

Testimony of
Coalition for the Homeless

On

Devising a Smart Supportive Housing Strategy for Ex-Offenders upon Reentry

Presented before

The New York State Assembly
Committee on Correction
Subcommittee on Transitional Services

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The Coalition for the Homeless welcomes this opportunity to testify before the New York State Assembly regarding supportive housing for homeless individuals, including those that are formerly incarcerated.

The Homelessness Crisis and the Need for Supportive Housing

There are 80,000 homeless persons in New York State, including single individuals and members of families. Among the 14,300 homeless single adults living in New York City's shelter system, many have histories of incarceration and involvement with the criminal justice system. For those homeless individuals exiting prison who have a mental illness, substance abuse history, or other disability, supportive housing is the best way to make sure individuals gain and maintain stable housing, as well as avoid further involvement in the criminal justice system. Indeed, multiple independent studies have confirmed that supportive housing reduces time spent in jail or prisons and saves on average over \$10,000 per placement.^{1,2,3} This is a crucial and proven-effective resource for the most vulnerable homeless New Yorkers, including those exiting New York's prisons and jails.

The Governor's Commitment to Supportive Housing and The Campaign 4 NY/NY Housing

The first step in providing a smart supportive housing strategy for individuals upon re-entry from prison is to make sure there are a sufficient number of units to meet the need. Two years ago, the Campaign 4 NY/NY Housing joined together to advocate for a fourth New York/New York supportive housing agreement between the Mayor and the Governor that would create 35,000 new units of supportive housing statewide to match the scale of the current homelessness crisis. The Campaign drew support from hundreds of organizations and faith leaders, along with 133 members of the State Assembly and 26 State Senators who played a crucial role in pressuring the Governor to support 35,000 units statewide.

Last fall and this spring, the Mayor and Governor made separate commitments to create a total of 35,000 units of supportive housing, with the Governor pledging 20,000 state-funded units in his State of the State address in January. Five months later, little progress has been made on this promise. Nearly \$2 billion was included in the State's budget for supportive and affordable housing, but it is subject to a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governor and legislative leaders before it can be spent. That MOU has still not been signed and as a result, \$2 billion lays idle, placing a serious delay on supportive housing that is critically needed.

¹ NYS Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. (2014). New York/New York III Supportive Housing Evaluation.

² Culhane, D., Metraux, S. & Hadley, T. (2002). Public Service Reductions Associated with Placement of Homeless Persons with Severe Mental Illness in Supportive Housing. *Housing Policy Debate* 13, 1.

³ Dohler, E., Bailey, P., Rice, D. & Katch H. (2016). Supportive Housing Helps Vulnerable People Live and Thrive in the Community. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

We therefore urge you to pressure the Governor and legislative leaders to sign the required MOU without further delay, thereby freeing up necessary supportive housing for the most vulnerable homeless New Yorkers, including those that are re-entering from prison and have significant disabling conditions. Any discussion about the best supportive housing strategies for homeless individuals re-entering from prison is useless if there is no supportive housing available. Signing the MOU and freeing up the \$2 billion is the first step to making sure homeless New Yorkers have access to life-saving supportive housing.

About Coalition for the Homeless

Coalition for the Homeless, founded in 1981, is a not-for-profit advocacy and direct services organization that assists more than 3,500 homeless New Yorkers each day. The Coalition advocates for proven, cost-effective solutions to the crisis of modern homelessness, which now continues past its third decade. The Coalition also protects the rights of homeless people through litigation around the right to emergency shelter, the right to vote, and life-saving housing and services for homeless people living with mental illness and HIV/AIDS.

The Coalition operates 11 direct-services programs that offer vital services to homeless, at-risk, and low-income New Yorkers. These programs also demonstrate effective, long-term solutions and include: supportive housing for families and individuals living with AIDS; job-training for homeless and formerly-homeless women; and permanent housing for formerly-homeless families and individuals. Our summer sleep-away camp and after-school program help hundreds of homeless children each year. The Coalition's mobile soup kitchen distributes over 900 nutritious meals each night to homeless and hungry New Yorkers across the streets of Manhattan and the Bronx. Finally, our Crisis Intervention Department assists more than 1,000 homeless and at-risk households each month with eviction prevention, individual advocacy, referrals for shelter and emergency food programs, assistance with public benefits as well as basic necessities such as diapers, formula, work uniforms and money for medications and groceries.

