



**Joint Legislative Public Hearing on Housing
Testimony in Support of Expanding and Making Permanent the Housing Access Voucher Program
February 25, 2026**

Testimony of Nathalie Interiano
Vice President of Policy and Advocacy
Care For the Homeless

On behalf of Care For the Homeless, I am submitting this testimony to urge the State Legislature and Governor to expand the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) to \$250 million and make the program permanent in the FY27 budget.

Care For the Homeless has 40 years of experience providing medical and behavioral health services exclusively to people experiencing homelessness in New York City. We are a nationally recognized nonprofit that unites health care, shelter, and social services in one coordinated, innovative model of care. Through this integrated approach we deliver comprehensive, compassionate services that improve health outcomes and create pathways to stability. In addition to our direct service work, we advocate for policies that expand access to housing, health care, and supportive services ensuring that individual care and public policy work together to create lasting change for our city's most vulnerable neighbors.

An expansion of HAVP will allow cities and towns across the state to stabilize approximately 10,000 households. They will be able to use these vouchers to help people experiencing homelessness find permanent homes or issue them to low-income New Yorkers at risk of becoming homeless. The program guarantees that participating households pay no more than 30 percent of their income toward rent. Although HAVP largely mirrors Section 8, it is more inclusive since it is available to people regardless of immigration status or criminal record. In addition to stabilizing individuals and families, a permanent HAVP program would provide financial stability to building owners, ensuring a steady stream of rental income from low-income tenants. Further, data from Win shows that, once fully implemented, HAVP could come with significant cost savings by offsetting other costs associated with eviction and homelessness.ⁱ

In January 2025, a report by the New York State Comptroller found that there were 158,019 people experiencing homelessness across New York State, including more than 50,000 children.ⁱⁱ It is not just unhoused New Yorkers who are experiencing housing instability; in 2025, there were a total of 192,156 eviction filings Statewide.ⁱⁱⁱ A report from 2024 found that more than half (2.9 million households) of all

renter households statewide are rent-burdened, and 20 percent are severely rent burdened, paying 50 percent or more of their income on rent.^{iv}

Research shows rental vouchers reduce homelessness and housing instability,^v improve outcomes for children,^{vi} and promote beneficial outcomes for family well-being, including *halving* intimate partner violence.^{vii} Federal Housing Choice Vouchers reduce the poverty rate for recipients by 43%^{viii} and provide long-term benefits to households that previously experienced homelessness.^{ix} State and local rental assistance vouchers have a similarly stabilizing effect: in FY25, the number of families with children in New York City who exited shelter with subsidies – mostly the City’s local rental assistance voucher, CityFHEPS – increased by 40% compared to FY24. The number of subsidized exits was almost triple that of unsubsidized exits.^x

Despite the wealth of evidence about the positive effects of rental assistance, there are not nearly enough federal and local vouchers to meet the need in New York. Only one in four eligible households receive Housing Choice Vouchers, and localities outside of New York City do not have their own local voucher programs, leaving households with little to no options to help them afford rent.

We urge the Legislature and Governor to expand HAVP to \$250 million and make the program permanent in the FY27 budget.

For these reasons, Care For the Homeless joins the Housing Access New York (HANY) coalition in urging the Legislature and Governor to expand HAVP to \$250 million and establish the program’s permanency in the FY27 budget.

Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Respectfully,

Nathalie Interiano
VP of Policy and Advocacy
Care For the Homeless

ⁱ Hannah Tager, Martin Gamboa, Chris Mann, “The Housing Access Voucher Program: Saving New York State \$200 Million and Preventing Homelessness for Tens of Thousands of New Yorkers Every Year” Win, <https://winnyc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/HAVP-Report.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Thomas DiNapoli “New Yorkers in Need: Homelessness in New York State” Economic and Policy Insights: January 2025. <https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/reports/pdf/new-yorkers-in-need-homelessness-nys.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ NYS Unified Court System “*State Wide Eviction Information,*” 2025

<https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiZGE3NzljYmItYTBMZC00OGI2LTliYTgtYzY5ZjI0N2U0MWYxIiwidCI6IjM0NTZmZTkxLWZDEtNDA2ZC1iNWZLTUzNjRiZWwYmY9>

^{iv} “New Yorkers in Need – The Housing Insecurity Crisis,” *The Office of Budget and Policy Analysis, New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli*, February 2024, <https://www.osc.ny.gov/reports/new-yorkers-need-housing-insecurity-crisis>

^v Ingrid Ellen Gould, “What Do We Know About Housing Choice Vouchers?,” *The NYU Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy*, July 2018, https://furmancenter.org/files/fact-sheets/HousingChoiceVouchers_ige.pdf

^{vi} <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.20150572>

^{vii} Douglas Rice, Major Study: Housing Vouchers Most Effective Tool to End Family Homelessness, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, July 2015, <https://www.cbpp.org/blog/major-study-housing-vouchers-most-effective-tool-to-end-family-homelessness#:~:text=Major%20Study:%20Housing%20Vouchers%20Most%20Effective%20Tool,to%20report%20incidents%20of%20domestic%20violence:%20and>

^{viii} Sophie Collyer, et. Housing Vouchers and Tax Credits: Pairing the Proposal to Transform Section 8 with Expansions to the EITC and the Child Tax Credit Could Cut the National Poverty Rate by Half,” Center for Poverty and Social Policy, Columbia University Population Research Center, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5743308460b5e922a25a6dc7/t/5f7dd00e12dfe51e169a7e83/1602080783936/Housing-Vouchers-Proposal-Poverty-Impacts-CPSP-2020.pdf>

^{ix} Family Options Study: 3-Year Impacts of Housing and Services Interventions for Homeless Families,” U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/family-options-study-full-report.pdf>

^x Analysis of data from Mayor’s Management Report 2023, NYC.gov. Page 259-260, https://www.nyc.gov/assets/operations/downloads/pdf/mmr2025/2025_mmr.pdf