



SUPPORTIVE HOUSING ADVOCATES, TENANTS, & ALLIES RALLY TO WARN OF IMPENDING FEDERAL FUNDING DISASTER

Constituents Across New York State Call on Congressional Leaders to Reject Devastating Housing Cuts

NEW YORK (July 31, 2025) – Tenants, service providers, and housing advocates rallied today in Staten Island, Rockland County, Long Island, and Washington County as part of the Hands Off Housing Day of Action, organized and co-hosted by the Supportive Housing Network of New York (the Network) and Housing Works.

The coordinated statewide action is part of a broader Summer of Advocacy and builds on a powerful rally in March that brought 500 people to the steps of City Hall in Lower Manhattan to demand a stop to the Department of Government Efficiency's attacks on housing.

Community members called on their Congressional representatives to reject the devastating housing cuts proposed in the President's FY26 budget request, which would eliminate the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) program and deeply reduce funding for the Continuum of Care (CoC) program — including the elimination of permanent supportive housing. Specifically, advocates want their representatives to fully fund the following:

- Homeless Assistance Grants, including Continuum of Care (CoC): \$4.922 billion
- Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA): \$750 million
 - This includes a base funding increase to \$600 million and an additional \$150 million for Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) to provide more funding to jurisdictions with the highest prevalence of HIV.
- Rental Assistance
- Public Housing

The president's budget proposal already contradicts the current House and Senate THUD markups, which don't fully adopt these draconian cuts. While negotiations continue, advocates are sounding the alarm before final decisions are made. These cuts would devastate critical supportive housing services for thousands of New Yorkers, including vulnerable groups like seniors, domestic violence survivors, and veterans.

Following each local rally, participants hand-delivered letters to congressional district offices, asking their local representatives to commit to reject the administration's proposed cuts and fully fund vital housing programs. A coordinated digital outreach campaign will also urge lawmakers to protect these life-saving housing programs before the current Continuing Resolution expires on September 30.

“We are incredibly proud to stand alongside tenants, service providers, and housing advocates unified in one clear, urgent message: Congress must fully fund the supportive housing programs that save lives,” **said Pascale Leone, Executive Director of the Network**. “This fight is part of a broader effort to dismantle the very social safety net that generations have relied on. It is a cruel irony that just this week, we marked the 60th anniversary of the law establishing Medicaid. Now, congressional Republicans have made the largest cuts to healthcare in our nation’s history. This is unconscionable, and we cannot stand idly by while support is stripped away from our neighbors. We are here not in protest, but in hope that our representatives will honor their commitments to protect and serve the people they were elected to represent by fully funding HOPWA and CoC Homeless Assistance Grants and oppose any and all cuts, consolidations, or policy changes that would weaken these programs.”

“Full funding for HOPWA and the Continuum of Care is a moral and public health imperative,” **said Anthony Feliciano, Vice President of Advocacy at Housing Works**. “These programs are lifelines for people living with HIV and for communities on the frontlines of homelessness. At a time when housing instability and health disparities are on the rise, cutting or underfunding these programs would be catastrophic. We’re calling on Congress to protect and expand these essential resources because housing is healthcare, and every person deserves the dignity of a safe, stable home.”

"The proposed cuts to HUD and the sudden elimination of Emergency Housing Vouchers would be a disaster for domestic violence survivors in New York. Federal funding is essential to help move survivors quickly from shelters into permanent housing, and without it, our city’s crisis of homelessness among survivors will only worsen," **said Nicole Branca, CEO of New Destiny Housing**. "Domestic violence isn't a political issue - it affects Democrats and Republicans alike. New York's elected leaders on both sides of the aisle must step up and ensure that federal funding is protected so that New York's domestic violence survivors can escape their abusers and access the safe, stable, and affordable housing they need to heal and start over."

“The CoC uses local data, evidence-based practices and listening directly to those locally impacted by homelessness,” **said Mike Giuffrida, Associate Director of the Long Island Coalition for the Homeless**. “This informed and collective local decision-making overwhelmingly points to the effectiveness of a housing first approach, bringing resources directly to people with initiatives like street medicine and outreach and safety planning for victims of domestic violence, and sheds light on who is experiencing homelessness on LI and why. You might be surprised to know that most people experiencing homelessness on Long Island are children and seniors. Homelessness is a housing problem, not the result of individual decisions.”

“Most people want a place to live, food on the table, a healthy family, a good job, and a society free of violence and fear,” **said Steve Miccio, Chief Executive Officer, PEOPLE USA**. “By ripping individuals off the streets without a long-term solution, we create a larger and more inhumane criminal justice system, overburden our healthcare system, and increase stigma against a marginalized population. Those of us in the housing and service delivery field have worked collaboratively and very hard to build a continuum of care, creating solutions that have been successful. It’s unfortunate that the ignorance of our administration is taking center stage with an inappropriate knee-jerk reaction to the issue of homelessness.”

“Continuum of Care funding is a critical support for New York State communities,” **said Michelle Sandoz-Dennis, Executive Director, CARES of NY, Inc.** “CoC funds allow households experiencing homelessness to live in safe, affordable housing and receive the comprehensive support needed to remain stably housed. Increased and continued investment in CoC is essential to breaking the cycle of homelessness and building stronger, healthier communities in the North Country and across New York State.”

“The Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York (CIDNY) supports that safe, accessible, and affordable housing is a human right for all New Yorkers especially, New Yorkers with disabilities,” **said Sharon McLennon Wier, Ph.D., MEd., CRC, LMHC, Executive Director of CIDNY.** “People with disabilities find it arduous to find accessible housing in New York City that they can afford due to their limited income. We must ensure that people can afford to age in place in the community and not worry about the accessible housing being unaffordable.”

“As the regional convener of health and human service providers on Long Island, HWCLI sees firsthand the critical role federal housing programs like HOPWA and the Continuum of Care play in stabilizing lives, advancing health equity, and preventing homelessness,” **said Vanessa Baird, President and CEO of the Health & Welfare Council of Long Island.** These proposed cuts would undermine the very systems our communities rely on—jeopardizing access to care, safety, and housing for thousands of our neighbors. We know that fully funding these programs is not optional—it’s essential. We join our partners statewide in calling on Congress to protect these lifeline programs. Housing is not a luxury—it’s a human right.”

“The proposed cuts to HOPWA, the Continuum of Care, and Supportive Housing programs would have a devastating impact on Long Island,” **said Donna O’Hearon, Director of Residential Services at Mercy Haven Inc.** “These programs are essential to keeping some of our most vulnerable neighbors—particularly those living with HIV/AIDS, mental illness and those experiencing chronic homelessness—safely housed and connected to care. On Long Island, where the cost of living continues to rise, the demand for supportive housing far exceeds the supply. Without supportive housing, many individuals would return to shelters, hospitals, or the streets—at a far greater cost to the community. These cuts threaten to reverse years of progress and put lives at risk. We urge our elected leaders to protect these lifeline programs and uphold their commitment to housing as healthcare.”

#