June 14, 2016

Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of the State of New York
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Honorable Carl Heastie
Speaker of the New York State Assembly
Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12248

Honorable John J. Flanagan
New York State Senate Majority Leader
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Governor Cuomo, Assemblyman Heastie and Senator Flanagan,

As Faith Leaders from many faith traditions and throughout New York State, we write you to express our appreciation for your support for building supportive housing to help the neediest and most vulnerable homeless men, women, and children in our communities. In January, most of us wrote to encourage you to support and extend this critical effort as part of your budget, and we are grateful you did. The funds committed this spring to build the first 6,000 new units of supportive housing – the first step in your commitment to build 20,000 statewide – will help thousands of families and individuals break the cycle of poverty.

As people of faith, we know you each share our belief that the true values of a society are revealed in the way it treats the neediest and most vulnerable among us. That is why we are writing you today to encourage you to finish the job by signing the Memorandum of Understanding your budget requires before those funds can be spent, and those 6,000 new units of supportive housing can be built.

As members of the clergy and the leaders of faith based communities and service organizations, we are on the front lines of providing support to the 80,000 homeless children, women and men in our communities. From Montauk to Massena, Brooklyn to Buffalo, too many individuals and families with serious social service needs simply cannot find and maintain permanent, affordable housing and get off the streets. Today, the short supply of supportive housing units means just one in six applicants can be placed in a home. With the stroke of a pen, you can begin to change that.

Supportive housing is the best, most humane, and most cost effective way to provide chronically homeless people the support they need. Providing supportive housing to our most vulnerable residents saves government’s money - $10,100 per year, per tenant here in New York – by reducing hospitalizations, detox and rehab programs, and incarceration.

Governor Cuomo, Assemblyman Heastie and Senator Flanagan, you have shown leadership on this issue in your approval of the funds for these first 6,000 units. Now we are calling on you to do it again. Finish the job. Sign this MOU and allow the first 6,000 of 20,000 units of supportive housing to be built. If you do, you will send a strong message to members of our congregations and the general public that New York State is serious about ending homelessness and providing all of our citizens the opportunity to live full, decent and productive lives. All that stands in the way now is this MOU.

