compensation, as well as multilingual staff needs to be funded to ensure there is a professionally trained social worker who can work with immigrant and diverse populations and complex situations. Funding growing need and agency infrastructure are cornerstones to strengthening the case management system citywide. Case Management is a key program that services seniors that are not Medicaid eligible but still need these services, and it is vital to sustain this program.

Council Restorations and Investments in Senior Services Through Schedule C

City Council has long been a staunch supporter of city and district wide senior services programs through allocations in Schedule C. We thank you for your investments and advocate for full restoration for all Senior Service Programs funded in Schedule C. These include NORCs, Support our Seniors, SuCasa, Senior Centers for Immigrant Populations, Health Aging Initiative, Social Adult Day, and others.

Age Friendly Commission

LiveOn NY sits on the Age Friendly Commission and knows the importance of the Commission and its work groups. It is critical to convene thought leaders from across disciplines working on these critical issues. LiveOn NY supports continued funding for \$100,000 for the Age-Friendly Commission to support its critical work, as well as an additional \$250,000 to support the ongoing and new work groups for the commission for a total of \$350,000.

Continued Investments in Human Services Sector

LiveOn NY is a member of the Human Services Advancement Strategy Group (HSASG).

The human services sector of our City is in crisis. Providers have long been sounding the alarm about the impact of the chronic underfunding of government contracts, and now we have reached a breaking point. Without a crucial investment on our current contracts, my organization will have to reevaluate



how we can engage with the City to provide crucial services to our communities. As things currently stand, we can no longer carry the deficit of our City contracts.

The gap between what the City funds on our contracts and what we can supplement with private and philanthropic dollars has grown too wide. It is vital that no cuts are made to human service programs as part of the mandated budget reductions and the chronic underfunding of the sector is rectified.

The sector is united in asking the City Council to include in their budget response a request for the Mayor to invest \$250 million dollars to fill the gap between provider's indirect costs and the contract reimbursement rates from the City. The new Health and Human Services Cost Policies and Procedures Manual, which was developed as part of the Nonprofit Resiliency Committee, lays out standardized indirect costs for our sector. However, without increased funding to address the gaps this manual displays in our contracts, the fiscal crisis we are facing remains unaddressed. Based on numbers provided by the Office of Management and Budget, \$250 million should cover the costs to fully implement this manual.

LiveOn NY looks forward to working with Mayor de Blasio, City Council, DFTA, all city agencies to make New York City a fair city for all ages and better place to age through a strong network of community based services.

LiveOn NY's members provide the core, community-based services that allow older adults to thrive in their communities. With a base of more than 100 community-based organizations serving at least 300,000 older New Yorkers annually. Our members provide services ranging from senior centers, congregate and home-delivered meals, affordable senior housing with services, elder abuse prevention services, caregiver supports, case management, transportation, and NORCs. LiveOn NY advocates for increased funding for these vital services to improve both the solvency of the system and the overall capacity of community-based service providers.

LiveOn NY also administers a citywide outreach program and staffs a hotline that educates, screens and helps with benefit enrollment including SNAP, SCRIE and others, and also administers the Rights and Information for Senior Empowerment (RISE) program to bring critical information directly to seniors on important topics to help them age well in their communities.



FY20: Make New York City A

#FAIRCITY4ALLAGES

The 3 Pillars of Fairness

Independence

- **DID YOU KNOW?** NYC currently funds seniors' meals at a rate of 20% below the national average.
- Senior Center Meals: Invest \$20 million for healthy, culturally competent meals, critical staffing needs, and the unfunded costs of safely running a kitchen. Include all senior centers in process.
- Home Delivered Meals: Invest \$15 million to ensure homebound seniors have access to nutritious meals and staffing is fully funded.
- Service Coordinators: Invest \$5 million to help seniors living in affordable housing to age in place.
- Case Management: Invest \$1 million to help address the 1,000 + client waitlist.

Equity

- No PEGs for DFTA: To avoid cutting direct services to older New Yorkers and the staff that serve them, DFTA should not be subject to PEGs.
- Workforce Salary Fairness: Invest across the DFTA workforce so that individuals performing similar roles in different programs are each paid an equitable, competitive salary.
- Senior Center Model Budget Inclusivity: Invest in the 38 senior centers that were not included in the Model Budget Process.
- Model Budget: Invest the promised \$10 million in funding for senior centers this year.

