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CONTACT: Hannah Tager, htager@winnyc.org, (347) 803-5414

Senate, Assembly Housing Chairs Rally with Advocates in Capitol for Housing Access Voucher Program

Housing Access New York Coalition Calls for \$250 Million Investment in State Housing Access Voucher Program

ALBANY, NY – Today, state Sen. Brian Kavanagh (Senate Housing Committee chair), Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal (Assembly Housing Committee chair), advocates from the Housing Access New York coalition, and New Yorkers impacted by homelessness and housing insecurity rallied on the steps of the Senate Stairs in the New York State Capitol to urge Gov. Hochul to commit \$250 million toward the **Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP)** in the next state budget, which would serve more than 13,000 households in New York.

As the housing crisis grows worse in New York, HAVP ([S568B/A4021A](#)) would provide desperately needed rental assistance to New Yorkers across the state. Similar to Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher, HAVP would be a statewide program dedicated both to helping homeless New Yorkers find stable housing, and to preventing eviction for households at risk of becoming homeless. HAVP would be available to people regardless of immigration status or criminal record.

Rally speakers highlighted the struggles homeless New Yorkers and those at risk of homelessness face finding permanent housing and demanded action from the Hochul administration to ensure every New Yorker has the resources to access a safe and affordable home.

“Providing vouchers to those on the precipice of eviction and homelessness is a key piece of the puzzle in solving our housing crisis,” said **Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal (D/WF - Manhattan), Chair of the Assembly Committee on Housing**. “With tens of thousands of people sleeping on the streets each night and 213,000 eviction filings in New York State last year, there is a dire need for us to enact the Housing Access Voucher Program. From developers to tenant activists, the spectrum of housing advocates is in agreement that HAVP must be funded in this year’s final budget.”

“There are currently over 150,000 unhoused individuals in New York and even more at risk of eviction. This is unacceptable,” said **Sen. Jeremy Cooney**. “Housing Access Vouchers would provide a form of rental assistance to NY families, an increasingly needed service. I’m proud to support this program, helping to alleviate some of the emotional and financial strain that often comes with housing insecurities.”

“Housing vouchers are one of the most effective tools we have to help families move into apartments of their own or avoid shelter altogether — and they cost significantly less than staying in shelter,” said **Christine C. Quinn, President & CEO of Win**. “I want to thank Senator Brian Kavanaugh and Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal for introducing legislation to implement the Housing Access Voucher Program in New York, which would give us a chance to use vouchers to tackle New York’s housing crisis, help nearly 30,000 New Yorkers avoid the trauma of homelessness, and save \$1 billion. The Housing Access Voucher Program is the definition of a win-win, and we urge Governor Hochul, Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, and Speaker Heastie to take immediate action and support HAVP.”

“New York State has the opportunity to significantly combat poverty and reduce housing insecurity by passing the Housing Access Voucher Program,” said **Juan Diaz, policy and advocacy associate at Citizens’ Committee for Children of New York**. “We are grateful to Sen. Brian Kavanaugh and Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal for championing HAVP. The inclusion of HAVP in the SFY’25 adopted budget will play a critical role in helping families, communities, and the state’s economy thrive.”

“New York’s affordable housing crisis requires a comprehensive set of solutions, including those which will directly benefit families in an immediate way,” said **Baaba Halm, Vice President and Market Leader, Enterprise Community Partners**. “The Housing Access Voucher Program would provide a flexible and game-changing new tool available to those seeking permanent housing or to remain stably housed. We cannot afford another year of inaction on this desperately needed new program.”

“Rental assistance programs can be life-changing resources for domestic violence survivors and their families, and the Housing Access Voucher Program is the tool we need to ensure that every New Yorker, regardless of their immigration status, has equitable access to housing,” said **Gabriela Sandoval Requena, Director of Policy and Communications at New Destiny Housing**. “One in three New Yorkers will experience domestic violence, and access to housing often determines if they can leave their abuser for good and rebuild their lives. We strongly urge Governor Hochul and leaders in both the Assembly and Senate to pass HAVP into law so that we can quickly help the thousands of New Yorkers facing housing instability, including survivors fleeing abuse, find safe and affordable homes.”

“50% of the population in rural, suburban and urban communities across the state pay more than 30% of their income on housing. There is no better solution to address the immediate needs of people who are precariously housed than passage of the Housing Access Voucher program,” said **Peter Cook, Executive Director of the New York State Council of Churches**.

“The New York State Council of Churches promotes the construction of many more affordable units but this is no substitute for addressing the immediate housing crisis faced by so many New York residents. It also makes no sense to us that we spend so much on more expensive temporary shelter for immigrant and non-immigrant residents when HAVP offers a much more humane and cost efficient alternative.”

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About Housing Access New York

Housing Access New York is a broad coalition of more than 50 New York groups fighting for the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP). HAVP ([S568B/A4021A](#)) would be a statewide voucher program similar to the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher for New Yorkers across the state at risk of or experiencing homelessness. HAVP would be available to people regardless of immigration status or criminal record.