



## **50+ organizations launch statewide coalition to demand funding for housing voucher program**

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Albany, NY More than 50 organizations from across New York launched Housing Access New York – a new coalition that brings together advocates for tenants’ rights, landlords, children, immigrants, criminal justice, and more – to urge governor Kathy Hochul to commit \$250 million toward the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) in the next state budget, which would serve more than 13,000 households in the state.

As the housing crisis grows worse in New York, HAVP (S568B/A4021A) would provide desperately needed rental assistance to New Yorkers across the state. Similar to Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher, HAVP would be a statewide program dedicated both to helping homeless New Yorkers find stable housing, and to preventing eviction for households at risk of becoming homeless. HAVP would be available to people regardless of immigration status or criminal record.

The launch of Housing Access New York comes as New York City and upstate organizations continue to sound the alarm about the dire housing crisis in their communities. In Niagara, Erie, Sullivan, Schenectady, Rensselaer and Nassau counties, between eight to 10% of all renters faced an eviction in 2022. In a recent letter to Hochul, nearly 40 upstate organizations wrote that HAVP will be critical to ensuring cities and towns can provide rental assistance to those who need it most. Furthermore, the latest findings from the New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (NYCHVS) showcase a vacancy rate of 1.4% in the city, highlighting the urgent need for HAVP for households at risk of eviction.

Housing Access New York member organizations include, among others: Robin Hood, REBNY, New York Immigration Coalition, The Fortune Society, Legal Aid Society, Win and Citizens’ Committee for Children of New York.

“There is no single silver bullet that will solve New York’s affordable housing crisis, policymakers across all levels of government need to be dually focused on increasing the supply of deeply affordable housing and helping tenants afford rent today,” said Chloe Sarnoff, director, policy research & initiatives at Robin Hood. “The Housing Access Voucher Program is an evidence-based, widely supported policy solution that will help tens of thousands of New Yorkers at risk of and experiencing homelessness afford stable housing immediately.”

“New York has long faced an affordability crisis that is hurting the ability of every resident to maintain a roof over their heads. The Housing Access Voucher Program is a critical investment in the health

and well-being of all New Yorkers by helping all housing insecure families— whether facing eviction or unhoused---acquire permanent and stable housing to begin building their lives with some security and stability,” said Murad Awawdeh, executive director, New York Immigration Coalition. “It is imperative that governor Hochul and the state legislature invest in legislation that we desperately need to ensure that every New Yorker, regardless of immigration status, has equitable access to housing supports and vouchers that will allow our families to thrive.”

“The Fortune Society is proud to be a member of the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) Coalition,” said Rob DeLeon, deputy CEO of The Fortune Society. “This bill fills a significant gap by including formerly incarcerated people, and people leaving incarceration, among those eligible for this form of housing assistance. Having a safe and stable place to live gives people leaving jail and prison the necessary foundation to engage in programs, seek employment, and reunite with their families - that makes all of us safer. We look forward to its passage and full funding for its successful and much-needed implementation.”

“Solving New York City’s housing crisis will require a comprehensive policy toolkit that creates more supply while also helping vulnerable New Yorkers remain in their homes,” said James Whelan, president of the Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY). “REBNY is proud to continue to advocate for HAVP, a common-sense solution that offers immediate relief for families in need.”

“New York’s unprecedented homelessness crisis demands common sense, long term solutions that will help people leave shelter and stay in permanent housing. That’s why I’m proud to stand with over fifty organizations from across New York who are calling on governor Hochul to fund the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) in the state budget,” said Christine Quinn, president and CEO of Win. “68% of New Yorkers support expanding housing vouchers to include more people in need because vouchers are proven to be one of the most effective tools for helping families leave shelter. I urge Governor Hochul and state leadership to fund this transformative policy that will help us break the cycle of homelessness for New Yorkers.”

“We are proud to stand with such a diverse coalition to demand that governor Hochul invest \$250 million towards the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) this budget cycle,” said Judith Goldiner, attorney-in-charge of the Civil Law Reform Unit at The Legal Aid Society. “Amid an unprecedented homelessness crisis, HAVP is critical for our clients and all New Yorkers languishing in the shelter system or facing eviction, and the measure would benefit more than 13,000 households across New York State.”

Housing Access New York members:

Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD)

CAMBA Inc.

Caribbean Equality Project

Catholic Charities Community Services

Churches United For Fair Housing

Citizens' Committee for Children of New York

Coalition for the Homeless

Community Missions of Niagara Frontier, Inc.

Community Service Society of New York

Elmont Cultural Center

Enterprise Community Partners

ETC Housing Corp

Family Homelessness Coalition

Family Promise of WNY

Hayden Schwartz, advocate, board member, & community organizer

HEALING HANDS INC

HELP Development Corp.

HELP USA

Henry Street Settlement

Her Migrant Hub

Homeless Services United

Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc.

Housing Visions Unlimited, Inc.

Jericho Road Community Health Center

Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter, Inc.

Neighbors Together

New Destiny Housing

New York Housing Conference

New York Immigration Coalition

New York Legal Assistance Group

NMIC

Open New York

Project Hospitality

Providence House, Inc

Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY)

Robin Hood

Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI)

Safe Horizon

Samaritan Daytop Village

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy Inc

Services for the Underserved

St Joseph's Community Outreach Center

The Building & Realty Institute

The Fortune Society

The Legal Aid Society

Trinity Church Wall Street

Urban Pathways

Voices of Community Activists and Leaders New York

Volunteers of America - Greater New York

West Side Federation for Senior and Supportive Housing

Win.

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