Safety

• Funding for Repairs: Invest \$10 million to provide funding for DFTA infrastructure needs, and for accessible funding for emergency repairs and conditions, particularly in the 100 DFTA NYCHA Senior Centers and Clubs.

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Making New York a better place to age

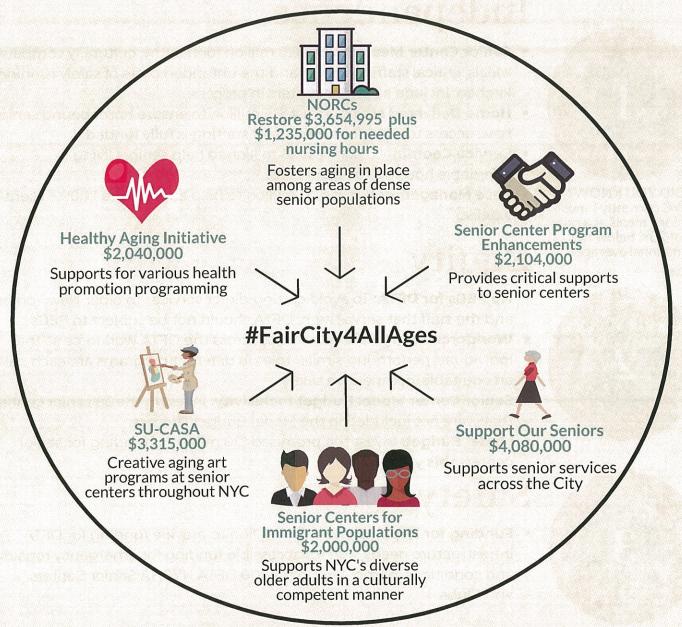
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Restore Aging Discretionary Funding

We ask for continued investment in *all* Senior Services Council Initiatives funded in FY19 including:



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Testimony of United Neighborhood Houses Before the New York City Council

FY 2020 Preliminary Budget Hearing: Committee on Contracts Council Member Justin Brannan, Chair

Presented by Tara Klein, Policy Analyst March 26, 2019

Thank you for convening today's hearing. My name is Tara Klein, and I am a Policy Analyst at United Neighborhood Houses (UNH). UNH is a policy and social change organization representing 40 neighborhood settlement houses in New York City with two in upstate New York. We mobilize our members and their communities to advocate for good public policies, and we promote strong organizations and practices that keep neighborhoods resilient and thriving for all.

The work we do strengthens the capacity of more than 30,000 employees and volunteers working across 680 locations to continue providing necessary services for people of multiple generations with programs that provide skills, education, social services, health, arts, and connection to community and civic engagement opportunities for over 765,000 New Yorkers who visit settlement houses each year.

Thank you to Chair Brannan and the Contracts Committee for your attention to the issues impacting nonprofit human services contractors. It is essential that in FY 2020 the City recognize and address the large-scale underfunding of city contracts across the nonprofit human services sector, which is calling into question the solvency of nonprofits and their ability to provide services in their communities. This will require a \$250 million investment to address low indirect rates, as well as additional funding to address new State overtime exemption rules, cost of living adjustments, and wage compression. It will also require a series of administrative reforms that the Council could help implement, most significantly the timely registration of contracts.

Sector Sustainability

Unfortunately, the ability of nonprofits to consistently deliver the highest quality services in a costeffective manner is continually compromised by insufficient funding that threatens their financial viability and stifles innovation. From under-funded services, to late payments for services rendered, to conflicting regulations, to onerous paperwork and audits, government contracts force nonprofits to endure financial losses, sap organizational morale, and divert critical human capital toward addressing financial crises instead of implementing innovative approaches to meeting their communities' needs.

UNH's nonprofit membership has increasingly looked to us to not only advocate for investments, but to focus on the quality of those investments. The financial stressors of late and underfunded

government contracts, coupled with administrative burdens and inflexibility, have led our members and their board leadership to assess with a more critical lens how government contracts promote or undermine their organization's short-term cash flow, workforce retention, and long-term sustainability. While the historic calculus of the nonprofit human services sector has generally been to find a way to "make it work," growing recognition of the risks government contracts pose to organizational sustainability is increasingly leading providers to decline bidding on human services contracts with state and local government.

UNH has been working to tackle these issues in partnership with the Strong Nonprofits for a Better New York campaign at the state level, and the Human Services Advancement Strategy Group at the city level.

