



**Testimony to NYC Council**  
General Welfare Committee  
FY25 Executive Budget Hearing  
May 6, 2024

Hello Chairperson and members of the New York City Council General Welfare Committee. My name is Tierra Labrada, the Associate Director of Advocacy at the Supportive Housing Network of NY. Thank you for the opportunity to testify about the FY25 Budget.

First, we would like to thank the Council for supporting the Network's NYC 15/15 reallocation proposal by signing on to the Dear Colleague letter circulated by Mental Health Chair, Linda Lee. NYC 15/15 is the primary mechanism for supportive housing development in the city, and it is failing to meet its target. This means that critical units are not being brought online that could house NYers in need. As part of our reallocation proposal, we are also seeking expand NYC 15/15 eligibility to include individuals exiting institutional settings, and survivors of domestic violence. Again, immense thank you to those who signed on, and for Council Member Lee and her team for their collaboration and support.

Next, we want to thank the council and the administration for heeding the calls of the human services sector by agreeing to a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). The proposed three-year, three percent wage increase will help these essential workers support themselves and their families as they continue to provide critical services to some of New York's most vulnerable residents.

However, the City must ensure that the nonprofits that employ these workers are paid on time for the services they provide. Nonprofits are under significant financial strain due to the City's failure to reimburse them for contractually mandated services in a timely manner. Some providers are still awaiting payment for services provided in 2018, with millions of dollars in arrears.

As proposed, the Executive Budget's significant cuts to the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS) would exacerbate this already untenable situation. We urge the Council and Administration to restore funds to personnel and non-personnel services to avert further harm.

The Network is also a steering committee member of Correct Crisis Intervention Today (CCIT) – NYC, a coalition advocating for a peer-led, nonpolice mental health crisis response system. The current city pilot program, B-HEARD, omits peers from response teams. We ask that Council adopt the best practices and features of the CCIT-NYC model by focusing on placing trained peers on the B-HEARD response teams as well as *fully* restore prior B-HEARD PEG cuts.