



new destiny
housing

TESTIMONY OF NEW DESTINY HOUSING TO THE NEW YORK STATE JOINT LEGISLATIVE BUDGET HEARING ON HOUSING

February 25, 2026

Thank you, Assembly Ways and Means Committee Chair Pretlow, Senate Finance Committee Chair Krueger, Housing Committee Chairs, Assemblywoman Rosenthal and Senator Kavanagh, and staff, for the opportunity to submit written testimony on Governor Hochul's Fiscal Year 2027 Executive Budget Proposal on behalf of New Destiny.

New Destiny's testimony underscores that housing is lifesaving for domestic violence survivors.

ABOUT NEW DESTINY

New Destiny is a New York City-based non-profit founded on the principle that survivors of domestic violence need safe, permanent homes to rebuild their lives. For over 30 years, New Destiny Housing has been creating homes for survivors as a developer and service provider, pioneering new models of housing assistance, and advocating for greater resources for a historically underserved population that is often hidden from view.

We are the only organization in New York exclusively dedicated to the solution of permanent housing for survivors of domestic violence. New Destiny is the largest provider of supportive housing for survivors in the state, and we operate the first and biggest HUD Continuum of Care funded rapid rehousing program for survivors in New York City. In 2025, we served more than 2,400 adults and children, helping them rebuild their lives with dignity and hope.

New Destiny is a co-convenor of the Family Homelessness Coalition and a member of the Supportive Housing Network of New York (SHNNY) and the Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development (ANHD).

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HOMELESSNESS

Domestic violence and homelessness are fundamentally connected. As New Destiny documented in our report: [*A Crisis Compounded: The Dual Crises of Domestic Violence and Homelessness*](#), more than 1 in 3 New Yorkers across the state will experience abuse by an intimate partner in their lifetime. New York has [the highest demand for domestic violence services in the country](#), yet not all survivors are able to access resources and services, especially when it comes to permanent housing. In fact, most of the unmet requests from domestic violence survivors in New York State are [housing related](#).

Without a safe place to rebuild their lives, survivors may be forced to remain in abusive situations, putting their lives at risk. According to the latest data, [1 of every 6 homicides](#) across the state were domestic violence related, where the victim was either an intimate partner or a family member.

Survivors who can flee may spend years in shelter, or staying with friends or relatives, before securing appropriate housing and face a myriad of challenges to keep it. In New York City, where more families with children enter shelter due to domestic violence than evictions, survivors are [5 times more likely](#) to move from domestic violence emergency shelter to another shelter than to an apartment upon reaching the state-mandated limit of 180 days.

Permanent affordable housing, coupled with support services, is critical for domestic violence survivors to rebuild their lives. The Executive Budget includes additional investments for supportive housing programs and capital funding, but they do not meet the need to ensure long-term housing stability of survivors and their children.

1. PROTECT SURVIVORS IN SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

a. Invest \$62.1 million in NYSSHP

Supportive housing is one of the safest and most cost-effective housing solutions for survivors of domestic violence. The New York State Supportive Housing Program (NYSSHP), on which thousands of survivors rely, is the oldest supportive housing program in the nation. NYSSHP had been virtually flat funded for nearly four decades until last year, when the state increased funding by 40% – the biggest investment ever.

We raise this important issue at this Housing Committee hearing because it relates to the Supportive Housing Preservation Program capital funding under the New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR). The Supportive Housing Preservation Program provides financing strategies for the preservation and improvement of our aging supportive housing stock. However, NYSSHP sites are struggling to access this funding, and therefore they are unable to make much-needed repairs and upgrades, many of which are decades if not centuries old. State housing agencies have invested hundreds of millions of dollars to develop these NYSSHP buildings, we are asking members of the Housing Committee to support fighting for the preservation of these units, which housed New York’s most vulnerable residents. Tenants and staff pay the price of leaky roofs, faulty elevators, and recurrent floodings. We must protect them and the state’s investment in supportive housing.

The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) administers NYSSHP to provide funding specifically for direct services tied to housing. More than 20,000 households across the state—all of whom are formerly homeless or at high risk—live in NYSSHP housing. As a result of nearly four decades of underfunding, NYSSHP nonprofits have been under tremendous financial stress. Since 2003, 33% of NYSSHP nonprofits have closed, left the program, or been absorbed by another agency.