Underfunded Contracts

Systematic contract underfunding is becoming an increasingly desperate challenge for nonprofits. Government contracts make up the majority of most nonprofit providers' budgets, but these contracts, according to the Human Services Council report, "NY Nonprofits in the Aftermath of FEGS: A Call to Action," pay only 80 cents on the dollar or less of the true cost of implementation. The following are some specific financial challenges that the City must address in FY 2020:

Indirect Rates

One of the most important areas of concern for providers is low indirect rates—everything from paying the rent and utilities to an organization's finance and human resources functions. We are glad the City began to enhance indirect rates on contracts in FY 2018 by committing to bring the average rate to 10% by FY 2022. Unfortunately, indirect rate enhancements were not uniformly applied to ensure that *each* provider realized a 10% rate on *each* contract—though even if had been, 10% remains well below the more realistic level of 15% needed to cover organizational administrative costs.

The new Health and Human Services Cost Policies and Procedures Manual, which was developed alongside Deputy Mayor Palacio, lays out standardized indirect costs for the sector, which are generally much higher than actual rates. However, without increased funding to address the contract gaps, this fiscal crisis will remain unaddressed. Based on numbers provided by the Office of Management and Budget, \$250 million is needed to cover the costs to fully implement this manual's recommendations.

Overtime Exemption Rules

In addition to raising the minimum wage to \$15/hour, New York State has raised the salary threshold that an employee must be paid before the employer is exempted from paying overtime. Beginning January 1, 2019, this salary increased from \$50,700 to \$58,500 for businesses in New York City employing more than 11 people. While the intention behind this change is to make sure employees are fairly compensated for their labor, it amounts to an unfunded mandate. Contracts are not adjusted to reflect the new cost that nonprofit providers will experience either from having to raise the salaries of staff or to pay more overtime hours to those employees. The State has yet to take any action on increasing rates to reflect this change. We urge the City to address these increased costs.

Cost of Living Adjustments

Staff salaries in contracted nonprofit programs are chronically low, leading to low staff morale and ultimately high turnover that destabilizes programs. We are grateful that the City has agreed to invest in modest Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs) for the human services sector, which featured a 2% COLA for FY2018, FY2019, and FY2020. Unfortunately, these scheduled COLAs come on top of funding levels that were stagnant for so long that they only serve to help recapture some of the ground lost to inflation over the years, and do not allow for staff salaries to be set at competitive rates.

This is especially pertinent and well-illustrated in salary disparities in early childhood education. Teachers, staff, and directors in community-based early childhood education programs are paid significantly less than similarly qualified counterparts in public schools. These disparities lead to high turnover in community-based programs. This turnover reduces program quality as it interrupts the consistent connection between a child and an adult that is essential to social-emotional development. It has also forced many programs to close classrooms and serve fewer children.

Wage Compression

While we are grateful that the City increased funding to bring covered employees up to \$15/hour at the end of 2018, the City has not addressed wage compression—the need of organizations to increase the salaries of staff already near or above the \$15/hour level. This issue also contributes to low staff morale and high turnover.

Timely Contract Registration

Beyond the challenges that insufficient funding presents to nonprofits in recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce, and the systemic financial risk of operating programs with reimbursement rates below the true cost of delivering services, there are a number of administrative and regulatory issues that have a significant impact on the health of the nonprofit human services sector. Most significant is the timeliness of contract registrations.

Human services contracts are registered late by city agencies 89% of the time, according to a report by Comptroller Scott Stringer, "Still Running Late: An Analysis of NYC Agencies in Fiscal Year 2018." Managing an unpredictable and inconsistent cash flow due to delays in government payments is an extremely challenging and unfair proposition for nonprofit human services contractors.

Notably, the City generally expects contracted nonprofits to commence service delivery before their contracts are registered (or renewed) and paid out on—summer camp must start in the summer, adult literacy classes must begin in the fall, and senior centers must run year-round. In order to meet payroll for the staff delivering these services, nonprofits are often forced to draw on lines of credit (when they have access to one, and upon which they pay interest), without having a clear sense of when they will be paid for their services. And since contract advances cannot take place until a contract is registered, "advances" are often experienced as a reimbursement for expenses already incurred and paid out. Once a nonprofit actually has a registered contract and submits vouchers to the City against that contract, they often experience yet another delay in receiving payment.

