

Testimony from Administration for Children’s Services, Dept of Housing, Preservation and Development, Dept of Health and Mental Hygiene, Dept of Social Services, New York City Public Schools, New York City Police Department, New York City Emergency Management, and Federal Legislative Affairs
Committee on Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation Jointly with Finance
Council Chambers – City Hall
April 16th, 2025

Introduction:

Good morning, Chairs Restler and Brannan, and Members of the Committee. On behalf of the City of New York, below is the testimony by several City agencies in response to your committee’s request on potential federal funding cuts. These agencies include:

- Office of Federal Legislative Affairs
- The Administration for Children’s Services (ACS)
- Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD)
- Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)
- Department of Social Services (DSS)
- New York City Public Schools (NYCPS)
- New York City Police Department (NYPD)
- New York City Emergency Management (NYCEM)
- Office of Federal Legislative Affairs (FLA)

Protecting and serving New Yorkers has always been this Administration’s North Star — and that will never change. New Yorkers can rest assured that we are focused on the substantive work to make sure they receive all the services they deserve. When a reduction in funds has indeed taken place, our Administration has filed lawsuits, submitted affidavits, lobbied the federal government, and done more to ensure our City gets the critical funding we need.

This Administration has been clear that we want to work with the federal administration, not go to war with them, just like Governor Hochul showed she is willing to do when she met with the president at the White House, to find common ground to help make the lives of New Yorkers better. From education to public safety, to housing, we need funding and support from the federal government on a number of issues, and this Administration thinks it is important to sit down with elected officials from both sides of the aisle at every level of government to keep delivering.

As you will see in the testimony laid out by several agencies below, the loss of federal funding represents a reduction of major services from programs such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), to financing for affordable housing programs and public education related disease prevention to vital projects that are already in progress and are critical to protecting New Yorkers’ lives such as coastal resiliency projects, and shoreline protections. New

York is not an anomaly here, cuts in federal funding have been implemented nationwide, and we continue to explore ways to work with other cities and mayors throughout the country to address these cuts.

Office of Federal Legislative Affairs

The Office of Federal Legislative Affairs (FLA) serves as New York City's direct liaison to the U.S. Congress, the White House, and federal agencies. We are responsible for monitoring and analyzing federal legislative, budgetary, and regulatory activity that could impact New York City's budget and operations.

While no legislation implementing funding cuts has yet passed Congress, we want to clarify recent federal actions. The U.S. House of Representatives approved a concurrent budget resolution—a non-binding framework that allows Congress to begin the budget reconciliation process. This resolution does not enact cuts but outlines the spending and policy priorities of the current House majority. Congress is currently in recess, and when they return, the House can begin drafting legislation to implement these instructions.

In the meantime, FLA continues to closely monitor the Federal Register, committee schedules, and legislative text moving through the Rules Committee. Since the beginning of this administration, we have maintained weekly coordination calls with New York City agencies to assess emerging threats to federal funding. We are also in regular contact with our congressional delegation and Senate offices to remain current on any shifts in appropriations or policy.

We recognize that significant federal cuts—whether through appropriations, reconciliation, or administrative action—could have broad and harmful consequences for New York City residents. From housing, education, and health care to food assistance, public health infrastructure, and emergency preparedness, many of our agencies depend on federal funding to deliver core services.

At this time, however, no clear guidance has been issued by federal agencies that would allow us to make detailed projections or formally prepare for specific cuts. As such, we are moving forward with caution, advocacy, and a deep commitment to protecting New York City's interests.

While we do not have a crystal ball, we are informed, alert, and ready to act.

Administration for Children's Services (ACS)

The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) protects and promotes the safety and well-being of New York City's children, youth, families and communities through child welfare, juvenile justice, and childcare assistance.

ACS typically receives approximately **\$1.3 billion** in federal funding each year, which we receive by claiming through the state. Programmatically, the two largest areas receiving federal reimbursement (via the state) are childcare and foster care, both of which are critical for children and families. The key federal funding streams are Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), Title IV-E, Title IV-B (part 1 and Part 2), TANF, and the Social Security Block Grant. (TANF and the Social Security Block Grant funding is often used by the state to fund their block grants such as the Child Care Block Grant and the Flexible Fund for Family Services- FFFS).

