

Faith Leaders for Home Stability Support

March 20, 2017

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of the State of New York
Executive Chamber
New York State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

As religious leaders from many faith traditions and backgrounds from throughout New York State, we are alarmed by the magnitude of homelessness in our State and the attendant human and financial costs to our communities. As members of the clergy and leaders of faith-based communities and service organizations with a shared commitment to stand with our most vulnerable, we are on the front lines of providing support to the homeless children, women, and men in our communities. We know that you agree that we must do everything possible to reduce this crisis and we call on you to initiate a new program to stem the tide of displacement that is driving large numbers of families and individuals into homelessness each and every day.

For over four decades, the “Shelter Allowance” provided to our poorest neighbors has grown increasingly inadequate. Under current policy, when we see welfare hotels receiving \$3,500 or more per month to house just one homeless family, we believe there is a better approach. In this spirit, we call on you to establish the Home Stability Support (HSS) program so that our families can be housed with dignity and our taxpayers’ money will be much more effectively spent. HSS would be a new statewide, State and Federally-funded rent supplement program which would bridge the difference between public assistance shelter allowances and 85 percent of Federal Fair Market Rents. It would also address the high costs of heating when borne by families.

HSS is designed to assist:

Each family or individual facing a loss of housing due to formal or informal eviction, domestic violence, or hazardous conditions;

Those who are already homeless and living doubled-up, in shelters, or outside in places not meant for human habitation.

The Home Stability Support program would be by far the most cost-effective solution for preventing homelessness. It requires, however, Executive action to replace the current failing patchwork of local programs that reach only a small fraction of those in need.

The problem of homelessness has reached a critical juncture. The costs to our communities are unsustainable. It is time to boldly and adequately attack the preventable causes of record homelessness. Your leadership on this crucial and timely initiative is urgently needed. Please see detailed recommendations at HomeStabilitySupport.com.

Thank you for your prayerful attention to this critical issue.

In Faith,

CC: Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie
Senate Majority leader John J. Flanagan
IDC Leader Senator Jeffrey D. Klein

Faith Leaders for Home Stability Support

Reverend Peter Cook, Executive Director, New York State Council of Churches, Albany
Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard, Bishop Emeritus, Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany
Reverend Dr. Robert Foltz-Morrison, Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of New York City
Reverend Amy Nyland, Executive Minister, Regional Synod of New York, Reformed Church in America
Rt. Reverend Mary D. Glasspool, Assistant Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of New York
Reverend Amy Williams Fowler, Presbytery Leader, Genesee Valley Presbytery
Reverend. Dr. Cheryl F Dudley, Regional Exec. Minister, American Baptist Churches of Metropolitan New York
Reverend John Macholz, Bishop, Upstate New York Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church
Reverend Skip L'Heureux, Executive Director, Queens Federation of Churches
Reverend Dyanne Pina, Executive Director, Long Island Council of Churches
Deborah C. Riitano, Executive Director, Capital Area Council of Churches
Reverend Alan Newton, Executive Minister, Rochester Genesee Region, American Baptist Churches
Reverend David R Gaewski, Conference Minister, New York Conference, United Church of Christ
Bishop Andrew St. John, Rector, Episcopal Church of the Holy Apostle, Manhattan
Casey R. Kemper, President, Collegiate Realty, Collegiate Church of New York
Christopher Sammond, General Secretary, New York Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends
Lucinda Antrim, Clerk, New York Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends
Reverend Dr. Raymond Rivera, President and Founder, Latino Pastoral Action Center, Bronx
Dr. Anne Klaeyen, Leader, New York Society for Ethical Culture
Reverend Alan Dailey, Executive Director, UCC, Greater Rochester Community of Churches
Reverend Abby Norton-Levering, Synod Ministries Coordinator, Synod of Albany, Reformed Church of America
Reverend Shannan Vance-Ocampo, Synod of the Northeast, Presbyterian Church USA
Venerable Michael S Kendall Archdeacon Emeritus, Episc, Diocese of NY, Past President, NYC Council of Churches
Reverend Chloe Breyer, Director, Interfaith Center of New York, Manhattan
Onleilove Alston, Executive Director, Faith in New York
Reverend Dr. Liz Theoharis, Co-Director, Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, & Social Justice Union Theological Seminary
Reverend Emily McNeill, Acting Director, Labor-Religion Coalition of New York State
Robb Smith, Lay Community Minister from Interfaith Impact of New York State
Reverend Dr. Robert L. Brashear, Chair, Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing
Rabbi Michael Feinberg, Director, Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition
Reverend Dr. Clyde Kuemmerle, Pastor, Executive Director, Ecclesia, New York
Reverend Dr. T. Kenjitsu Nakagaki, President, Buddhist Council of New York
Dr. Raymond Rufen-Blanchette, Bishop, Campaign for Social and Economic Justice
Dr. Diane Steinman, Director, Interfaith Network for Immigration Reform
Marc Greenberg, Executive Director, Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing
Reverend James Addison, Life Experience and Faith Sharing Association
Reverend John Backe, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, ELCA, Staten Island
Maya Bhardwaj, Economic Justice Organizer, Faith in New York
Iman Boukadoum, Community Engagement Director, Interfaith Center of New York
Reverend Adrienne Brewington, Senior Pastor, Poughkeepsie United Methodist Church
Reverend Peter JB Carman, Pastor, Emmanuel Friedens Church, Schenectady
Reverend Luis-Alfredo Cartagena Zayas, Associate Pastor, Park Avenue Christian Church, Manhattan
Andrew Chestnut, Reformed Church, & Chair, Finance Committee, NYS Council of Churches Rev.
Sandy Damhof, Pastor, Journey United Church of Christ, Albany
Sister Carol De Angelo, Director, Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation, Sisters of Charity of NY
Daniel DeBrucker, Ruling Elder, Robinson Memorial Presbyterian Church, Syracuse
Reverend. Kathy Donley, Pastor, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Albany
Reverend Alistair Drummond, Pastor, West End Presbyterian Church, Manhattan
Father John P. Duffell, Pastor, Blessed Sacrament Church, Manhattan