In Faith,
Reverend Peter Cook, Executive Director, New York State Council of Churches, Albany
Rabbi Joseph Potasnik, Executive V.P., NY Board of Rabbis
Reverend Robert Foltz-Morrison, Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of New York City
Reverend Michael S. Bos, Senior Minister, West End Collegiate Church, President, Collegiate Church of New York
Casey R. Kemper, President, Collegiate Realty, Collegiate Church of New York
Reverend Skip L’Heureux, Executive Director, Queens Federation of Churches
Reverend Dr. Serene Jones, President, Union Theological Seminary, Manhattan
Reverend Fred Davie, Exec. VP, Union Theological Seminary, Manhattan
Nicholas Napolitano, Assistant for Social Ministries, USA Northeast Province of the Society of Jesus
Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader, New York Society for Ethical Culture
Reverend John H. Vaughan, Executive Vice President, Auburn Seminary, Manhattan
Reverend Dr. Raymond Rivera, President and Founder, Latino Pastoral Action Center, Bronx
Reverend Joel Gibson, Director of Faith Based Initiatives, Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies
Reverend Kevin Mullen, Minister Provincial, Holy Name Province - Franciscan Friars
Deacon Walter Ayres, Catholic Charities' Commission on Peace and Justice, Albany
Reverend Dr. Richard Gilbert, Interfaith Impact of New York State, Albany
Bishop Dr. James I Clark, Jr, Co-Chair, Faith in New York, Christ Temple of Apostolic Faith, Brooklyn,
Sheikh Moussa Drammeh, Director and Founder, Islamic Cultural Center, Bronx
Reverend Emily McNeill, Labor-Religion Coalition of NYS
Rabbi Michael Feinberg, Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition
Mary Smith, Communications Coordinator, Church Women United in New York State
Hemant Wadhwani, Hindu American Seva Charities
Laura Jarvis, Parish Assoc., Rutgers Presbyterian Church & ED, (Retired) West Side Federation for Senior and Supportive Housing, Inc.
Reverend Terry Troia, Director, Project Hospitality, Staten Island
Dr. Diane Steinman, Director, Interfaith Network for Immigration Reform
Marc Greenberg, Executive Director, Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing
Reverend James Addison, Coordinator, Life Experience and Faith Sharing Association, Manhattan
Cassandra Agredo, Executive Director, Xavier Mission, Manhattan
Reverend, Moira Ahearne, Interim Pastor, Union Church of Bay Ridge, Brooklyn
Rabbi Daniel Aldar, Brotherhood Synagogue, Manhattan
Reverend Ian Alterman, Spirit Fellowship Ministries, Manhattan
Rabbi Renni S. Altman, Associate Dean, Director, Rabbinic Program, Hebrew Union College-JIR, Manhattan
Reverend Laurie Anderson, Interim Pastor, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Queens
Reverend, Michael Asbury, Pastor (Ret.), United Methodist Church, Loudonville
Dipo Ashiru, Elder, Trinity Grace Church, Manhattan
Rev. Deacon Anne Auchincloss, Episcopal Diocese of New York
Reverend John Backe, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, ELCA, Staten Island
Reverend Erica Baron, Minister, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Catskills, Kingston
Dennis Barton, Deacon, Middle Collegiate Church, Manhattan
Reverend Alan Bentz-Lets, Retired College and hospice chaplain, Queens
Brother Raj Bhushan, Promoter & Reporter, Oneness of All Movement, Manhattan
Andy Biddy, Elder, Trinity Grace Church, UWS, Manhattan
Reverend David Brettell, Pastor, Glen Morris Presbyterian Church, Queens
Reverend Yolanda Brown, Pastor, CENTER OF DESTINY Christian Fellowship, Manhattan
Ashley Byrd, Elder, Trinity Grace Church – Westside, Manhattan
Father Michael J. Callaghan, Executive Director, Nazareth Housing, Pastor, The Oratory Church of St. Boniface, Brooklyn
Reverend Dr. James Campbell, Pastor, Broadway United Church of Christ, Manhattan
Reverend Luis-Alfredo Cartagena Zayas, Park Avenue Christian Church (DoC)/UCC, Manhattan
Rabbi Ayelet Cohen, Hebrew Union College, Manhattan
Reverend Doug Cunningham, Lead Pastor, New Day United Methodist Church, Bronx
Reverend Chase Danford, Assistant Rector, Grace Church in New York, Manhattan
Reverend Adrian Dannhauser, Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, Manhattan
Sister Carol De Angelo, Director of Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation, Sisters of Charity of New York
Daniel DeBrucker, Ruling Elder, Robinson Memorial Presbyterian Church, Syracuse
Reverend Beverly Dempsey, Pastor and Executive Director, Jan Hus Presbyterian Church, Manhattan
Grace R. Diaz, Pastoral Associate, Our Lady of the Americas Shrine Church, Albany
Reverend Alistair Drummond, Pastor, West End Presbyterian Church, Manhattan
Father John P. Duffell, Pastor, Blessed Sacrament Church, Manhattan
Reverend Kate Dunn, Associate Pastor for Congregational Care and Outreach, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, Manhattan
Sister Irene Ellis, Dominican Sisters of Sparkill
Reverend Brian Ellis-Gibbs, Pastor, Queens Baptist Church
Susan Enzer, Trustee and Secretary, Sacred Music New York
Reverend Paul B. Feuerstein, President/CEO, Barrier Free Living, Manhattan
Rabbi Brian Fink, Jewish Community Center (JCC), Manhattan
Reverend Katharine Flexer, Rector, St Michael's Episcopal Church, Manhattan
Sheika Feriha Friedich, Nur Ashki Jerrahi Sufi Order, Manhattan
Reverend Carl Garrison, Minister of homeless outreach, Manhattan Church of Christ
Reverend Calvin Gibson, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Queens
