



## Written Testimony to the New York State Assembly Standing Committee on Housing

February 25, 2026

The Honorable Linda B. Rosenthal, Chair, Assembly Standing Committee on Housing  
Stuart Kaplan, CEO, Selfhelp Community Services

### Support for the Affordable Independent Senior Housing Assistance Program

Chair Rosenthal and members of the Assembly Standing Committee on Housing:  
Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of the Affordable Independent Senior Housing Assistance Program, also known as "Resident Assistance." We are appreciative of Chair Rosenthal ongoing leadership and unwavering commitment to advancing affordable housing and improving the lives of older New Yorkers. Her dedication has been instrumental in ensuring that older adults across our state have the opportunity to age with dignity in their own communities.

#### **Alignment with the State's Master Plan for Aging**

New York State's Master Plan for Aging establishes a clear and forward-looking framework for supporting older New Yorkers. Central to this plan is the recognition of the affordability of community housing models that enable adults to safely age in their own homes while effectively containing escalating healthcare and long-term care costs. The Resident Assistance program embodies this vision by integrating on-site support services directly within affordable senior housing.

This program is designed to meet older adults where they live, offering practical and immediate assistance that addresses their most pressing needs, including:

- Assistance enrolling in vital benefits,
- Connection to preventative health services, and
- Access to social and wellness opportunities that help prevent isolation.
- Care coordination for long term care services and community resources

#### **Demonstrated Outcomes and Cost Savings**

The effectiveness of this approach is supported by both research and practical experience. Selfhelp's Active Services for Aging Model (SHASAM) exemplifies the impact of Resident Assistance. Among residents receiving these services, outcomes include:

- Hospitalization rates reduced by half,
- Emergency room visits for chronic illnesses decreased by 76%, and
- Notable reductions in the average length of hospital stays.

Studies led by Dr. Michael K. Gusmano and others further validate that older adults residing in service-enriched affordable housing experience significantly lower rates of inpatient hospitalizations compared to peers without such supports. These findings translate into tangible, near-term savings for both Medicaid and Medicare as well as avoidance of costly nursing home stays.



### **Investing in Sustainable, Dignified Aging**

Despite clearly demonstrated benefits, many affordable senior housing properties remain without the resources needed to provide these critical supports. As a result, thousands of low-income older New Yorkers are left without access to services that can stabilize both their housing situation and their health.

Accordingly, Selfhelp and its partners respectfully request a State investment of \$10 million over five years—beginning with \$2 million in the SFY 2027 Budget—for the Resident Assistance program. This investment would enable on-site support in at least 16 affordable senior housing communities, benefiting 1,600 or more older adults each year.

The financial, health, and social returns of this program are clear. Funding the Resident Assistance program will help the State realize savings by avoiding unnecessary acute care costs, further the implementation of the recommendation in the Master Plan for Aging, and, most importantly, ensure that more seniors have the opportunity to remain safely and independently in their homes.

Thank you for your attention to this testimony and your continuing partnership in promoting the well-being and dignity of New York's older adults.