Childcare assistance is critical for families. ACS is the city agency drawing down these funds through the state, some of which funds childcare vouchers for families on cash assistance through HRA, some is passed to NYCPS for contracted childcare, and some is used for ACS low-income childcare vouchers. ACS receives a state allocation from the state's Child Care Block Grant, which is comprised of various funding streams such as TANF and the federal Child Care Development Fund, as well as state funds. ACS has historically received about **\$500 million** of childcare funding through the state block grant; however, this past year ACS received about **\$1.1 billion** from the state due to rollover/supplemental funds (Note: the exact distribution between federal and state funds from the state's block grant is not provided to ACS.) This funding currently supports approximately 65,000 low-income ACS childcare vouchers, as well as 27,000 HRA vouchers and 12,000 NYCPS contracted childcare slots.

While ACS focuses on providing services and supports so children can remain safely at home, the safety of children and youth sometimes requires that they come into foster care. While the number of children in foster care continues to decline, it is essential that ACS has the resources needed to support foster care, which includes stipends to care for the children and funding for foster care agencies and residential providers. Over time, federal funding for foster care, an entitlement through Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, has been declining because federal eligibility for reimbursement includes a number of factors including income eligibility which is tied to whether a family today would have been eligible for AFDC in 1996. That said, ACS receives approximately **\$175 million** of federal funding for foster care. In addition, ACS is reimbursed approximately **\$130 million** for adoption/KinGAP assistance, which includes subsidies for children adopted from foster care and subsidies for kin who get permanent legal guardianship, as well as about **\$7.2 million Chaffee funds** to support programs for older youth.

ACS also receives some federal funding for prevention services, which is our continuum of services providing free, voluntary services to over 15,000 families throughout the city. The state requires the city to use all available federal funds (including the state's FFFS) before drawing down the state's 62/38 match. ACS receives approximately **\$150 million** of federal funding (via the state) for prevention services. ACS also receives **\$19 million** of federal TANF funds to support our homemaking program, which is a supportive in-home service that provides training

to allow parents and guardians to develop skills to support child well-being and to successfully manage daily household tasks.

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It is also important to note that ACS's foster care providers draw down Medicaid for children and youth in foster care. This Medicaid funding supports the health and mental health services for children in foster care and residential programs.

Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD)

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) relies on significant federal funding to support the creation and preservation of affordable housing, rental assistance programs, and essential housing code enforcement services for New Yorkers. Each year, HPD receives roughly 60 percent of our budget from federal resources, enabling the agency to finance affordable housing developments, assist low-income renters, and support building maintenance and code enforcement.

While we await further guidance from the federal government, we are analyzing all potential impacts of any changes in our federal funding. Any changes to federal funding could impact the financial closing of affordable housing development projects that rely on federal funding, the issuance of new project-based and tenant-based rental assistance vouchers, federally funded rehabilitation and preservation projects, and funding for certain housing services and programs dependent on federal grants. We remain deeply committed to protecting tenants, preserving affordable housing, and advancing New York City's housing goals despite these financial uncertainties.

Any changes to federal funding threaten our work, including **but not limited to**:

- Delaying the closing of affordable housing development projects that rely on federal funding
- Pausing the issuance of new project-based and tenant-based rental assistance vouchers
- Slowing or suspending federally funded rehabilitation and preservation projects
- Reducing funding for certain housing services and programs dependent on federal grants

While a funding decrease or pause would imperil not only our ability to create affordable homes, but also our enforcement team's work to uphold the housing code that keeps New Yorkers safe, we remain deeply committed to protecting tenants, preserving affordable housing, and advancing New York City's housing goals despite these financial uncertainties.

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)

For the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, federal funding comprises approximately 20%—or \$600 million—of DOHMH’s budget, largely supporting emergency preparedness and infectious disease control. These funds are received through longstanding federal grants and partnerships, especially with the CDC.

On March 25, DOHMH was notified by HHS that \$100 million in grant funding would be terminated immediately. The CDC had recently extended these grants to end in 2026 and 2027 respectively to fund infectious disease prevention and surveillance programs. In addition to funding key COVID prevention activities, the funds have been used to enhance core public health activities and help New York City respond to current and emerging infectious diseases. This includes disease outbreak detection and investigation work and rapid testing capabilities.

The grants also support the Health Department’s Flu, COVID, and RSV vaccination education and community outreach efforts. We believe this action is unlawful and harmful. A Temporary Restraining Order has paused the termination, and a hearing on the preliminary injunction is scheduled for April 17.

