

**Memorandum in Support:  
Home Stability Support (HSS)  
S.2375 (Krueger)/ A.1620 (Hevesi)  
February 10, 2020**

The Legal Aid Society supports Home Stability Support (HSS) S.2375/A.1620, which will create a statewide rental supplement for public assistance-eligible families and individuals facing eviction, currently homeless, or facing loss of housing due to domestic violence or hazardous living conditions. The HSS supplement will help low-income families stay in their homes and allow homeless families to transition back to permanent housing. By giving people the ability to afford their rents and retain their homes, HSS both prevents and reduces homelessness.

**HSS is designed to prevent and reduce homelessness state-wide**

New York is in the midst of a homelessness crisis. During the 2018-2019 schoolyear, nearly 253,000 New Yorkers were homeless, staying in shelters or doubled-up with friends or family. In New York City there are over 63,000 homeless people staying in shelter each night. Existing public assistance shelter allowances are woefully inadequate. As a result, there is an affordability gap in housing. A single person on public assistance receives only \$215 towards rent, a couple only \$250, and a family of 4 only \$450 per month. Meanwhile, the Fair Market Rent amount set by the federal government for a modest apartment in New York City ranges from \$1665 for a studio, to \$1,951 for a two bedroom apartment. HSS supplements would help bridge this affordability gap by paying up to 85 percent of federal Fair Market Rent amounts and allowing local governments the option to contribute the rest.

**Reducing homelessness is good for families and our communities**

Keeping families in their homes is the best way to mitigate the extensive social costs of homelessness and the negative impact it has on an individual's education, health and employment. In addition to preventing evictions and helping those fleeing unsafe environments find new homes, HSS would provide New Yorkers the residential stability to succeed. Over a ten-year period HSS could reduce New York City's shelter population by 80 percent among families with children and 40 percent among single adults. HSS also makes fiscal sense. HSS will save taxpayers money by reducing the high cost of shelters and emergency housing. The cost of a monthly HSS supplement would be considerably less expensive than the \$71,624 annual cost of emergency shelter for each family in New York City.

**New York State cannot afford to miss the opportunity to address homelessness**

We at The Legal Aid Society see the financial and human costs of homelessness in the communities we serve every day. Amidst the worst homeless crisis since the Great Depression, New York State has a unique opportunity to enact a fiscally-responsible approach to combatting homelessness that reduces public assistance costs while keeping families in their homes. HSS is an essential component to addressing the homelessness crisis in an effective, financially responsible manner.

**For these reasons, The Legal Aid Society strongly supports this legislation.**

*For more information, contact:* Kathleen Kelleher, [kkelleher@legal-aid.org](mailto:kkelleher@legal-aid.org), (212) 577-3307  
Susan Welber, [sewelber@legal-aid.org](mailto:sewelber@legal-aid.org), (212) 577-3320