



Welfare Rights Initiative's (WRI) Memoranda in Support of A.1620/S.2375

WRI strongly supports this legislation to prevent homelessness and its most solvable causes through the provision of State and Federally funded rent funded supplements for public assistance households.

The bill creates a new Section 131-bb of the Social Services Law to authorize provision rent supplements to those public assistance households who are homeless, as well as those at risk of becoming homeless due to eviction, domestic violence, or hazardous conditions in the home.

By providing housing assistance to help poor and low-income New York households afford market rents, the program would help families to retain their homes, and at the same time help thousands of others to relocate from costly shelters, crowded shelters, and places unfit for human habitation. It would also offer support services to help individuals keep homes of their own.

As Coalition for the Homeless reports NY City and NY State has had 23,000 more New Yorkers becoming homeless each year than exiting homelessness. This level of homelessness is unsustainable.

WRI alumni, students and staff know firsthand the importance of housing, health and food security in stabilizing families in crisis. Our work over the last 24 years has shown the devastating effects that living in crisis can have on families' self-determination and move toward economic security. We believe that after a family is stabilized, access to education and training can lead to better outcomes for individuals, communities as well as the state of New York.

Lastly, WRI has seen that the implementation of law is an essential aspect of getting programs and services to the people the law is meant to aid. WRI will follow up in NYS Legislator's district offices to assure that implementation reaches constituents statewide.