New Destiny operates 5 NYSSHP buildings, with a total of 177 apartments where we house hundreds of children and adults impacted by domestic violence. The program is supposed to fund basic case management and security, but it has fallen tragically short. While the increased funding allocated in last year’s budget allowed New Destiny to increase the level of case management support, we are still falling short as NYSSHP does not fully cover security for our buildings.

Governor Hochul included a 4% increase for NYSSHP in her Fiscal Year 2027 budget proposal, which falls short from \$62.1 million increase the program needs as part of a five-year plan to bring this first-generation supportive housing up to modern standards. We should not have to choose between providing 24-hour security for survivors of domestic violence or paying a living wage to our support staff.

b. Increase ESSHI funding for existing and upcoming projects

The more recently created Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative (ESSHI) is the engine for new supportive housing across the state. Unlike NYSSHP, ESSHI provides both operating and service funding to support operating costs. While ESSHI rates are significantly higher than NYSSHP rates, ESSHI contracts deeply subsidize all the supportive housing apartments, which enables tenants to pay only 30% of their income in rent.

Last year, the state increased the annual per unit rate from \$25,000 to \$34,000 in New York City and \$31,000 elsewhere in the state for newly created projects, but existing ESSHI sites

and those already in development did not benefit from this increase. This is particularly concerning for projects that received a lower award than the \$25,000 annual rate.

We join SHNNY and the New York State Association for Affordable Housing to request that the Senate and the Assembly include an additional \$82 million in the Fiscal Year Enacted Aid to Localities OTDA budget to bring all existing and upcoming ESSHI units up to parity with current sustainable service and operating rates.

Additionally, we request that language be added to the Governor's \$300 million appropriation to direct that any ESSHI funds that are available in excess of the initial funding formula to be used to increase service and operating rates for existing ESSHI awards, including projects in all ESSHI RFPs prior to the 2025 version.

2. INCREASE HHAP FUNDING TO \$281 MILLION AND MODERNIZE APPLICATION PROCESS AND REPORTING

Since 1983, OTDA's Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP) has provided capital for supportive housing and other projects. HHAP is a vital capital funding source for new construction and preservation, and the only one in many regions across the state. However, HHAP is flat funded at \$153 million in the Governor's budget proposal.

We call for a continuation of the \$25 million set-aside for supportive housing stabilization and a doubling of the \$128 million available for the main funding program, for a total of \$281 million. Additionally, we urge the administration to modernize the application process and eliminate redundant reporting.

3. EXPAND HAVP TO \$250 MILLION, MAKE THE PROGRAM PERMANENT, AND INCLUDE SURVIVORS FLEEING ABUSE

This spring, HCR and the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development will implement the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) that was created in last year's budget with a \$50 million allocation. Because of limited funding, only some households in shelters or on the streets will be able to participate in HAVP. Survivors who are not in shelter, but who are attempting to flee domestic violence, are excluded from the program, as well as New Yorkers at risk of eviction.

We urge the State and the Assembly to include \$250 million for HAVP in the Fiscal Year 2027 budget, make the program permanent, and include the [federal definition of homelessness](#) as part of the eligibility criteria. This will ensure that survivors who are trying to escape life-threatening situations qualify for HAVP to find a safe home they can afford.

4. CREATE A \$250 MILLION HAPI FUND

New York's supportive housing providers are in serious financial distress, threatening the stability of the domestic violence survivors we house. Rising costs—insurance doubling, utilities up 25%—combined with rental arrears and cash flow challenges have led to deferred maintenance, property sales, and even closures, putting affordable homes and critical services at risk. As affordable housing stock shrinks across New York, we must invest in a public financing pool, such as the Housing Access and Preservation Initiative (HAPI) Fund, with a dedicated revenue source administered by a state or local housing agency to preserve and stabilize housing for survivors and other low-income tenants.

A \$250 million+ investment into HAPI Fund within the Low-Income Housing Trust Fund overseen by HCR would provide funds to stabilize distressed affordable properties through forgivable loans for arrears relief and short-term operating support and preserve long-term affordability with dedicated capital funding for repairs and reinvestment.

We join ANHD to request the State and the Assembly to include \$250 million in the HAPI Fund for Fiscal Year 2027. This investment is what it will take to stabilize our affordable housing stock, maintain safe housing conditions, and keep our most vulnerable tenants housed.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.