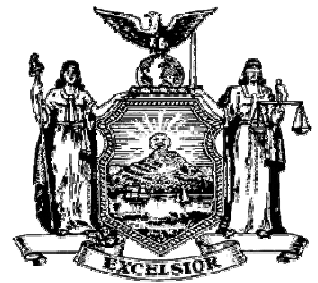




NEWS

Assemblymember Jim Brennan

44th Assembly District



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BRENNAN CALLS ON NYC TO CHANGE COURSE TO DEAL WITH RECORD HOMELESSNESS

In the face of record homelessness in New York City, Assemblymember Jim Brennan (D-Brooklyn) has written to Mayor Bloomberg calling for a reversal of current policy on homelessness.

Approximately six years ago the City introduced the “Advantage” program, which is funded by the State and City of New York. Prior to that, the City would refer homeless people to Federally-funded housing resources such as public housing and Section 8. A return to this practice is the most effective and fiscally responsible solution available to help bring down the shelter population by permanently housing those currently living in temporary housing at State and local expense.

“This would allow the City to maximize Federal resources, saving State and City funds, all while improving services to those most in need,” Brennan noted. Governor Cuomo has proposed cutting the Advantage Program in the State budget because these costs could be shifted to the Federal government if the City referred the homeless to Section 8 or public housing.

According to the Coalition for the Homeless the shelter return rate for Federally-subsidized public housing and Section 8 vouchers is less than four percent after two years. The City’s Advantage program has seen 26% of those participants who have lost their subsidy return to the shelter system. Given the projected lower rate of people returning to the shelter system, the cost of the alternative approach that Brennan is supporting could save New York City \$65-225 million dollars, according to Coalition for the Homeless’ analysis.

The group also projected that under the current policy the City would see an increase in the homeless population over the next 10 years, whereas a return to the previous policy could see a 59% decrease in the homeless population over the next decade.

Brennan cautioned that given the record levels of homelessness in New York City, this change will not be all that is needed to address the crises, but, he stated, “It is a step in the right direction and the right thing to do for those facing homelessness and for the taxpayers in general.”

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