If these cuts are allowed to proceed, the consequences would be severe:

- Slower responses to outbreaks of vaccine-preventable and emerging diseases
- Loss of specialized lab capacity
- Reduced support for high-risk settings such as shelters and nursing homes
- Fewer vaccination clinics in underserved neighborhoods
- Weakened collaboration with community partners
- Limited public education around disease prevention

DOHMH is working closely with City Hall and OMB to assess the impact and explore mitigation options. However, local solutions cannot fully offset the scale of these cuts. We urge continued federal investment in public health infrastructure. We are currently working to assess all potential impacts to the city and remain committed to keeping New Yorkers safe and healthy.

Department of Social Services (DSS)

DSS, HRA, and DHS budgets rely significantly on federal dollars; federal support is crucial to the 3 million people we serve. Federal cuts, reportedly under active consideration, would have profound negative impacts on New Yorkers and our social safety net's ability to support access to food, health care, and vital services.

Threats to federal funding currently being contemplated by Congress pose a serious risk to the vulnerable populations the Department of Social Services (DSS) serves and vulnerable populations across the country. DSS is the largest local government social services agency in the country, comprised of the Human Resources Administration (HRA) and the Department of Homeless Services (DHS).

For example:

- The anticipated \$230 billion in cuts in the Agriculture Committee would almost certainly impact the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the 1.8 million New Yorkers who rely on SNAP. SNAP is an essential tool in fighting food insecurity, which intersects with so many aspects of health, education, and well-being for children, adults, and older adults. Furthermore SNAP serves as an economic engine for NYC and beyond supporting \$1.56 of economic activity in the City's markets and surrounding farms.
- The anticipated \$880 billion in cuts in the Energy and Commerce Committee would impact Medicaid and the 4 million New Yorkers who rely on Medicaid for health care. Medicaid is another indispensable link in the social safety net that allows low income families, mainly children and adults, to access the care they need including homecare, managed care, mental health, substance use services, and hospital care.
- Although not explicitly mentioned, the House Appropriations menu of potential cuts includes a potential
 - o o \$21 billion in cuts to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Elimination of the TANF Contingency Funds would mean a reduction of approximately \$290 million for New York State. In FY25, 590,000 New York City residents relied on Cash Assistance to support their housing stability. Similarly, TANF dollars also serve to support hundreds of the families with children shelters across the City.
 - o o Similarly contemplated are \$15 billion in cuts to the Social Service Block Grant would impact the 72,000 New York City residents who rely on Adult Protective Services (APS) and Domestic Violence Services (DVS). APS and DVS assist eligible at-risk New Yorkers live safely and independently, free from abuse and violence.

As shown by the scale of the cuts contemplated, the City and State would not have the budgetary ability to replace this crucial federal funding. All of these are vital programs that need to be retained and augmented. Instead of a conversation centered on cuts that tear holes in our social

safety net, we must advocate for Congress and the White House to maintain or increase funding levels of these critical programs and services that millions of New Yorkers are entitled to and depend on.

New York City Public Schools (NYCPS)

New York City Public Schools is the largest school district in the nation, serving nearly one million students across approximately 1,600 schools. While federal dollars comprise only about 6% (or over \$2 billion) of our annual budget, all of our students and schools benefit from this funding in various ways, as do many of our early childhood programs. In fact, federal dollars and programs support many of our highest needs students and the schools and programs that serve them, including students from low-income households, students with disabilities, and students in temporary housing. Federal financial aid—such as Pell grants and student loans—also support our students after they leave us to pursue postsecondary education.

Our largest categories of federal funding are Title I (approximately \$800M), school meals (nearly \$600M), IDEA (over \$300M), childcare and early childhood education (nearly \$200M), and Medicaid reimbursement of related services for eligible students with disabilities (over \$80M). We use these federal dollars in alignment with their statutory purposes; for instance, Title I funds support improving instruction in over 80% of our schools that serve concentrations of low-income students, along with family engagement and academic and non-academic supports for students in temporary housing. We also receive over \$50M in Title II, which covers activities such as professional development and teacher recruitment and retention; over \$30M in Title III to provide high quality supplemental services to our multilingual learners to help them achieve English language proficiency, in addition to related professional development and family engagement; and over \$80M in Title IV to support programs such as community schools and college and career pathways.

Due to the critical resources these funds provide, any changes would negatively impact the students of New York City. To that end, we remain in close conversation with our city and state partners as it pertains to our federal funding streams—and should federal funding be reduced, we would work with these partners to try to obtain the necessary funding to maintain essential programming and to avoid impact particularly to our most vulnerable students.