Rabbi Megan Goldman, Columbia/Barnard Hillel, Manhattan
Father Anthony Green, St. John of God Parish, Albany
Phillip Grigsby, Executive Director Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM)
Father Mark Hallinan, Pastor, St Mary's Mount Carmel Church, Staten Island
Francis Hardy, Faith & Community Relations Manager, Habitat for Humanity New York City
Reverend Martin Hauser, Pastor, Grace & St. Paul Lutheran Church, Manhattan
The Reverend Peter Heltzel, Associate Director, The Micah Institute at New York Theological Seminary
Reverend Stephen Holton, Assistant Rector, Grace Church, Manhattan
Katy Homans, Head Coordinator, Friends shelter, Manhattan
Frances Hunter, Elder, Robinson Memorial Presbyterian Church, Syracuse
Rabbi David Ingber, Romemu, Manhattan
Karen Jackson, Director of Recovery and Community Initiatives, Project Hospitality, Staten Island
Reverend Scott Black Johnson, Senior Pastor, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, Manhattan
Rabbi Jeremy Kalmanofsky, Congregation Anshe Chesed, Manhattan
Reverend Jim Ketcham, Executive Director, FOCUS Churches of Albany, Inc.
Sister Honora Kinney, Sisters of Saint Joseph, Albany
Sister Janet Kinney, Executive Director, Providence House Inc., Brooklyn
Leah Kozak, Associate Director, The Micah Institute at New York Theological Seminary
Rabbi Robert Levine, Congregation Rodeph Sholom, Manhattan
Rabbi Ellen Lippmann, Kolot Chayeim/Voices of Our Lives, Brooklyn
Reverend John Long, First Presbyterian Church, Buffalo
Reverend Sally MacNichol, Co-Director, CONNECT - NYC
Rabbi Marc Margolius, West End Synagogue, Manhattan
Father Joseph Marina, Pastor, Church of St. Francis Xavier, Manhattan
Rabbi José Rolando Matalon, Congregation B'nai Jeshurun, Manhattan
Reverend Martin McGeachy, Pastor, Gilead Church, Queens
Imam Khabir John McGeehan, Masjid Al Farah, Manhattan
Reverend Emily McNeill, Labor-Religion Coalition of NYS
Reverend John McNeill, Senior Pastor, St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Ithaca
Reverend Erika Meyer, Rector, Church of the Good Shepherd, Manhattan
Reverend Paul B. Millholland, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Queens
Father Stephen Mimnaugh, Executive Director, St. Francis Friends of the Poor, Inc., Manhattan
Reverend Brian Moll, Coordinator, New York Collaborative to End Homelessness
Rabbi Steven Moskowitz, Congregation L'Dor V'Dor, Oyster Bay
Abdul Qadir, Muhammad, Director of Administration, Masjid AT-Taqwa, Brooklyn
Reverend Eric Mull, Pastor, Lutheran Church by the Sea, Queens
Reverend Andrew Tobias Nelson, Pastor, Christ Our Emmanuel Lutheran Church, ELCA, Chatham
Reverend Daiken Nelson, Zen Peacemaker Order, Coordinator, Mandala Café, Manhattan
Reverend Patrick O'Connor, Senior Pastor, First Presbyterian Church in Jamaica, Queens
Reverend James Osei-Kofi, Associate Pastor, Bethesda Healing Center, Brooklyn
Reverend Emily Otto, Presbyterian New England Congregational Church, Saratoga Springs
Rabbi Shuli Passow, Congregation B'nai Jeshurun, Manhattan
Reverend Jennifer Reddall, Rector, The Church of the Epiphany, Manhattan
Ayelet Porzecanski, Cantor, West End Synagogue, Manhattan
Reverend Thia Reggio, Pastor, Astoria First Presbyterian Church, Queens
Reverend Irving Rivera, Senior Pastor, Reformed Church in America, Bronx
Joann Sams, Administrator, The Dwelling Place of NY, Manhattan
Rev. Dr. Maria A. Scates, D.D., CEO/Founder, JCTOD Outreach Inc. (dba) Johnson Park Center, Utica
Reverend Matt Schaeffer, Pastor, Bethel United Methodist Church, Staten Island
Reverend Donna Schaper, Senior Minister, Judson Memorial Church, Manhattan
Sally Siemoens, Elder, Robinson Memorial Presbyterian Church, Syracuse
Rabbi Felicia Sol, Congregation B’nai Jeshurun, Manhattan
Reverend Bruce Southworth, Senior Pastor, Community Church of New York, Inc., Manhattan
Reverend Scott Stearman, Pastor, Metro Baptist Church, Manhattan
Reverend Charles Straut, Retired clergy, NY Annual Conference United Methodist Church, Brooklyn
Reverend James Sudbrook, Pastor, Advent Lutheran Church, Manhattan
Reverend Edward Sunderland, Executive Director, Crossroads Community Services, Manhattan
Reverend Kenneth J. Thomas, Associate Minister, West End Presbyterian Church, Manhattan
Reverend Margaret O. Thomas, Associate Minister, West End Presbyterian Church, Manhattan
Reverend Phil Tom, Interim Senior Pastor, Eastchester Presbyterian Church, Bronx
Reverend Kitty Ufford-Chase, Co-Director, Stony Point Conference Center, Stony Point
Reverend Rick Ufford-Chase, Co-Director, Stony Point Conference Center, Stony Point
Reverend Shannan Vance-Ocampo, Albany Presbytery, Presbyterian Church USA
Reverend J. Donald Waring, Rector, Grace Church in New York
Musa Watanabe, Peer Specialist, Rainbow Heights Club, Brooklyn
Reverend William C. Webb, Episcopal Diocese Western NY, Albany
Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, Brooklyn
Michael Weis Cantor, Brotherhood Synagogue, Manhattan
Reverend Anette Westermark, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church of Newtown, Queens
Reverend Suzanne Wiedel-Pace, Coordinator, Living Well, Restorative Communities Collaborative
Reverend Dustin Wright, Pastor, Messiah Lutheran Church, Schenectady

Institutional Affiliations listed for Identification Purposes only

For further information about Faith Leaders 4 NY/NY Housing
Contact Marc Greenberg, Executive Director, Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing, at Marc@iahh.org – 917-913-0098