



Bridging the Gap to Make Housing Affordable

These days, it is almost impossible to have a conversation about the nation's economic recovery without also pausing to consider those individuals and families for whom economic recovery is still not on the horizon. Evidence of the widening income gap surrounds us every day and yet some of the hardest working men and women in our state – too many of which are working for an insufficient minimum wage – continue to find themselves trapped under the burden of living in a city with the second highest cost of living in the nation and an income level that is no where near enough to meet their basic needs. As Chair of the state Assembly's housing committee and a lifelong resident of the Harlem community, I am all too familiar with the harsh realities of the affordable housing crisis. As the rich continue to get richer and the poor fall deeper into poverty, the poor are also at greater risk of being without a place to call home. During the last five years, the demand for low-income housing swelled as the impact of the Great Recession took its toll on those families that were already on the brink. With demand at an all-time high and vacancy rates at record lows across the city's 334 public housing developments, it is past time that we turn our attention to the how public housing eligibility is determined and the role of the area median income.

To determine an applicant's eligibility for public housing and related assistance programs, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses a formula known as the Area Median Income (AMI) calculation to determine where an individual's household earnings fall, in relation to the earnings of similarly sized households in a particular geographic region. For purposes of this calculation, the City of New York constitutes a single geographic region. In a city where some of the richest residents live among some of the poorest, this extreme variation has the potential to distort the reality of affordability; to the detriment of those who can least afford it. In an effort to start a dialogue about how this is currently impacting the residents of New York City and explore possible solutions, I will be hosting a public hearing on November 18th to examine the role of the AMI and the impact on access to housing. I hope that you will join me for this very important conversation!

**New York State Assembly Standing Committee on Housing
Keith L.T. Wright Chair
Public Hearing on the Area Median Income Calculation
Monday, November 18, 2013
5:00 p.m.
8th Floor, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. State Office Building**

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

Community Pride will be hosting a **Community Job Fair at the National Black Theater** --The home of A Cut Above – on **Thursday, November 14, 2013 from 10:00 am-2:00 pm**. Local employers will be accepting resumes and some will hold on-the-spot interviews.

Please note that the dress code is business attire (dress slacks, skirts, sweaters, shirts and ties are acceptable).

To pre-register for the fair, individuals can contact Latonia Greene at 212-932-1920 or e-mail: lgreene@hcz.org.

TEAM WRIGHT AT WORK

Constituent, Cynthia Jones* came into Assemblyman Wright's office looking to have her son moved from a correctional facility near the Canadian border, closer to her home in New York City on account of Ms. Jones' battle with a potentially terminal disease and she had not seen her son in 4 years.

Special Assistant Maurice A. Cummings took the case and ran with it. Maurice contacted The Office of Classification and Movement at the New York State Department of Correctional Services. There, he was able to speak with the appropriate persons who were then able to have Mr. Jones transferred to a correctional facility 40 miles north of NYC. Since the move, Ms. Jones now sees her son twice a month; and the visits have apparently lifted her spirits and her health.

*actual names of persons and facilities have been changed to protect confidentiality

ALBANY UPDATE

Recap: NYS 3rd Annual MWBE Forum

On October 3rd and 4th, over 1,800 Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs) gathered at the New York State Empire Plaza Convention Center in Albany, where they were joined by representatives from state agencies, public authorities and elected officials for the State's 3rd Annual MWBE forum. Renowned entrepreneur R. Donahue Peebles, owner of the country's largest African American real estate development company with a multi-billion dollar development portfolio of luxury hotels and commercial properties, gave the keynote address.

On the first of the two-day forum, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced that the state had reached, and exceeded its goal of twenty percent MWBE participation across all state agencies, to the tune of over \$1.4 billion in awarded contracts!

See photos and highlights of the forum at [http://www.
http://nysmwbeforum.org](http://www.http://nysmwbeforum.org)

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

The New York City Council's Black, Latino & Asian Caucus (BLAC), Co-Chaired by Councilmember Robert Jackson & Councilmember Fernando Cabrera, invites you to its 2013 Employment & Small Business Opportunities Expo. The event will take place on **Saturday December 7th from 10AM to 3PM** at **Murry Bergtraum High School- 411 Pearl Street New York, NY 10038**. The expo includes *Power Hour* sessions on New York City's Training Grant Program, resume review and job matching strategies for high growth industries, small business fundamentals, tips on developing a business plan, financing facts & fictions, advice on conducting business with government, and tips for successful bidding, and employment opportunities.

Visit
http://bit.ly/blac_expo_2013
to register.

KID'S CORNER

Teach your little ones history
through art

The New York Public Library will be featuring a special exhibit: ***Claiming Citizenship: African Americans and New Deal Photography*** highlighting the ways African Americans used opportunities provided under the New Deal to claim their status as citizens and the influence these first steps had on the Civil Rights Movement

On display now through Saturday,
January 4, 2014
at the
**Schomburg Center for Research
in Black Culture,
Latimer/Edison Gallery**
Located at **515 Malcolm X
Boulevard**

For exhibit hours and directions,
visit
[http://www.nypl.org/locations/tid/
/64/directions](http://www.nypl.org/locations/tid/64/directions)

For more information or if you have any problems we can help solve, please do not hesitate to contact our office directly. We are always here to help.

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