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February 25th, 2026

Dear Chair Krueger and Chair Pretlow,

Please accept this correspondence as submission of our written testimony for the 2026 Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Housing on February 25, 2026.

We are gravely concerned about the proposal to redirect the longstanding 10% HEAP allocation away from the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

We implore the Legislature to preserve the 10% HEAP allocation in the one-house budget to maintain the stability and effectiveness of this essential program.

Sunset Park Redevelopment Committee Inc. has been working with the Sunset Park Community in Southwest Brooklyn for over 40 years and currently completed 287 units for the 2025 contract year.

SPRC has been creating great experiences for local multifamily building owners and community members including senior citizens like Ms. Lorna Richards our two-family building owner and client who resides at 9607 Avenue B.

Ms. Lorna Richards is an elderly citizen who spent all of the 2024-2025 winter without a working heating system, and started out the 2025-2026 winter in the same circumstances. These circumstances caused her to become ill and having to spend time in the hospital on several occasions.

Since the day we performed our energy assessment, Ms. Richards was very appreciative of anything that could be done to help her and treated us with a very "grandmotherly" kindness about her.

Unfortunately, we found out that this kind lady in her 80's would make do by clothing herself indoors with extra layers and using an electric space heater and her stove for heating purposes. Both of these options can be unsafe and costly. Aggravating an already difficult situation was that her roof was leaking in a couple of areas including directly over her bed.

Utilizing HEAP funds and other available sources, we corrected her leaky roof, added insulation in her home's roof cavity and installed a new steam boiler, among other things. Now Ms. Richards can enjoy her home knowing it is properly heated this winter and much safer.

Losing funding from the HEAP program will deeply impact people like Ms. Richards forced to live in unsafe conditions including rippling through our operations, our community impact, and even the broader energy-efficiency ecosystem.

The core issue is that our programs are designed to reduce energy costs, improve health and safety and support low-income households, when those dollars disappear the consequences would be both immediate and structural for SPRC

Funding loss would impact our operations in reduced service capacity with a team of 16 people reducing hours and or freezing hiring, training or professional development, which directly impact how our team can deliver traditionally in weatherization possibly resulting in future staffing cuts and workforce instability.

Such a change would eliminate nearly 60% of our program funding, destabilizing decades of infrastructure, jeopardizing trained staff positions, and sharply reducing access to essential services for the most vulnerable households in our community

The aftermath of such cuts would create difficulty restarting programs with crew and administrative staff once dismantled. The impact on the households that we would not be able to serve would create higher energy burdens for low-income families, worsen health and safety risks, including reduced climate and resilience benefits.

Thank you for taking the time and for your continued dedication to supporting New Yorkers most in need.

Kind Regards,

Xiomara Garcia

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Sunset Park Redevelopment Committee Inc