As an agency, New York City Public Schools is closely following all education-related actions taken by the federal government, analyzing both the actions themselves and the various legal challenges that have been asserted in response. While the federal administration has taken multiple actions since January 2025 that have implications for schools—including funding actions, Executive Orders, Dear Colleague Letters and other forms of guidance, as well as rhetorical and legal challenges to DEI programming—our policies and programs at New York City Public Schools have not changed in any way. We have reiterated this message with families, staff, and the public, and will continue to do so. We will continue to abide by our values and, importantly, by all relevant federal, state and local laws.

New York City Police Department (NYPD)

Annually the NYPD receives just under \$200M in federal funding on average, the majority of which is from the Department of Homeland Security. These funds are integral to our counterterrorism and public safety mission.

The Department uses federal resources to provide equipment and training to our counterterrorism officers, and to support our Critical Response Command, a specially trained and equipped group of officers who regularly deploy throughout the city to critical infrastructure, special events, and sensitive and iconic locations to detect and deter acts of terrorism and targeted violence.

We depend on federal funding to maintain our Domain Awareness System, which is a critical intelligence-sharing tool for law enforcement officers. The Domain Awareness System (DAS) allows the law enforcement and emergency responder community to share intelligence information and data about incidents during an emergency or disaster with state, regional, local, or federal partners. It provides deterrence and detection capabilities to prevent or stop an attack before it is carried out while also providing NYPD officers access to critical information and databases in real time.

We rely on this funding stream to acquire Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive detection equipment to support intelligence analysis preparedness efforts. This includes Handheld Explosive Trace Detectors, Thermal Imaging Units, Personal Radiation Detectors, Multi-Mode Threat Detectors, Mobile Platform Gamma/Neutron Detectors, Chemical Sensors, Advanced Detection under Vehicle Imaging, and Fixed/Mobile Radiation Detection Systems all of which play a critical role in combatting terrorism.

Federal funding also covers the costs associated with protecting the United Nations, as well as providing security for foreign dignitaries and properties. This includes protection during demonstrations and dignitary visits, as well as providing for fixed security posts at consulates and missions.

Twenty-three years after 9/11 the city remains a priority target for terrorists due to its unique draw of iconic locations, high-profile events, and a diverse population. The Department relies on federal funds to protect New Yorkers against terrorist attacks and strengthen homeland security preparedness, including the security of critical transportation and port infrastructure. While we have not yet felt any direct impact on our federal funding levels under the new administration, we are closely monitoring all directives and changes regarding federal grants. Any decrease in this funding will jeopardize our ability to continue programs that are absolutely critical for the prevention of terrorist attacks and would fundamentally limit our ability to detect and prevent terrorist attacks on the nation's largest city and potentially impact the safety of the law enforcement personnel who protect our community.

New York City Emergency Management (NYCEM)

Thank you for inviting New York City Emergency Management (NYCEM) to provide a statement on the issues currently facing emergency management related to federal funding. Federal grants make up the majority of NYCEM's budget, with 66% of our agency's budgeted headcount supported by federal funds. Over the last five years we have seen cuts to these federal grants nationally while also facing reductions in City funds. With falling funding and growing costs due to inflation and other economic factors, emergency managers across the country are being asked to do more with less. This concern predates the current administration. Over the last few years, New York City and many other cities and states across the country had to manage one of the largest humanitarian crises with little help from the federal government.

We are in the midst of a period of major change for the U.S. emergency management system, not just on funding alone but also broader support and resources. The impact of cuts to the federal workforce, especially at FEMA and other federal agencies we depend upon, should not be underestimated and has national impacts and implications. We must prepare for a world where we cannot depend on the historical structure of state and federal support before, during, or after emergencies. Across the country, emergency management 101 is that the local jurisdiction, whether a small town or county, a large city like New York, or a state, is in charge of managing an incident, but once that emergency exceeds their capabilities, they are able to turn to the state and then the federal government for support. Federal agencies provide unique expertise and capabilities that support local preparedness, response, recovery, surveillance, and mitigation. We will need to ensure that we can properly prepare for and manage the consequences of emergencies in the absence of the fully capable federal agencies that have supported emergency management efforts over the past several decades.

