



**HOMELESS SERVICES UNITED**

307 W. 38TH STREET, 3RD FLOOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10018  
T 212-367-1589  
www.HSUnited.org

Memorandum In Support

February 7, 2020

Re: A. 1620 (HEVESI, BARRON, GOTTFRIED, D'URSO, BRAUNSTEIN, ORTIZ, BARNWELL, QUART, NIOU, PAULIN, ENGLEBRIGHT, SIMON, ROZIC, MOSLEY, LUPARDO, SIMOTAS, RA, B. MILLER, HUNTER, O'DONNELL, GIGLIO, ABINANTI, DICKENS, RAIA, SEAWRIGHT, JAFFEE, FAHY, M. G. MILLER, WEPRIN, PEOPLES-STOKES, JEAN-PIERRE, AUBRY, DENDEKKER, VANEL, M. L. MILLER, COLTON, CYMBROWITZ, TAYLOR, SANTABARBARA, GARBARINO, GUNTHER, CRESPO, DE LA ROSA, RAMOS, ARROYO, WRIGHT, BLAKE, PICHARDO, BENEDETTO, DAVILA, COOK, LIFTON, RIVERA, STIRPE, BICHOTTE, JOYNER, FERNANDEZ, BARRETT, KOLB, DILAN, DINOWITZ, FINCH, MORINELLO, PHEFFER AMATO, THIELE, EPSTEIN, RYAN, L. ROSENTHAL, REYES, EICHENSTEIN, BRONSON, PRETLOW, D. ROSENTHAL, BUTTENSCHON, MCDONALD, BLANKENBUSH, PALMESANO, JONES, HYNDMAN, ASHBY, OTIS, JACOBSON, WILLIAMS, ABBATE, RODRIGUEZ, CRUZ, PERRY, ZEBROWSKI, KIM, FALL, RICHARDSON, TITUS, LAVINE, ROMEO, CARROLL, GLICK, BURKE, WOERNER, NOLAN, WALKER, DARLING, FRONTUS, GANTT, MAGNARELLI, MCMAHON, SAYEGH, STEC, STECK, STERN, WALLACE; M-S: BRABANEC, CAHILL, DESTEFANO, DIPIETRO, FITZPATRICK, FRIEND, GALEF, GRIFFIN, LENTOL, MAKTELOW, MCDONOUGH, MONTESANO, SALKA, SOLAGES, TAGUE, WALSH)

S.2375 (KRUEGER, ADDABBO, BAILEY, BENJAMIN, BIAGGI, BOYLE, BRESLIN, CARLUCCI, COMRIE, FELDER, GIANARIS, GOUNARDES, HARCKHAM, HOYLMAN, JACKSON, KAMINSKY, KAPLAN, KAVANAGH, KENNEDY, LIU, MAY, METZGER, MONTGOMERY, MYRIE, PARKER, PERSAUD, RAMOS, RIVERA, SALAZAR, SANDERS, SAVINO, SEPULVEDA, SERRANO, SKOUFIS, STAVISKY, THOMAS)

*AN ACT to amend the social service law, in relation to home stability support programs*

Homeless Services United (HSU) strongly supports this legislation to create a new Statewide rental assistance program which would help New Yorkers at risk of eviction to retain their housing and those experiencing homelessness a pathway into permanent housing.

Homelessness in New York is near record highs, with almost 80,000 families and individuals currently in New York City shelters. The root causes of homelessness are lack of affordable housing and inadequate wages. Families and individuals with CityFHEPS and FHEPS “shopping letters” are often unable to find apartments in a timely manner, given the rent amounts are set below Fair Market Rent (FMR). With heightened demand for less expensive housing, vacancy rates are extremely low. People living in shelter can search for months to over a year for an apartment given the scarcity. **Housing vouchers must be able to match Fair Market Rent to be effective, and HSU is excited that Home Stability Support achieves this**, by granting localities the flexibility to use local funds to enhance rent levels up to FMR.

**Home Stability Support would be an effective tool to combat gentrification and rising rents, and would grant homeless households access to a much larger swath of housing stock Statewide.**

Establishing a Statewide housing voucher that is competitive with market rates will allow more households at risk of eviction to keep their apartments given the higher maximum rent, and will rapidly help more families and individuals move from shelter into permanent housing. Creating an effective



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pathway to attaining and retaining permanent housing, will result in cost-savings for New York State and taxpayers, by reducing evictions and lowering the demand for emergency shelter and homeless services.

Creating a statewide housing assistance voucher program not only makes fiscal sense, but is the morally just thing to do to provide for the welfare of New Yorkers.

Homeless Services United strongly supports the passage of this legislation and urges its adoption.

*For additional information, please contact Catherine Trapani, Executive Director of Homeless Services United at 212-367-1589.*