Faith Leaders for Home Stability Support

Dr. James Fairbanks, Riverside Church, Editor, Saving Justice, Bronx
Rabbi Brian Fink, Jewish Community Center (JCC), Manhattan
Reverend Paul Fleck, Chair, New York Annual Conf. Board of Church in Society, United Methodist. Church
Sister Eileen Gannon, Executive Team Member, Dominican Sisters of Sparkill
Philip R. Garvey, Presbyterian U.S.A. and Treasurer, New York State Council of Churches
Reverend Brian C. Ellis-Gibbs, Pastor, Queens Baptist Church, Queens Village
Reverend Joel Gibson, Micah Faith Table
Sr. Doreen Glynn, CSJ, Albany Province Justice Coordinator, Latham,
Rev. Gwendolyn Hadley-Hall, Co-Chair, Education Committee, Micah Faith Table
Andrew Hausermann, Director of Organizing, Faith in New York
Reverend Stephen C. Holton, STM, Director, Neighborhood Embrace, Episcopal-Muslim Relations, Manhattan
Katy Homans, Clerk, Head Coordinator, Friends shelter, Manhattan
Reverend Dr. Gideon Jebamani, Pastor and Chaplain, NYS DOCCS, Episcopal Diocese of New York
Lawrence Hui, Shelter Coordinator, Episcopal Church of Christ and St. Stephen, NYC
Reverend Russ Jennings, West Park Presbyterian Church, NYC`
Reverend Marc Johnson, Associate Pastor, Greater St. John Church of God in Christ, Albany
Sister Janet Kinney, CSJ, Executive Director, Providence House Inc., Brooklyn
Reverend. Martha Korienek, Associate Rector, Grace Church in New York
Reverend Dr. Bill Levering, Sr. Pastor, First Reformed Church of Schenectady
Reverend L. Kathleen Liles, Christ & Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church, NYC
Rabbi Ellen Lippmann, Kolot Chayeinu/Voices of Our Lives, Brooklyn
Reverend Dee Lowman, Pastor, Lark Street Together United Methodist Church, Albany
Rabbi Marc Margolius, West End Synagogue, Manhattan
Imam Khabir John McGeehan, Masjid Al Farah, Manhattan
Reverend Hugo Monroy, Pastor, Second Christian Church, Bronx, NY
Reverend Cris Mogenson, Director of Jail Ministry, Broome County Council of Churches
Reverend, Eric Mull, Pastor, Lutheran Church by the Sea, Queens
Reverend Heidi Neumark, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church in Manhattan
Reverend James Osei-Kofi, Associate Pastor, Bethesda Healing Center, Brooklyn
Reverend Stephen Phelps, Presbytery of NYC
Reverend Father Grover T. Reddie, Coordinating Chaplain, Coxsackie, Diocese of Albany
Reverend Horace Sanders, Chief Diversity Officer, Schenectady Inner City Ministry, Sr. Minister, Mt. Olivet Missionary Bapt. Ch.
Reverend Dr. Charles "Chick" Straut, New York Methodist Conference
Dr. Okpoti Sowah, Mission and Social Justice Committee, The Riverside Church
Reverend Martha Koenig Stone, Chair, Commission on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, NY Conf. UCC
Reverend Marti Swords-Horrell, Senior Pastor, Christ United Methodist Church, Troy
Reverend Phil Tom, Interim Senior Pastor, Eastchester Presbyterian Church, Bronx
Reverend Gregory Town, Minister of Renewal & Revitalization, Regional Synod of NY, Reformed Church in America
Sunita Viswanath, Board Member, Sadhana – Coalition of Progressive Hindus
Hemant Wadhvani, Hindu American Seva Charities
Reverend Suzanne Wiedel-Pace, The Riverside Church, Manhattan
Reverend Andrew Wilkes, Associate Pastor, Greater Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church
Reverend Dustin G. Wright, Pastor, Messiah Lutheran Church, Schenectady
Brother Anthony Zuba, OFM Cap. Pastoral Staff, Parish of the Holy Cross, St. John the Baptist, NYC

*Organizations listed for Identification Purposes Only – 95– For further information on this effort contact:
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