We thank the City Council for its attention to and advocacy on this issue over the last several months, and urge the Council to continue to support timely contract registration and establishing a transparent process for tracking contract actions.

Future Considerations

Finally, UNH endorses the following recommendations for the City to improve the human services procurement process, as proposed by the Human Services Council:

- > Provide greater access to information on the timeliness and status of contract registrations;
- > Reduce the turnaround time on capital appropriations by requiring that these appropriations happen at least as quickly as program appropriations;
- > Expedite the contract registration process by setting a 60-day time limit for the entire process;
- > Include a sample budget with each procurement that demonstrates how the City arrived at proposed reimbursement rates;
- > Survey existing contractors to gather information on rates, deliverables, and outcome measurements before developing new requests for proposals;
- > Reimburse interest payments made by nonprofits forced to take out loans and/or draw on lines of credit while waiting for payments from the City;
- > Require that the Procurement Policy Board (PPB) hold quarterly meetings open to nonprofits and other members of the public.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony; requests for additional information may be directed to Tara Klein at tklein@unhny.org or 917-484-9326.

Neighborhood Settlement

"Not just a place to go, but a place to grow"

Testimony

New York City Council Committee on Contracts Preliminary Budget Hearing Tuesday March 26, 2019

Submitted By Christopher Hanway, Executive Director Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement

Good afternoon Chairperson Brannan and all of the esteemed members and staff of the New York City Council Committee on Contracts. My name is Christopher Hanway, and I represent Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement, a 129-year-old community based organization serving the children, youth, seniors, and families of Western Queens, many of whom are low-income and/or immigrants and the majority of whom are residents of public housing.

I intend to be brief today, but in short, I am here to reiterate and support two key requests made by my colleagues in the Human Services sector that the Council a) allow no cuts to human services programs and indeed shore up our sector with an additional investment of \$250 million and b) mandate that the city clean up the backlog of all contract registrations and payments and ensure a transparent and timely registration system going forward.

At this point, the gap between what the City funds on our contracts and what we can supplement with private dollars has grown too wide. It is vital that no cuts are made to human service programs as part of the mandated budget reductions and the chronic underfunding of the sector is rectified. The sector is united in asking the City Council to include in their budget response a request for the Mayor to invest \$250 million dollars to fill the gap between provider's indirect costs and the contract reimbursement rates from the City. The new Health and Human Services Cost Policies and Procedures Manual, which was developed as part of the Nonprofit Resiliency Committee, lays out standardized indirect costs for our sector. However, without increased funding to address the gaps this manual displays in our contracts, the fiscal crisis we are facing remains unaddressed. Based on numbers provided by the Office of Management and Budget, \$250 million should cover the costs to fully implement these changes.

Additionally, as you well know, 89% of city contracts for human services are late, delaying vital funding and leaving 20% of New York City's nonprofit human services institutions technically insolvent. It is imperative that contracts be approved and registered now and that a failsafe system be put in place to ensure a transparent and timely registration system in the future.

At Riis Settlement, this situation has had significant consequences on the individuals and families we serve. We provide after-school, summer camps, violence prevention, and job and college readiness services to children and youth; allow older adults to age in place and maintain their healthland (over)

independence, and work with immigrants from around the world to help them build educational, economic, and civic self-sufficiency through over 25 city contracts from six discreet government agencies. But the chronic gaps in funding and delays in registration and payment have forced us to take the following actions, among others:

- Holding back on hiring crucial support and administrative staff that undergird the services we support to the community, and, in at least three instances of which I am aware, laying off members of our team;
- Delaying purchase of supplies, equipment and uniforms that enhance our programs and make them more effective;
- Passing on an increasingly large share of health insurance costs to staff members, most of whom simply cannot bear such increases, and;
- Bypassing vital infrastructure and technology improvements that would allow us to increase efficiency and overall service and, in the long run, save money.

These actions have direct effects both on the 160 individuals we employ and the almost 3,000 residents of Long Island City, Astoria, and Western Queens who rely on Riis Settlement's services every single year. Far too many of our fellow social services organization have closed their doors or are in severe financial distress and, now more than ever, the residents of the Queensbridge and Ravenswood Houses cannot afford for neighborhood institutions like Riis Settlement to founder because of chronically inadequate funding.

I thank you once again for the opportunity to speak, for your ongoing partnership, and for your advocacy on behalf of the underserved residents of New York City.

