

For Immediate Release

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**SUPPORTIVE HOUSING ADVOCATES & ALLIES FROM ACROSS THE STATE
RALLY IN ALBANY TO DEMAND ADEQUATE RESOURCES TO COMBAT
CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS**

*Providers & Tenants Thank the Governor & Legislative Champions for Proposed Investment to
Expand and Preserve Units and Services, Highlight Need for Additional Resources*

ALBANY, NY (February 3, 2025) – More than 200 supportive housing providers and tenants from across the state rallied in Albany today to advocate for additional resources for supportive housing – a proven approach to combatting homelessness – in the final state budget.

Members of the Supportive Housing Network of New York (the Network) applauded Governor Kathy Hochul for including in her Executive Budget proposal much needed increases in funding for supportive housing and mental health services. State lawmakers joined advocates to highlight the rising need for additional investment while calling for the passage of the Supportive Housing Modernization Act ([S136/A2134](#)).

The Executive Budget includes \$17.8 million for the chronically underfunded New York State Supportive Housing Program (NYSSHP) – the first such major investment since the program’s inception 40 years ago. But sadly, it is far less than the \$32 million the Network has identified as necessary to ensure 9,000 units across the state that are at the brink of closing are stabilized.

Further, the Governor’s proposed rate increase for NYSSHP’s successor, the Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative (ESSHI), from \$25,000 to \$31,000 is a huge boon to spurring construction of the initiative’s remaining 11,000 units of housing. But thousands of woefully underfunded existing units desperately need these additional funds as well.

“Affordable housing is indispensable in this state, and we can’t afford to lose a single unit as homelessness has increased and demand grows,” said **Pascale Leone, Executive Director of the Network**. “The resources allocated in the governor’s Executive Budget reflect a most welcome and critical step forward but need to be the starting point – not the last word - for in budget negotiations. We remain committed to working with our legislative leaders to secure this vital funding through their adoption of the Supportive Housing Modernization Act.”

“Supportive housing is a proven model to support New Yorkers living with disabilities, mental health challenges and other conditions,” **said Senator Cordell Cleare, SD-30, sponsor of S136.** “Unfortunately, the state has underfunded NYSSHP, which is why we continue to fight. We are not giving up the fight because we know this is important. Housing is a human right, and once we understand that our fight will not end until the folks who are desperately in need of this housing have it.”

“We know that supportive housing is one of the most important things that government can fund, that there are people out there who – with just a little bit of help – can lead more meaningful lives and be more involved in the community and make the state the great place we all aspire to,” **said Senate Housing Committee Chair Brian Kavanagh, SD-27.** “There’s some real progress in the executive budget, and I know we really want to push to get parity in these programs. These are difficult times, but we have a lot of good work to do that will be productive and successful.”

The Governor also included additional funding for the Homeless Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP) – which although welcome is far less than needed: the program ran out of funding less than four months into the fiscal year. Meanwhile, the Governor’s proposed cost-of-living (COLA) increase for human service workers falls short of the 7.8 percent contract rate and COLA increases sought by advocates across the human services community to account for rampant inflation.

“Our hard-working staff deserves so much more,” **said Nicole Branca, CEO of New Destiny Housing.** “They deserve more colleagues. They deserve more pay. They have to choose right now: Do they help the mom who was abused? Do they help the daughter? Do they help the son? Do they help with financial resources? Do they help with their subsidies that never come on time? What are they supposed to do? They can only do a fraction of this right now. And how much does the state fund for security? Zero. So, I have buildings filled with tenants where most of their abusers know where they live, and the state pays for zero security. This needs to change.”

“The tale of NYSSHP is instructive,” **said Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal, AD-67.** “We can’t throw the buildings up and then just walk away. What happens? They deteriorate. People who live in the buildings don’t get the proper atmosphere. None of us should live in a building that’s falling apart. And when people need services, we also have to make sure there’s funding for those services.”

“We do not have enough supportive housing units coming online every year; we need to fix this problem,” **said Assemblymember Harvey Epstein, AD-74.** “The way we need to do this is to invest in development, invest in the workforce, invest in our city. That’s what we’re here talking about – investing in supportive housing, investing in the people who take care of people in need.”

“Supportive Housing has been, by far, ignored too long,” said **Assemblymember Maritza Davila, AD-53**. “This is why we're seeing the remnants in the train station, in the street, people committing crimes because they have nowhere to go, no one to understand, no one to help them with their paperwork and tell them you are worthy. You are worthy.”

“Two weeks ago, the bathroom ceiling fell in in my unit; thank God I was in the other room, or otherwise I would have been hit,” said **supportive housing tenant advocate Loretta Glover**. “We have other people who are coming in. They're coming off the street. We've got old, dilapidated, soiled mattresses, and we're giving these to people. That's an insult to humanity. We've got to start acting like human beings again and taking care of our fellow humans.”

“We need you to see that there the success stories among us,” said **New Destiny supportive housing tenant advocate Sharike**. “We need help to stay successful. As a survivor and an immigrant, I ask you to ensure that you put the money into these facilities. How many homeless people are out there? How many have tasted housing and had to leave because they can't afford it or because they don't have the assistance necessary to stay? I stand here asking you to put that money behind New Destiny and every other supportive housing building – because it's a human right.”

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