



Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

530 West 166th St. 6th Floor, New York, NY 10032

Phone: (212) 568-8500, Fax: (212) 740-8197

Website: www.nyc.gov/mcb12

Eleazar Bueno, Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

December 1, 2020

Hon. Steven Banks
Commissioner
Department of Homeless Services
33 Beaver Street, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10004

Re: Resolution to Combat Youth Homelessness & Mental Health Disparities amid COVID.

Dear Commissioner Banks:

Please be advised that Community Board 12, Manhattan, passed a resolution with 35 votes in favor, 0 opposed, 5 abstentions, 0 not voting, at its Tuesday, November 24, 2020, General Meeting, calling upon the State of New York to reverse the harmful cuts to NYC's emergency shelter system that have resulted in the State short-changing the City by hundreds of millions of dollars over the past six years and share equally with the City in the non-Federal cost of sheltering families and individuals.

Whereas: The State and City is required by law to provide shelter to everyone who needs it;

Whereas: Homelessness in NYC has reached the highest levels since the Great Depression

Whereas: Over City fiscal year 2019, 132,660 different homeless children, men, and women slept in the NYC shelter system, which included over 44,300 homeless children;

Whereas: In August 2020, there were 57,660 homeless people, including 12,866 homeless families with 19,006 homeless children, sleeping each night in an NYC shelter;

Whereas: The Coalition for the Homeless' State of the Homeless 2020 report shows that Governor Cuomo is failing to address homelessness, most disturbingly by allowing thousands of individuals to be released from hospitals, jails, and nursing homes directly to shelters;

Whereas: In 2018, more than 3,400 individuals were released from State prisons directly to shelters in NYC, and between 2015-2018, more than 15,000 such individuals were sent to City shelters by the State;

Whereas: The State did not adequately address housing needs as psychiatric centers (similar to that of the Allen Pavilion) were closed, leaving many people vulnerable to homelessness;

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Whereas: 1 in every 100 babies born in NYC last year was brought "home" from the hospital to a shelter;

Whereas: The public assistance shelter allowance set by the State has been historically inadequate, leaving those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness without permanent, affordable housing options;

Whereas: 60% of New Yorkers say they don't have enough emergency savings to cover at least 3 months' worth of expenses like food and rent while nearly 20% of NYC residents already live below the poverty line (earning less than \$24,300 for a family of four)

Whereas: The Coalition for the Homeless estimates keeping a family in their home saves taxpayers \$68,422 per year in shelter costs.

Therefore, be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon Congress to enact the HEROES Act passed by the House of Representatives that would set aside \$100 billion in emergency rent relief, \$10 billion of which would go to New York under the typical formulas used for such programs

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the State of New York to accelerate the pace of production of the 20,000 units of supportive housing pledged by the Governor in 2016 by completing them within 10 rather than 15 years, and fully funding the construction and operation of the remaining 14,000 units.

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the State of New York to implement the *Home Stability Support (HSS)* program to create a State-funded, long-term rent subsidy for households receiving public assistance who are homeless or at risk of losing their housing due to eviction, domestic violence, or hazardous housing conditions.

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the State of New York to reverse the harmful cuts to NYC's emergency shelter system that have resulted in the State short-changing the City by hundreds of millions of dollars over the past six years and share equally with the City in the non-Federal cost of sheltering families and individuals.

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the State of New York to conduct further oversight of hospitals, jails, and other institutions to prevent inappropriate discharges to shelters and the streets.

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the State of New York to adequately fund existing community-based housing programs for individuals with psychiatric disabilities.

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the State of New York to ensure effective reentry planning for individuals released from State prisons to identify viable housing options before each individual's scheduled release date.

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the City of New York to accelerate the timeline for creating 15,000 City-funded supportive housing units by scheduling their completion by 2025 rather than 2030.

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the City of New York to allocate at least three-quarters of tenant-based Section 8 vouchers to be made available each year to homeless households so they can exit shelters.

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Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the City of New York to increase the City Rental Assistance Voucher Amount to Fair Market Rate

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the City of New York to Expand Access to the City Rental Assistance Vouchers

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the City of New York to create an impartial appeals process for individuals applying for supportive housing

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the City of New York to allocate more generous funding in the fiscal year 2021 and 2022 budget to help subsidize the increased production of housing mandated under Local Law 19, which will require the City to allocate a minimum of 15 percent of apartments to homeless New Yorkers in new City-subsidized buildings over 40 units.

Be it resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan calls upon the City of New York to reduce significantly reliance on the Single One Time Assistance (SOTA) program and help families move out of shelters with long-term rent subsidies, including Section 8 vouchers.

Sincerely,



Eleazar Bueno
Chairperson

cc: Hon. Andrew Cuomo, NYS Governor
Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman
Hon. Jessica Ramos, State Senator

Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator
Hon. Brian Benjamin, State Senator
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly Member
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member
Hon. Carl Heastie, State Assembly Speaker