The Coalition was founded around the effort to bring the landmark litigation on behalf of homeless men and women in Callahan v. Carey and Eldredge v. Koch and remains a plaintiff in these now consolidated cases. In 1981 the City and State entered into a consent decree in Callahan through which they agreed that, "The City defendants shall provide shelter and board to each homeless man who applies for it provided that (a) the man meets the need standard to qualify for the home relief program established in New York State; or (b) the man by reason of physical, mental or social dysfunction is in need of temporary shelter." The Eldredge case extended this legal requirement to homeless single women. The Callahan consent decree and the Eldredge case also guarantee basic standards for shelters for homeless men and women. Pursuant to the decree, the Coalition serves as court-appointed monitor of municipal shelters for homeless adults.

Campaign 4 NY/NY Housing

One out of every seven homeless people in the United States lives in New York. Statewide there are roughly 67,000 men, women and children who staying in shelters at any given time.¹ In New York City (NYC) alone, over 59,000 people, including 24,000 children, sleep in a homeless shelter each night.² An additional 7,700 people³ stay in a shelter outside NYC. Thousands of others sleep on the streets or in abandoned buildings and makeshift campsites while thousands more exit foster care, hospitals and other institutions each year without a home.

Homelessness in New York has nearly doubled in the last decade. New York State (NYS) must end this crisis and invest in the most cost-effective strategy proven to solve homelessness for those with the greatest needs: Supportive Housing, which pairs affordable housing with on-site supportive services. We call on Governor Cuomo to work with NYC and the other localities with large and growing homeless populations across NYS, to create 35,000 units of supportive housing over the next ten years, 30,000 units in NYC and 5,000 units outside NYC.

Supportive housing is by far the most successful way to end homelessness for individuals and families living with disabilities and other challenges. However, there is not nearly enough supply to meet the record need, and the current City-State supportive housing production initiative, the New York/New York III Agreement (NY/NY III), is expiring.

Unfortunately, four out of every five people found eligible for supportive housing in NYC have had to stay in shelter or on the street because there are too few supportive housing units available to meet the current need. Outside of NYC, where there is no NY/NY program, there are even fewer resources.

Supportive Housing Solves Homelessness, Improves Neighborhoods, and Saves Tax Dollars

By almost every measure, supportive housing has been a success. It has:

- Reduced use of shelters, hospitals, psychiatric centers and incarceration, for an average net public savings of \$10,100 per unit per year;
- Decreased chronic homelessness among single adults by 47% in the first five years of the NY/NY III agreement;
- Provided stability, as more than 86% of NY/NY III tenants remain housed after one year; and
- Raised real estate values for properties located closest to supportive housing developments.

¹ 2014 HUD Point In Time Homeless Populations Data

https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/reportmanagement/published/CoC_PopSub_State_NY_2014.pdf

² Coalition for the Homeless, The Catastrophe of Homelessness <http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/the-catastrophe-of-homelessness/facts-about-homelessness/>

³ 2014 HUD Point In Time Homeless Populations Data

https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/reportmanagement/published/CoC_PopSub_State_NY_2014.pdf

A new statewide NY/NY supportive housing program should continue to prioritize individuals with long histories of homelessness and illness. Specifically, it should:

- Target the vast majority of resources toward individuals, families (including adult families) and young adults who are homeless and vulnerable, including those living with serious and persistent mental illnesses, chronic health conditions including HIV/AIDS, and long term addiction. This would include people living on the street and in the various shelter systems. It should continue what NY/NY III began by also allowing certain units targeted toward people exiting institutions into homelessness who have multiple disabilities and/or barriers to obtaining housing on their own.
- Allocate greater resources to help those with the greatest needs. Research shows that an estimated 20% of homeless families need housing with onsite supports – more than simple rental assistance – in order to overcome homelessness. Much greater proportions of homeless individuals, particularly those with disabilities, need both the housing and services that supportive housing provides. We recommend dedicating two-thirds of the units in the new statewide NY/NY program to individuals (23,350 units) with the remaining one-third for families (10,150 units) and youth (1,500 units).
- Promote creation and use of a coordinated assessment and referral system with a risk assessment tool that can match need with resources, and ensure that the most vulnerable families and individuals can access supportive housing.
- Provide adequate funding to operate the housing and provide support services. To be a viable resource, scattered-site supportive housing will need adequate funds to keep pace with market rents over time and all supportive housing will require long-term contracts as well as adequate operating and service funds to provide sufficient supports to help tenants remain healthy and stable.

