

## FEDERAL

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### TAX CREDIT AND BOND REFORM

➤ **Strengthen Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)**

LIHTC is the nation's most successful affordable housing finance program producing more than 3 million units by leveraging private investment. In NY, it has created more than 200,000 affordable units, which has helped about half a million households across the state. The Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act legislative provisions would significantly strengthen the program and provide a 50% increase in Housing Credit allocation authority to states. This needed expansion would allow 15,425 affordable housing units to be built in New York over the next ten years.

➤ **Permanently Fix 4% LIHTC**

Under current law, the 4 percent LIHTC rate floats and credit rates have been much lower than originally intended, resulting in less equity available to build affordable housing using the Housing Credit. Establishing a fixed 4 percent Housing Credit rate will allow 12,372 additional affordable homes to be built in New York over the next 10 years.

➤ **Expand Eligible Use Definition of Recycled Bonds**

Recycled bonds may only be used to finance multifamily housing. Broadening eligible use to include single family housing and economic development projects will allow for more efficient allocation of limited resources by States. If New York State can dedicate recycled bonds to these uses that do not utilize Low Income Tax Credits, it will preserve \$100-200 million in volume cap annually in non-recycled private activity bonds, which would generate an additional \$80-160 million in as-of-right 4% Low Income Tax Credits for multifamily housing.

➤ **Exempt Bonds for RAD from Volume Cap**

Federal law limits each state's private activity bond issuance by a population-based formula to establish a state "volume cap". Some public priorities are not counted towards volume cap such as airports, government-owned solid waste disposal facilities, and public educational facilities. Given the importance of preserving public housing, federal law should exempt private activity bonds used in projects in HUD's RAD program from state volume cap. This will lead to greater private investment in public housing to finance capital repairs.

### APPROPRIATIONS / STATUTORY REGULATIONS

➤ **Protect and Fully Fund the HUD Budget**

Serving more than 1,100,000 people in New York, HUD programs are essential resources for elderly, disabled and low-income NY households. Cuts to the HUD budget put NY families at risk and cause a rise in homelessness, accelerate the decline of public housing buildings, decrease the health, safety and living standards of public housing residents and reduce the amount of new affordable housing that can be built. Thus, it is imperative that HUD program funds are safeguarded, including Rental Assistance programs, Public Housing Capital and Operating, and CDBG and HOME, etc.

➤ **Increase Public Housing Capital for Healthy Living Conditions**

Deteriorating building conditions can lead to environmental health hazards, impacting the health and lives of residents. In public housing, exposure to mold, lead and other environmental hazards can be eliminated with targeted capital for PHAs to correct deficiencies leading to adverse health impacts such as leaking roofs, failing plumbing systems and peeling paint etc. This would help NYCHA correct their pervasive lead and mold problems stemming from a \$40 billion dollar capital backlog.

➤ **Expand Funding for Affordable Senior Housing Programs**

With 10,000 Americans turning 65 every day, and 40 percent of seniors depending on only Social Security in retirement, more resources than ever are needed to help build and preserve senior affordable housing units to meet this growing demand. It is critical that Section 202 funding for new senior housing continues to increase.

➤ **Combat Homelessness**

New York and the nation are facing a growing homelessness crisis. More than 92,000 are homeless New Yorkers on any given night across the state and 30 percent of people in families who experience homelessness in the U.S. do so in New York. Across our state more 900,000 households will pay more than half on their income on rent this month and are at risk of becoming homeless. Congress must do more to combat this preventable crisis by expanding federal rental assistance funding and homeless assistance grants.

➤ **Safeguard Fair Housing Protections**

The Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) rule is a legal requirement that federal agencies and federal grantees further the purposes of the Fair Housing Act. HUD's recent proposed changes to AFFH rule would weaken the metrics that are used to determine if a jurisdiction is facing housing discrimination protections and HUD's enforcement of these protections and the original intent of the law. Given the nation's persistent racial homeownership gap and continued findings of rampant housing discrimination by realtors and landlords, the AFFH rule needs to be protected and strengthened not weakened.

## HOUSING FINANCE

➤ **Fight for Equitable Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Reforms**

Dangerous reforms proposed by OCC and FDIC could impact the quality and quantity of investments in LMI communities and affordable housing projects. Any CRA modernization must ensure continued targeted and equitable investment in underserved communities while also providing clarity for financial institutions in a changing banking landscape.

➤ **Ensure Housing Finance Reforms Benefit Affordable Multi-Family Rental Housing and Low-Income Communities**

Reform the nation's housing finance system to ensure that the role of the Government Sponsored Entities allows for accessible lending for both single family and multi-family housing, while maintaining affordable housing goals.

## NEW YORK STATE

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In a coalition of 14 organizations, we have developed shared budget and policy priorities for FY2021 listed below for the final year of the statewide housing plan. We have also outlined a [linked framework](#) for budget and priorities for the second phase of a statewide housing plan FY2022-27.

