Faith Leaders to Join Homeless New Yorkers and Advocates to Call on Gov. Cuomo to Keep Supportive Housing Promise

Campaign 4 NY/NY Housing to Hold Weekly Rallies Outside Governor’s Office Until Cuomo Makes Good on Commitment to Build 20,000 New Supportive Housing Units

New York, NY – Homeless New Yorkers, faith leaders and advocates from the Campaign 4 NY/NY Housing will converge in front of Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s NYC office on Wednesday to demand he keep his promise to build 20,000 new supportive housing units. The rally, the third one in a series of weekly events sponsored by the Campaign looks to bring visibility to the needs of the homeless until Gov. Cuomo signs the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) needed to start building the first 6,000 supportive housing units.

Gov. Cuomo promised in his Jan. 13 budget address that the State would create 20,000 new supportive units, and the budget approved in April set aside $1.9 billion for supportive and affordable housing. However, those funds are subject to an as-yet-to-be-completed MOU between Cuomo, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan. By the time the legislative session ended in June, the State leaders approved a last-minute deal to release only $150 million – leaving the rest of the funds sitting unused at a time when 80,000 New Yorkers are homeless statewide.

“As the legislative session closed on June 18th we were dismayed and deeply disappointed to learn that the Governor and State leaders agreed to release a mere $150 million of the 2 billion dollars in the state budget for affordable and supportive housing. Every delay in signing the full Memo of Understanding means that many of our most vulnerable neighbors will suffer and some will actually die prematurely from the lack of appropriate housing and needed services. We see no reason to delay this effort one more day!” – The Reverend Robert Foltz-Morrison, Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of New York City.

‘With 20,000 households across the state of New York approved for supportive housing each year but only 1 in 6 actually obtaining it, our most vulnerable citizens need our elected officials to stand up for them TODAY and sign the Memo of Understanding for the full 1.9 Billion Dollars – a true 5-year commitment and not a series of one year allocations. Signing the MOU would send a powerful signal to members of our communities, the general public, advocates, stakeholders and the entire country that New York is serious in its determination to end homelessness and help to affirm the public’s faith that Government is committed to help all citizens to live full and decent lives. New Yorkers look to Governor Cuomo and our State leaders to do their job and sign the full MOU NOW” -- The Reverend Peter Cook, Executive Director, New York State Council of Churches
“As people of faith, we believe that decent housing is the God-given right of all people. Our elected officials have done their part, they've budgeted the money. All it requires is the governor's signature. And still Governor Cuomo refuses to sign. It is simply wrong, in every sense of the word, to hold the lives of our most vulnerable neighbors, hostage to political whim. Governor Cuomo, sign now!” – The Reverend Dr. Robert Brashear, Senior Pastor, West Park Presbyterian Church, Chair, Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing

“Today, I stand with faith leaders to bring to our awareness our brothers and sisters who need a place to live, a place they can call home, especially those in need of supportive housing. Too often, their stories are not known, their voice not heard. We need to get to know them, listen to their stories and respond. We are one family, brothers and sisters to each other. I give thanks for all who are working to address this injustice. Sisters of Charity of New York join with Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing, faith leaders and others who urge Governor Cuomo and New York State legislators to sign the MOU on Supportive Housing. The MOU is one way to bring forth new life for those in need of supportive housing. – Said Sister Carol De Angelo, SC, Director of Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation for the Sisters of Charity of New York.

Pope Francis, in Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home, states: “Disregard for the duty to cultivate and maintain a proper relationship with my neighbor, for whose care and custody I am responsible, ruins my relationship with my own self, with others, with God and with the earth. When all these relationships are neglected, when justice no longer dwells in the land, the Bible tells us that life itself is endangered.” --

“The New York Society for Ethical Culture was the first community to answer Mayor Koch’s call to provide shelter for our most needy neighbors. After 30 years of giving comfort and support to women in transition as they take the necessary steps to self-sufficiency, finding a new home and job, we join our colleagues from throughout our great state in calling on our Governor to do his job and sign the MOU without delay.” Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader, New York Society for Ethical Culture.

“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. But supportive housing development is an endeavor that involves multiple partners and years of planning and coordination. The current $150 million authorization severely constrains our partners' ability to gain the long term commitments from funders, developers, property owners and others required to move forward on the scale of development that our current crisis demands. The lives of New York's most vulnerable residents are not a bargaining chip!! They are our mothers and fathers, sisters, brothers, children and neighbors.” – Marc Greenberg, Executive Director, Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing
Supportive housing breaks the cycle of homelessness by pairing the stability of a permanent home with on-site services to support people with mental illness, addiction, HIV/AIDS, chronic illness, disability or other special needs. Research proves that supportive housing:

- Solves homelessness
- Improves neighborhoods
- Saves tax dollars

**Event Details**

What: Homeless New Yorkers and faith leaders from across the state will converge on Gov. Cuomo’s NYC office this week to demand he keep his promise to build 20,000 new supportive housing units.

Who: Faith Leaders
Homeless New Yorkers
Campaign 4 NY/NY Members

When: Wednesday, Aug. 10, 9 a.m. (Occurring Weekly)

Where: Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s NYC Office
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

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