



**Testimony for William J. Simmons, President,**

**New York State Public Housing Authority Directors Association (NYSPHADA)  
and Executive Director of the Syracuse Housing Authority**

**2024 Joint Legislative Budget Hearing**

**February 14, 2024**

Good afternoon. I come before you today to discuss NYSPHADA's budget request for this year.

Over the last several years NYSPHADA has worked closely with our partners in state government ( NYS HCR, Governor's Office and Legislature) to urge PHA's to rethink how they rehabilitate public housing stock in need of modernization. Many of our authorities are considering RAD projects and pursuing innovative alternatives to repurposing their facilities.

NYSPHADA is very grateful to the legislature and executive for the incredible support in the past several budget cycles to help modernize and rehabilitate our aging facilities. We are expecting more housing authorities to pursue major upgrades and Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) projects in the coming two years. Therefore, we respectfully request that the legislature and executive set aside \$150 million in this year's budget for public housing authorities outside of New York City for substantial or moderate rehabilitation and/or the demolition and replacement through new construction of public housing authority developments outside of New York City.

We have taken advantage of over \$250 million in the last five years to help public housing authorities across New York State modernize their facilities. We want to continue the momentum for our public housing authorities and provide the highest quality of life for all of our residents. Several of our authorities have undergone renovations utilizing New York State tax incentive programs including the following:

Albany  
Amsterdam  
Auburn  
Buffalo  
Freeport  
Geneva  
Glens Falls  
Greenburgh  
Herkimer  
Ithaca  
Kingston  
New Rochelle  
North Hempstead  
Rochester  
Rome  
Saratoga Springs  
Schenectady  
Troy  
Utica  
White Plains  
Yonkers

In addition to our budget request we want to address an issue pertaining to insurance discrimination. Insurance discrimination is becoming an ever growing issue in the affordable housing market. As public housing authorities continue to transition to RAD, we are more concerned about the growing threat of insurance discrimination. Therefore, NYSPHADA strongly supports passage of Senator Brian Kavanagh's bill (S. 7298) to address discrimination practices by insurance companies. This bill prohibits insurance discrimination because of the affordability of residential buildings and residential construction projects. In addition, we support Assemblywoman Linda Rosenthal's bills that will address this issue as well. A.7923 - prohibits insurance companies from requesting information on or discriminating against buildings for the use of rental subsidies in such building. A.7944 - establishes that the cancellation, refusal to issue or renew, increase in premium or restriction of coverage based on the acceptance of rental subsidies is an unlawful discriminatory practice.