*For more information, please visit:
<http://www.nynycampaign.org/>*

Submitted on behalf of:

Abba Realty Associates, Inc.
ACMH, Inc.
ADD, Inc.
AIDS Center of Queens
County
Albany Housing Coalition, Inc.
Alembic Community
Development
Ali Forney Center
Amida Care
Arbor Housing and
Development
Ardent Construction and
Development, Inc.
Artemis Development
ASCNYC
Association for Community
Living
Association of New York
Catholic Homes
Astoria First Presbyterian
Church
Bailey House, Inc.
Barrier Free Living
Benchmark Title
Betts Housing Partners LLC
Bikur Cholim Inc.
Black Veterans for Social
Justice, Inc.
BOOM!Health
Brainpower
BRC
Breaking Ground
Brewster-Holdings
Bridging Access to Care, Inc.
Broadway Housing
Communities
Bronx Park Phase 1 Tenant
Association
BronxWorks
Brooklyn Community Housing
and Services, Inc.
Brooklyn Community Services,
Inc.

Butler Consulting
CAMBA
CAMBA Housing Ventures
Cardinal McCloskey Sunrise
Drop In Center
Care for the Homeless
CARES, Inc.
CASES
Catholic Charities Community
Services
Catholic Charities Housing of
Albany
Catholic Charities of
Onondaga County
Catholic Charities, Brooklyn
and Queens
Catholic Charities/Casa
Betsaida
Catholic Family Center
Cazenovia Recovery Systems,
Inc.
Center for Behavioral Health
Services
Center for Community
Alternatives, Inc.
Center for Independence of
the Disabled, NY
Center for Urban Community
Services
Central New York Services,
Inc.
Central Park Gardens
Tenants' Association
Chadwick Residence, Inc.
Chances and Changes, Inc.
CHOP, Inc.
Christ Lutheran Church,
Manhattan
Christa Construction LLC
Citizens' Committee for
Children of New York
CLUSTER, Inc.
CNY Fair Housing
Coalition for Behavioral Health
Agencies

Coalition for Homeless Youth
Coalition for the Homeless
Coalition for the Homeless of
the Southern Tier, NY Inc.
Coalition Of Concerned
Citizens For Complete Justice
(COCFOJU)
Coalition of Institutionalized
Aged & Disabled
CoC NY-505 Housing and
Homeless Coalition of
Syracuse and Onondaga
County
COFCCA
CohnReznick LLP
Columba Kavanagh House
Community Access, Inc.
Community Counseling &
Mediation
Community Housing
Innovations, Inc.
Community Voices Heard
Comunilife, Inc.
Concern for Independent
Living
Concourse House
Covenant House New York
CREATE, Inc.
CSD Housing, LLC
CSH
Curtis + Ginsberg Architects,
LLP
Daughters of Charity of
Harlem
Daughters of Charity-Bayside,
NY
Denham Wolf Real Estate
Services, Inc.
DePaul, Inc
Development Resource Group
Diaspora Community Services
Dominican Sisters
Dunn Development Corp.
EAC Network