Christopher Hanway
Executive Director, Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement
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Testimony of Dana Altneu, Assistant Director, Government Contracts New York City Council Contracts Committee Hearing March 26, 2019

Good afternoon. I am Dana Altneu, Assistant Director of Government Contracts at Good Shepherd Services. I want to thank the Committee on Contracts for holding this hearing. This issue is of great importance to the nonprofit sector and I appreciate the opportunity to testify.

Good Shepherd Services goes where children, youth, and families face the greatest challenges and builds on their strengths to help them gain skills for success. We provide quality, effective services that deepen connections between family members, within schools, and among neighbors. To achieve our mission, we lead in the development of innovative youth development programs; provide quality, effective services that strengthen participants' connections with family, school and community; and advocate on their behalf for broader change. We operate over 90 programs, which help over 30,000 youth and family members in struggling neighborhoods throughout New York City.

I want to start off by thanking the Mayor's Office of Contracting Services and the Non Profit Resiliency Committee for their collaborative process and including nonprofits in discussions and solutions. One major issue facing nonprofits is delays in contract registration which causes major cash flow issues. I very much look forward to the roll out of PASSPort release three in early 2020 in order to decrease the administrative burden on nonprofits as well on time contract registration.

I wish to touch on two contracting challenges that face not only Good Shepherd Services but the sector at large: (1) current funding is inadequate to cover basic programming and administrative costs; (2) full participation of all city agencies in the adoption of the Mayor's Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and Indirect Increases, as well as participation in the Non-profit Resiliency Committee.

Good Shepherd Services currently has over 80 contracts with NYC totaling over \$65 million. These contracts comprise three-quarters of the agency's budget. However, none provide sufficient funds to deliver the basic services expected by the funding agency, nor do they cover the necessary administrative supports. We urge the city to go through the model budget process for all city contracts in order to ensure the city is paying for the full cost of running programs. The process for the Administration of Children's Services was a collaborative process between the city and providers, and a similar process should be used for all city contract.

Additionally, all new Requests for Proposals should include at minimum the additional COLA and Indirect funding that providers received. No new contracts should pay less than previous contracts. This goes against the work of the Non-profit Resiliency Committee and requires non-profits to pay for the decrease if contract funding.

We are grateful for the adoption of The City of New York Health and Human Services Cost Policies and Procedures Manual, but without additional funding, non-profits will continue to need to privately fundraise the difference between what the city pays and the actual cost of running high quality programming. We request that the city:

- 1. Allocate funds, \$250 million, through the city budget process to enable contracts to be adjusted to reimburse the increased indirect rates. Given the amount of time that contract indirect rates have remained too low, we recognize that it will take a substantial infusion of new resources to make reimbursement of actual costs possible. It would be reasonable to anticipate that movement toward real indirect cost reimbursement would need to be phased in over time; however we strongly believe that the city's commitment to high-quality human services requires putting in place a concrete, actionable plan.
- Commit to include cost-escalators into the boilerplate for all human service contracts. Cost escalators should automatically kick in with all contract renewals and extensions. Cost escalators should similarly be aligned with real cost increases and be directly funded.

The gap between what the City funds on our contracts and what we can supplement with private and philanthropic dollars has grown too wide. It is vital that no cuts are made to human service programs as part of the mandated budget reductions and the chronic underfunding of the sector is rectified.

It is vital that all New York City agencies include COLA and Indirect Rate increases in their contracts, as outlined in the Mayor's budget in Fiscal Year 2018. This includes the Department of Education which is currently under the Mayor's control. Good Shepherd Services alone would have to cover \$150,000 of funding if the DOE does not include these increases in Fiscal Year 19 contracts. Additionally, all city agencies, including DOE, should be participants in the Non-profit Resiliency Committee and adopt all policies and procedures put forward.

Contracts with government are essential to our organization and the programs we offer, and government relies on us to provide critical services in communities on their behalf. With stagnant dollars, contract delays, and duplicative reporting the cost of taking on government contracts has become a risk to our health.

Thank you again for providing me with this opportunity to testify, and for your continued partnership with our sector. I am happy to answer any questions.



TESTIMONY: UJA-FEDERATION OF NEW YORK

New York City Council Committee on Contracts

Submitted by: Louisa Chafee UJA-Federation of New York

March 26, 2019

Good afternoon Chairperson Brannan and members of the Committee on Contracts. My name is Louisa Chafee and I am the Senior Vice President for External Relations and Public Policy at UJA-Federation of New York. On behalf of UJA, our network of nonprofit partners and those we serve, thank you for the opportunity to testify on human services contracting practices and deficiencies that nonprofit providers are currently dealing with.