### SUPPORT CONTINUATION OF A STATEWIDE HOUSING PLAN

As we approach the end of the Five-Year Housing Plan, New York faces the challenge of a production gap. The continuous availability of affordable housing financing resources from the State is necessary for affordable housing developers to continue building a pipeline of affordable housing sites and buildings. For supportive housing, the cornerstone of new construction in the current plan, nonprofit developers will be stalled in their efforts to acquire sites and advance deals without the guarantee of an ESSHI commitment for supportive services. The last awards under the current plan will be issued in the spring of 2020.

➤ **Authorize ESSHI Continuation**

It is critical that the 2020-21 enacted budget authorize the continuation of the ESSHI program by statutorily committing funding for the next five years, beginning in SFY 2021-22. The State's commitment will signal to investors, syndicators, service providers, and developers that it will finance the remaining 14,000 units of the ESSHI commitment over the next 10 years.

➤ **Codify a Five-Year Housing Plan requirement**

Enact a requirement that a statewide affordable housing plan be developed and funded at least every 5 years. Ensure this plan includes a five-year capital budget commitment and is targeted towards New York State's most pressing housing development and preservation needs with annual public reporting requirements.

## PRESERVE PUBLIC HOUSING

Public Housing is a critically important housing resource that requires federal, state and city resources. NYCHA's capital repairs needs were recently estimated to have reached \$40 billion. This number will grow without immediate investment in repairs.

- **Increase Public Housing Funding**

We recommend \$1 billion for NYCHA; \$50 million for the rest of the state.

## ADDRESS HOUSING POVERTY & HOMELESSNESS

As you know, New Yorkers across the state are struggling to afford rental housing. Nearly 900,000 severely rent-burdened families pay more than half their income in rent each month. In NYC, 1 in 10 public school children will experience homelessness during the year. Tonight, 92,000 New Yorkers will sleep in a shelter or on the street. The solutions are more affordable housing and rental assistance supported by NY State.

- **Homeless Housing Assistance Program** (\$128 million)

Capital grants and loans for the acquisition, construction or rehabilitation of housing for persons who are homeless and are unable to secure adequate housing without special assistance.

- **Home Stability Support** (\$40 million)

Statewide rent supplement for families and individuals who are eligible for public assistance benefits and who are facing eviction, homelessness, or loss of housing due to domestic violence or hazardous living conditions.

- **Alternative Housing Voucher Programs**

We also support alternative state programs for housing vouchers for eligible individuals and families who are homeless or who face an imminent loss of housing such as the program described in Senate Bill S7628.

## AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP

Owning a home can increase a family's financial security. Minorities significantly lag in homeownership rates, a major factor contributing to the racial wealth gap. For example, in Albany the white homeownership rate is 68.9% compared to the black homeownership rate at 20.1%. Modernizing and expanding the State's homeownership programs should be a priority.

- **Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP) Funding** (\$20 million)

Sustain current foreclosure prevention services.

- **Increase the Funding for the Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC program)** (\$40 million)

Increase funding from \$18 million to \$40 million for homeownership construction and rehabilitation to reflect increased construction costs over the last 35-years.

## ENFORCING FAIR HOUSING

The gap between income and rent is the primary cause of high rent burdens but access to housing is also an ongoing issue in many communities as shown in Newsday's report on housing discrimination. With a new source of income discrimination law on the books, efforts should be made to enforce this law. Current efforts are inadequate.

- **Enforcement of Source of Income Protections** (\$5 million)

Provide funding to public and private agencies for education and enforcement of the new income protection law.

## PREPARE FOR AN AGING POPULATION

- **Senior Resident Assistant Program** (\$10 million)  
Enhance resident assistance in existing and new senior housing to provide low-income seniors access to an array of services focusing on wellness and healthy aging so they may remain independent and avoid moving from their homes to a costlier level of care.

## MAKE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRIORITY

- **Sustainable Affordable Housing Program** (\$50 million)  
Develop and fund sustainable building solutions and maintenance practices in affordable housing developments, including energy efficiency and construction.

## NEW YORK CITY

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### PUBLIC HOUSING

- **Prioritize the Preservation of Public Housing**  
NYCHA is home to more than 400,000 New Yorkers, providing the most affordable rental housing in New York City. Preserving this housing stock should be a top priority and must include a substantial plan for capital improvements, operations and management improvements and resident engagement. NYCHA 2.0 revenue strategies should be implemented while protecting the rights of residents and guarding long-term affordability for future generations.

### HOMELESSNESS

- **Coordinate Agencies Approach to Reduce Homelessness Crisis**  
In NYC, Emergency Shelter and Homeless Prevention has ballooned to \$3.2 billion, yet the city's homeless population continues to grow and now one out of ten NYC school children have faced homelessness in the past year. NYC must do more to strategically coordinate all city agencies efforts, spending and services to better address this crisis.
- **Prioritize Permanent Housing and Shelter Exits by Increasing the City Rental Assistance Voucher Amount**  
Increase the CityFHEPS allowable rents to Fair Market Rent would make it easier for thousands of homeless New Yorkers struggling to find a permanent home they can afford.

### FAIR HOUSING

- **Implement Where We Live Campaign Recommendations**  
NYC recently released their draft AFH assessment and recommendations to address fair housing and racial inequality across the city. While this voluntary effort is to be applauded, NYC must pivot from researching and listening to implementing actionable goals and strategies to make this a fairer and more equitable city.