<i>East House</i>	<i>HeartShare St. Vincent's Services</i>	<i>Kolot Chayeinu/Voices of Our Lives</i>
<i>EFMNY</i>	<i>HELP USA</i>	<i>Lakeview Health Services, Inc.</i>
<i>Emergency Shelter Partnership</i>	<i>Henry Street Settlement</i>	<i>Lantern Community Services</i>
<i>Encore Community Services</i>	<i>Hirschen Singer & Epstein LLP</i>	<i>Legal Action Center</i>
<i>Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.</i>	<i>Holy Name Province - Franciscan Friars</i>	<i>Lenox Hill Neighborhood House</i>
<i>Fairview Recovery Services, Inc.</i>	<i>Homeless Alliance of Western New York</i>	<i>Lettire Construction Corp.</i>
<i>Federation of Organizations</i>	<i>Homeless and Travelers Aid Society of the Capital District, Inc.</i>	<i>Leviticus 25:23 Alternative Fund, Inc.</i>
<i>First Sterling</i>	<i>Homeless Services United, Inc.</i>	<i>Lexington Mental Health & Vocational Centers for the Deaf</i>
<i>Forsyth Street</i>	<i>HOPE'S DOOR</i>	<i>Liberty Resources, Inc.</i>
<i>Fountain House</i>	<i>Hour Children</i>	<i>Lifting Up Westchester</i>
<i>Fox House</i>	<i>Housing and Services, Inc.</i>	<i>Local Initiatives Support Corporation</i>
<i>Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement</i>	<i>Housing Visions</i>	<i>Loeb House, Inc.</i>
<i>FREE</i>	<i>Housing Works</i>	<i>Low Income Investment Fund</i>
<i>Friends House</i>	<i>Hudson Housing Capital</i>	<i>Lutheran Social Ministries</i>
<i>Friends Shelter</i>	<i>Hudson River Housing, Inc.</i>	<i>Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church</i>
<i>Fulton Friendship House</i>	<i>Human Development Services of Westchester</i>	<i>Manhattan Church of Christ</i>
<i>GHMC</i>	<i>Human Services Council of New York</i>	<i>MCCNY Charities, Inc.</i>
<i>Goddard Riverside Community Center</i>	<i>ICL, Inc.</i>	<i>Mega Contracting</i>
<i>Goldstein Hall PLLC</i>	<i>Independence Plaza North Tenants Association</i>	<i>Mental Health Association in Orange County, Inc.</i>
<i>Good Shepherd Services</i>	<i>Institute for Family Health</i>	<i>Mental Health Association in Ulster County, Inc.</i>
<i>Goodwill Industries of Greater NY & Northern New Jersey</i>	<i>Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing</i>	<i>Mental Health Association of Columbia-Greene Counties, Inc.</i>
<i>Grace & St. Paul's Church</i>	<i>Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless</i>	<i>Mental Health Association of New York City</i>
<i>Gran Kriegel Associates Architects + Planners</i>	<i>Interior Resources</i>	<i>Mercy Haven, Inc.</i>
<i>Greater NYC for Change</i>	<i>JCTOD Outreach, Inc.</i>	<i>Met Council on Housing</i>
<i>Greater Syracuse Tenants Network</i>	<i>Jericho Project</i>	<i>MFY Legal Services, Inc.</i>
<i>Greenhope Services for Women, Inc.</i>	<i>Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services</i>	<i>Mohawk Valley Housing and Homeless Coalition</i>
<i>Greenwich House</i>	<i>Jewish Child Care Association</i>	<i>Moravian Open Door</i>
<i>GSG</i>	<i>Joseph's House and Shelter</i>	<i>NAMI-NYC Metro</i>
<i>Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church</i>	<i>Kairos: The Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice, Union Theological Seminary</i>	<i>NAMI-Rockland</i>
<i>Hamilton-Madison House</i>		<i>National Association of Social Workers, NYC Chapter</i>
<i>HANAC, Inc.</i>		<i>Nazareth Housing, Inc.</i>
<i>Harlem Independent Living Center</i>		
<i>Harlem United</i>		
<i>Harm Reduction Coalition</i>		

