

Written Testimony of Michelle Voke
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2026 Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Housing
February 25, 2026

Chairs Krueger, Kavanaugh, Pretlow and Rosenthal, along with Ranking Members O’Mara, Martins, Palmesano, Fitzpatrick, and members of the committees:

The American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC) represents more than 4,000 member service coordinators across the country, who assist low-income older adults, families, and individuals with disabilities living in HUD affordable housing. In doing so, service coordinators play integral roles in efforts to remove barriers to self-sufficiency reduce health care costs and keep older adults aging in community.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on the housing portions of the annual budget. There are an estimated 267 HUD-funded service coordinators working in New York, making it one of the nation’s leaders in service-enriched federally-subsidized housing. However, more than 60% of HUD-funded properties for older adults in the state still do not have access to service coordination at their properties because of a lack of available funding. AASC believes that every older adult living in affordable housing in New York deserves the extensive support of a service coordinator.

In an effort to reduce this gap, we ask that you include in the budget \$10 million over five years to support a Resident Assistance program as outlined in legislative bill numbers A.1948 (Rosenthal)/S.956 (Kavanagh) at least 16 affordable senior housing buildings of up to 100 units, which would provide up to \$125,000 per building, per year to support at least one full-time Resident Assistant staff person who would act in a capacity similar to a HUD service coordinator. This is an incremental first step to expanding service coordination. LeadingAge New York estimate estimates this investment would serve 1,600 or more low-income older adults.

Service coordinators are the foundation of affordable housing. The majority of supports provided by service coordinators address social drivers of health, including helping residents access meals, transportation, health care and positive social interactions. [Eviction prevention](#) is a top priority for service coordinators who assess early warning signs and step in to assist residents who are facing financial challenges.

Service coordinators working in federally subsidized housing also partner with community providers to host regular programs that inform residents on managing chronic health conditions and local resources as well as keep them socially connected with their neighbors.

During the pandemic, researchers with the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University [reported](#) that service coordinators promoted resiliency among the older adults they served. Meanwhile the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University [found](#) that service coordinators went “above and beyond their normal job duties” to keep their residents safe and ensure their basic needs were met during the height of coronavirus infections.

These wraparound supports lead to aging in community. AASC has found that 95 percent of older adult residents living in affordable housing properties with service coordinators continued living

independently instead of moving to facilities with higher care levels in 2025. This finding is significant because surveys show up to 90% of older adults want to continue living in their homes and it saves them from paying the high cost of moving to an institutional setting. The majority of those living in federally assisted housing do not have the financial means to pay for long-term services and supports if needed and must rely on Medicaid to afford long-term care, including nursing homes and assisted living. The average up-front cost of keeping an older adult independent in their home with service coordination is 72% less on average than nursing home care in New York, [an AASC analysis found](#).

LeadingAge New York estimates that allocating \$2 million annually for Resident Assistants would generate a state share of Medicaid savings of at least \$6.5 million per year, with net State-share Medicaid savings (after the \$2M annual investment) of at least \$4.5 million annually.

As a national leader in service coordination, New York is well-positioned to expand the reach of service coordination into more affordable housing sites. It's an investment that prioritizes older adults aging in their communities with dignity while also reducing state Medicaid costs.

If you have questions about service coordination or the Resident Assistants proposal, please contact AASC Director of Government Affairs, Melissa Harris at mharris@servicecoordinator.org. Thank you for your time.