



new destiny
housing

MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT
The SAFE Shelter Act
A3264B (Hevesi)/S7738A (Gounardes)

September 8, 2026

New Destiny Housing urges Governor Hochul to sign A3264B/S7738A, the **Securing Access to Fair & Equal (SAFE) Shelter Act**, which will expand access to emergency domestic violence shelter for single adult survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and trafficking. The bill ensures that domestic violence shelter providers who accommodate a single adult in a room designed for two individuals will receive a differential to preserve the existing per diem reimbursement rate.

The New York State emergency domestic violence shelter system was configured for families. Most rooms are designed to hold a family of two, three, or more. Because the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) reimburses domestic violence shelter providers on a per person per night basis, providers face a financial penalty when a single adult seeks shelter and the only space available is designed for a family. Under this “heads in beds” reimbursement structure, a provider that places a single survivor without children in a unit with two or more beds will lose significant revenue for every empty bed for the length of time the single survivor occupies that room.

The need has grown while the supply has not. The number of single adult survivors of trafficking and domestic and gender-based violence seeking emergency shelter has increased year over year, but the number of units designed to accommodate them has remained mostly flat, and inadequate. According to 2025 data from New York City’s 24-hour Domestic Violence Hotline, operated by Safe Horizon, 55% of calls were from single survivors without children in need of shelter. Of those, only 17% were connected to shelter, compared to 68% of survivors with one child. This exclusion falls hardest on survivors already least well served by the system: LGBTQ+ survivors, older survivors, and survivors of trafficking, who are disproportionately likely to be fleeing alone.

A3264B/S7738A will require New York State to preserve the full reimbursement rate for providers who “downsize” a room configured for a family of two to accommodate a single adult individual. By removing this financial barrier, the bill opens the shelter system to survivors who have long been shut out of it.

New Destiny works with survivors both before they reach shelter and while they are in it. Emergency shelter is the front door to permanent housing, and when it is closed to the majority of survivors calling for help, the path to stability closes with it. In a State where domestic and gender-based violence is a leading driver of homelessness, the SAFE Shelter Act will make our shelter system, and consequently permanent housing, more equitable and accessible to all survivors, regardless of age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or family size.

The SAFE Shelter Act will make a life-changing difference for single adult survivors seeking safety and refuge. **New Destiny Housing urges Governor Hochul to sign A3264B/S7738A.**

About New Destiny Housing: We are exclusively dedicated to permanent housing solutions for survivors of domestic violence, the leading cause of family homelessness in New York City. New Destiny is the largest developer and provider of permanent supportive housing for survivors in the State, and we operate the first and largest federally funded rapid rehousing program for survivors in the five boroughs.

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