Established more than 100 years ago, UJA-Federation of New York is one of the nation's largest local philanthropies. Central to our mission is to care for those in need. We identify and meet the needs of New Yorkers of all backgrounds and Jews everywhere. We connect people to their communities and respond to crises both locally and around the world. We support nearly 100 nonprofit organizations serving those that are most vulnerable and in need of programs and services.

New York City provides a wide range of human services to low income and vulnerable individuals and families to address a myriad of needs including: food supports, senior centers, sheltering, supportive housing, mental health care, workforce development, and legal services. These services are provided by nonprofits and managed through government contracts. Currently there are about \$4 billion in health and human services (HHS) contracts open with the City of New York.

Out of a \$92 billion proposed budget, human services funds should not be sacrificed to meet the mandated reductions set by the Administration this year. These services are too important in addressing inequality in our city, and are themselves already severely underfunded, with reimbursement of 80 cents (or less) for every dollar. Providers regularly have to fill the gap between what the City funds for services and what it actually costs to provide them. It is at a breaking point, where not even fundraising or philanthropic dollars can adequately alleviate this fiscal stress. It is vital that no cuts are made to human service programs as part of the mandated budget reductions, and it is equally important that the chronic underfunding of the sector is rectified.

The nonprofit human services sector is united in asking the City Council to include in their budget response a request for the Mayor to invest \$250 million dollars to fill the gap between provider's indirect costs and the contract reimbursement rates from the City. The new "Health and Human Services Cost Policies and Procedures Manual", which was developed as part of the Nonprofit Resiliency Committee, lays out standardized indirect

costs for the human services sector. However, without increased funding to address these gaps this manual displays in our contracts, the fiscal crisis we are facing remains unaddressed. Based on numbers provided by the Office of Management and Budget, \$250 million is needed to cover the cost of implementing these standards.

In addition to deficient service reimbursement rates and inadequate funding for indirect costs, contracts are registered late 89% of the time across City agencies. Providers cannot defer services while waiting for their contracts to be registered. Instead, they are forced to begin programming without payment. Even after contracts are registered, payments are often significantly delayed as well.

Human services contracts also fail to take into account occupancy costs, like rent, relevant taxes, maintenance and insurance costs, as well as fringe and cost of living adjustments. An attempt at a transformative "model budget" announced at start of FY18 used five City agencies to test this process: DHS's Homeless Services contracts, HRA's Adult Protective Services contracts, DFTA's Senior Center contracts, DYCD's Runaway and Homeless Youth contracts and ACS's Preventive Services contracts. The City committed to developing a rightsizing tool to systematically correct underfunding. The goal of the "model budget" was understood to be an analysis of costs of service provision and response to contract inequities by rightsizing fiscal shortcomings.

However, from the start, no clear guidelines or structure were communicated; there was minimal coordination and little transparency provided to nonprofits meant to benefit from the process. Ultimately, there was significant failure in this process, either through delays or limited scope. The DFTA Senior Center model budget targeted programming and certain staff salaries. Egregiously, kitchen staff salaries and food costs were not included in this formula. Ultimately, poor implementation and inconsistencies dominated the "model budget" process and in some cases only exacerbated the same issues these reforms were meant to address.

UJA-Federation is grateful to the City Council for their support of our FY19 requests to encourage system-wide contract review and allow providers to adjust contracts to support cost escalators for rent, insurance, supplies and utilities, and appropriately account for fringe benefits over the life of the contract. We hope you will continue to support us in our requests for FY20, including \$250 million to fully fund the "Health and Human Services Cost Policies and Procedures Manual" and standing with the sector to reject any cuts to human services funding.

UJA also thanks the Council for introducing Intros. 1448, 1449, 1450 which attempt to streamline the contracting process for nonprofits. Thank you for listening to providers and advocates to help alleviate a stressful, timely and costly process. We also thank the Council for including changes to the procurement process in the Charter Revision Commission recommendations.

As the City continues to strive to achieve fairness and equity among all of its residents, UJA-Federation respectfully urges your consideration and support of these system-wide nonprofit contracting improvements to strengthen the City's human services providers. Thank you for your time; if you have any questions please contact me at chafeel@ujafedny.org.

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