Neighborhood Care Team, Inc.
Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter
Neighbors Together
New Alternatives for LGBT Homeless Youth
New Directions
New York Foundling
New York Housing Conference
New York Society for Ethical Culture
New York State Association for Affordable Housing
Nixon Peabody, LLP
Northeast Brooklyn Housing Development Corp.
Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation
Northside Center for Child Development
NY Statewide Senior Action Council/NYC Chapter
NYAPRS
NYC Association of Homeless and Street-Involved Youth Organizations
NYS Council of Catholic Charities Directors, NYS Catholic Conference
OCV Architects
Odyssey House, Inc.
Ohel Children's Home and Family Services
Options for Community Living, Inc.
Osborne Association
Oswego County Opportunities, Inc.
Palladia, Inc.
PathStone Corporation, Inc.
PEOPLE, Inc
Peoples First Baptist Church
Phoenix House
Pibly Residential Programs, Inc.
Pratt Area Community Council
Praxis Housing Initiatives, Inc.
Preparation Church Of God
Program Design and Development LLC
Project FIND
Project Hospitality
Project Renewal, Inc.
Project Urbanista
Providence House, Inc.
PSCH, Inc.
R. Randy Lee, PC
Rauschenbusch Metro Ministries
RBC Capital Markets
Real Estate Property Group
Red Stone Equity Partners, LLC
Rehabilitation Support Services, Inc.
Residential Experience in Adult Living Inc.
Richman Housing Resources, LLC
Richmond Community Services
Riverdale Mental Health Association
Robert Sanborn Development
Rochester's Cornerstone Group
Rockaway Wildfire
Rockland Hospital Guild
RUPCO, Inc.
Rural Housing Opportunities Corporation
Saint Joseph's Medical Center
Samaritan Village
Saratoga County Rural Preservation Company
Schenectady Community Action Program, Inc.
Schur Management Company, Ltd.
SCO Family of Services
SDI Laundry Solutions
Search for Change, Inc.
Service Program for Older People, Inc.
Services for the Underserved
Settlement Housing Fund
Shade of Grace, Inc.
Siena House
Single Stop
Sisters of Charity of New York
Sisters of Social Service of Buffalo, Inc.
Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester Leadership Team and Justice Committee
SKA Marin
Sky Light Center
South Shore Association for Independent Living
St. Catherine's Center For Children
St. Dominic's Home
St. Francis Residences
St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center Syracuse
St. Mary of the Assumption Church
St. Vincent's Hospital Westchester
Staten Island Mental Health Society
Steinway Child and Family Services
STEL, Inc.
Support Ministries/SASH
Supportive Housing Network of New York
Syracuse Behavioral Healthcare
Teaching and Restoring Youth, Inc.
Teens Against Crime

Tempo Development Company Inc.
Tenants Political Action Committee
The Actors Fund
The Arker Companies
The Bridge
The Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services
The Church of the Ascension
The Church of the Epiphany
The City Congregation for Humanistic Judaism
The Community Builders, Inc.
The Community Healthcare Network
The Doe Fund
The Door
The Dwelling Place of NY
The Fortune Society, Inc.
The Guidance Center of Westchester
The Housing Collaborative, LLC
The Hudson Companies, Inc.
The Legal Aid Society
The Vecino Group
The Way Back, Inc.
Thorpe Family Residence, Inc.
Tompkins Community Action
Transitional Living Services of Northern New York, Inc.
Transitional Services, Inc.
Transitional Services for New York, Inc.
Trinity Lower East Side Lutheran Parish
Trinity Lutheran Church of Manhattan
Trinity's Services And Food for the Homeless
Union Church of Bay Ridge
Union Settlement Association
Unique People Services, Inc.

United Helpers
United Neighborhood Houses
Unity House of Troy, Inc.
University Settlement
Urban Architectural Initiatives RA P.C.
Urban Builders Collaborative, LLC
Urban Pathways, Inc.
Venture House, Inc.
Vesta Community Housing Development
Violence Intervention Program
VIP Services
VOCAL-NY
Volunteers of America Greater New York
Volunteers of America Upstate New York
West 112th Street (Broadway-Amsterdam) Block Association
West End Presbyterian Church
West End Residences HDFC, Inc.
West Side Campaign Against Hunger
West Side Federation for Senior and Supportive Housing, Inc.
Westchester County Veterans Service Agency Committee
Westhab, Inc.
Wilson Commencement Park
Weston United
Win, Inc.
YWCA of Binghamton and Broome County
YWCA of Brooklyn
YWCA of Rochester and Monroe County
YWCA of Syracuse and Onondaga County Inc.
YWCA of the Greater Capital Region, Inc.
YWCA of the Niagara Frontier

YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester
Zion-St. Mark's Lutheran Church