



February 25, 2020

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

Dear Governor Cuomo,

On behalf of Robin Hood, New York City's largest organization focused on lifting families out of poverty, I strongly support the Home Stability Support (HSS) legislation which would drastically reduce the homeless population across the city and state and would help thousands of New Yorkers stay in their homes.

Every night, more than 63,000 people sleep in shelters in New York City, including more than 12,000 families and 22,000 children, and thousands more sleep on the street. Without HSS, the city and state's homelessness crisis will only continue to grow – putting thousands more New Yorkers in danger each year, especially children who make up an increasing share of the state's overall homeless population. Robin Hood invests more than \$8 million per year in homelessness and eviction prevention programs, services for those in shelters, and supportive housing because we know that stable, safe, and affordable housing is essential not only for economic mobility, but also for survival.

Government programs, like shelter allowances and housing vouchers, were created to help more people afford housing and stay out of shelter but the dollar amounts of these subsidies have failed to keep up with the rising cost of housing. Many voucher holders spend months trying to find units compatible with their vouchers.

Home Stability Support is designed to make vouchers more effective and keep New Yorkers out of shelter and off the streets by:

1. Replacing the various rent subsidies that localities have created with a state voucher;
2. Raising the maximum rent of the new state voucher to 85 percent of Fair Market Rent (FMR) to make more apartments available and affordable to voucher holders; and
3. Allowing localities to close the gap between 85 percent and 100 percent of FMR.

By bringing the value of housing vouchers closer to the real cost of housing in New York, thousands more New Yorkers will be able to find and retain stable housing and projections show that HSS could reduce the city's homeless population by 60 percent. In addition to the tremendous impact HSS would have on the lives of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, HSS will provide tremendous cost-savings to local and state governments over time from reduced shelter use, shorter shelter stays, prevented evictions, and reduced social service costs associated with homelessness.

For these reasons, Robin Hood strongly supports this legislation and urges its adoption. I remain available to discuss our organization's support of HSS with you and your staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wes Moore".

Wes Moore
CEO

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