



Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness  
for Women and their Children

**Testimony by Win for the New York State Budget Hearing on Housing Joint Legislative  
Public Hearing on the FY27 Executive Budget: Topic Housing  
Scheduled for 2/25/26**

Thank you to Chairs Kavanagh and Rosenthal and the esteemed members of the state legislature Committees on Housing for the chance to submit testimony. My name is Chris Mann, and I am the Assistant Vice President of Policy & Advocacy at Win. Win is the largest provider of shelter and supportive housing in New York City. We operate 16 shelters and nearly 500 supportive housing units across the five boroughs. Each night, more than 7,000 people call Win “home,” including 3,600 children.

**The Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP)**

Win is also a proud member of Housing Access NY (HANY), a broad coalition of more than 80 organizations from across New York State. HANY brings together advocates for tenants’ rights, landlords, children, immigrants, criminal justice, and more who are all united around the common goal of expanding access to the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP).

As the State continues to grapple with the worst homelessness crisis in its history, we urgently request that the Legislature and Governor expand HAVP to \$250 million and make the program permanent in the FY27 budget.

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 shelter and other costs associated with eviction and homelessness.<sup>i</sup> 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.<sup>ii</sup> It is not just unhoused New Yorkers who are experiencing housing instability; in 2025, there were a total of 192,156 eviction filings Statewide.<sup>iii</sup> 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.<sup>iv</sup>

Research shows rental vouchers reduce homelessness and housing instability,<sup>v</sup> improve outcomes for children,<sup>vi</sup> and promote beneficial outcomes for family well-being, including *halving* intimate partner violence.<sup>vii</sup> Federal Housing Choice Vouchers reduce the poverty rate for recipients by 43%<sup>viii</sup> and provide long-term benefits to households that previously experienced homelessness.<sup>ix</sup> 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,



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CityFHEPS – increased by 40% compared to FY24. The number of subsidized exits was almost triple that of unsubsidized exits.<sup>x</sup>

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.

For these reasons, Win 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.

### **Supportive Housing**

Win deeply appreciates the historic investment in Supportive Housing in the FY26 budget, and although that money has made a real difference, additional investment is needed. To build on this progress, the FY27 budget must prioritize the long-term stability of our housing infrastructure and the workforce that sustains it. Specifically, we call for a \$62.1 million increase for the New York State Supportive Housing Program (NYSSHP), alongside automatic contract renewals and increased flexibility to protect nearly 10,000 at-risk units currently facing operational uncertainty.

Furthermore, expanding the pipeline of available housing is essential to meeting the ongoing crisis. We urge the State to provide \$281 million for the Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP) to build nearly 1,000 more supportive housing units annually while providing the necessary resources to stabilize older projects. Finally, to ensure our providers can keep pace with rising costs, the budget must include a 2.7% Targeted Inflationary Increase (TII) for all State human services contracts. These investments are not just line items; they are the foundation of a system that provides vulnerable New Yorkers with the dignity of a permanent home.

### **Preparation for Federal Cuts**

Over the last year, the Trump administration has continued to attack vital housing programs for low-income individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Specifically, federal programs that help individuals achieve housing stability—such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8)/ Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV’s), Public Housing (NYCHA), Continuum of Care (CoC), and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) programs remain squarely in the sights of the administration.

These continued attacks will ultimately lead to a loss of benefits that will exacerbate financial insecurity and homelessness for tens of thousands of low-income families with children in New York City and State. To prevent low-income households from losing their housing and to help more individuals gain access to safe, stable, and affordable housing, *New York State should:*



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**Direct all funding from New York’s Rental Supplement Program to rental assistance programs for homeless families traditionally ineligible for public benefits.** In the FY26 budget, the State allocated \$100 million to its Rental Supplement Program (RSP), which was designed to provide rental assistance “to individuals and families, both with and without children, who are experiencing homelessness or are facing an imminent loss of housing, regardless of immigration status.”<sup>xi</sup> To alleviate shelter capacity, the NYC Department of Social Services developed the SHARE program, which utilizes funding from New York State’s Rental Supplement Program to provide rental assistance to the longest-term stayers, many of whom are undocumented immigrants, in the DHS system who are not eligible for other housing subsidies.<sup>xii</sup>

Despite the purported goals of RSP, in the last budget cycle, the State mandated New York City to use a portion of RSP funding to pay for NYS FHEPS increases. The State should ensure that 100% of the \$68 million in RSP funding to New York City goes to the SHARE program, which will ultimately support 950 households experiencing homelessness and find another source of funding to pay for FHEPS increases. The City needs this funding to immediately expand this program, so more households and long-term stayers in shelter can access housing resources and exit shelter sooner.

**Pass legislation to empower New York City to extend housing benefits to New York residents regardless of immigration status (S1631– Kavanagh / A5513– Rosenthal).** Many immigrant households are ineligible for most housing subsidies, due to their immigration status, a denial that is exacerbating the historically high shelter census and trapping noncitizens in shelters for incredibly long periods of time. [S1631/A5513](#) would empower the City to expand housing vouchers, including CityFHEPS, to these households in need, regardless of their immigration status. This expansion could save hundreds of millions of dollars annually, while helping the newest New Yorkers exit shelter, and freeing up space in our homelessness response system.<sup>xiii</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Although New York is in a difficult position as it faces down significant federal cuts, the homelessness crisis necessitates action. New York must step up and lead the nation by expanding HAVP, investing in Affordable and Supportive Housing, and ensuring that our immigrant communities also have access to housing supports. With strong leadership and bold action, New York can make real progress in addressing homelessness and ensuring that every family has a safe, stable place to call home. Thank you for your time and commitment to ensuring all New Yorkers have access to dignified housing.

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<sup>i</sup> 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>

<sup>ii</sup> Thomas DiNapoli “New Yorkers in Need: Homelessness in New York State” Economic and Policy Insights: January 2025.



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<https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/reports/pdf/new-yorkers-in-need-homelessness-nys.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> NYS Unified Court System “*State Wide Eviction Information*,” 2025

<https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiZGE3NzljYmItYTBMZC00OGI2LTliYTgtYzY5ZjI0N2U0MWYxIiwidCI6IjM0NTZmZTkYLNWZDEtNDA2ZC1iNWZlTUzNjRiZWwYtGzMyJ9>

<sup>iv</sup> “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>

<sup>v</sup> 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](https://furmancenter.org/files/fact-sheets/HousingChoiceVouchers_ige.pdf)

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

<sup>vii</sup> 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>

<sup>viii</sup> 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>

<sup>ix</sup> 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>

<sup>x</sup> 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](https://www.nyc.gov/assets/operations/downloads/pdf/mmr2025/2025_mmr.pdf)

<sup>xi</sup> Rental Supplement Program, *New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance*,

<https://otda.ny.gov/resources/reports/Rental-Supplement-Program-Report.pdf>.

<sup>xii</sup> Commissioner Molly Park, Fiscal 2025 Executive Budget Testimony, *NYC Department of Social Services*, May 6, 2024,

[https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hra/downloads/pdf/news/testimonies/2024/dss\\_executive\\_budget\\_fy25\\_hearing\\_presentation.pdf](https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hra/downloads/pdf/news/testimonies/2024/dss_executive_budget_fy25_hearing_presentation.pdf).

<sup>xiii</sup> “Permanently Housing Rather Than Just Sheltering Asylum Seekers Could Save the City Over \$3 Billion Annually,” *Win*, August 2023, <https://winnyc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Housing-Instead-of-Emergency-Shelter-for-Asylum-Seekersbriefv4.pdf>.