A recent example relates to the cutting of funding for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) which was created under President Trump's first administration with bipartisan support. This funding cut affects storm and flood protection for public housing, for the food supply chain, and for coastal neighborhoods, much of it nearing the start of construction. For New York City, that amounts to nearly \$300 million federal dollars intended to stop the next Ida or Sandy from becoming another million or billion-dollar disaster.

During Commissioner's Iscol preliminary budget testimony, he announced a 90-day process that NYCEM commenced to assess our risk so we as a city can better understand what we will need to do to mitigate and prepare for our new political context. NYCEM will use this process to outline solutions and propose novel approaches to grow our local emergency management capacity. To identify and address gaps created by federal cuts, NYCEM is chairing "The Future of Local Emergency Management Advisory Commission" comprised of public safety experts from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to fundamentally reassess our risk profile in this evolving political landscape and develop a robust, more self-sufficient local emergency management system. We need to identify areas where we can strengthen our own capabilities to mitigate risks and effectively prepare for emergencies, even if federal support is not as readily

available as it once was. This will lead the city's efforts to be better prepared for the foreseeable and unknown threats that lie ahead. Once this review is complete, we will gladly share the results with the Council.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony. Our agencies are united in concern about the significant risks posed by potential federal funding reductions. We stand ready to work with the Council, City Hall, and our partners to protect the services that New Yorkers depend on every day.



April 16, 2025

Jacqueline Sherman, General Counsel and Chief Innovation Officer, New York City Independent Budget Office on
Preparing for Changes in Federal Funding
Before the New York City Council Committees on Finance and Governmental Operations

Good morning Chair Brannan, Chair Restler, and members of the Finance and Government Operations Committees. I am Jacqueline Sherman, General Counsel and Chief Innovation Officer at the Independent Budget Office (IBO). I am here today with my colleague, Sarah Parker, Senior Research and Strategy Officer; we appreciate the opportunity to appear before you. My testimony builds upon IBO Director Chafee's [testimony last month](#), highlighting IBO's concerns about risks that ongoing federal actions pose to New Yorkers and to the City's fiscal health.

Since January 20th, New York—along with the rest of the nation—has faced a cascade of announcements of reductions in federal spending. Federal funding—currently around 8% of the City's expense budget—supports a range of core services, including services for the most vulnerable New Yorkers, public education, housing code inspectors, city planning, and public health. In addition to direct funding cuts, layoffs of federal workers—many of whom administer and disburse funds to state and localities—have already begun in some agencies.

Ongoing uncertainty in the national economy further complicates the picture. Rapid changes in tariffs and extreme volatility in trade policy continue to pose significant risks for inflation, consumer spending, tourism, and ultimately, state and local revenues.

We have yet to hear specifics from the Administration about how these combined risks are likely to affect New York City's budget. In that context, the rest of this testimony outlines crucial questions the Administration should address in the upcoming Executive Budget.

Transparency about Budget Expenditures

Given the current high-risk environment, the City's budget process must embrace transparency and fiscal realism. Specifically, the City needs to move away from two types of inaccuracy invariably found in the budget that obscure crucial policy choices. First, the budget continues to materially understate costs for uniformed personnel overtime, "Carter Cases" at the Department of Education, and funding for CityFHEPs rental housing vouchers. Second, it continues to overestimate the City's payroll costs and costs for services to asylum seekers.

On a related note, the City also faces a critical fiscal policy decision—how to allocate the projected

fiscal year 2025 budget surplus. The Council should weigh the merits of two options: placing funds into reserves or using them to prepay next year's expenses. While pre-payment may offer short-term flexibility, it will not address the more structural risks in the current environment. Applying surplus to strengthen reserves provides more long-term stability and will allow the City to respond to unanticipated future shortfalls and forestall deeper cuts.

Large-Scale Risks to the Economy

Through the City's budget process, the Administration should detail its economic assumptions in light of current discussions around trade, immigration, and tax policy, and how those underlie its revenue and expense forecasts. As examples, the Administration should explain its assumptions regarding how:

- inflation, GDP growth, and the chances of recession affect the local economy;
- rapidly changing federal trade policy could affect local job creation and the City's income, business, and sales tax bases;
- tariffs could change the City's purchasing power for goods and supplies; and
- volatility in the bond market may hinder the City and Authorities' ability to borrow.

Direct Federal Funding Cuts

Some City agencies rely heavily on direct federal funding. For instance, according to the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget (OMB), federal funding totals over half of the budget of the Department of Housing Preservation & Development and more than 40% for the Administration for Children's Services.¹ Separate from the City's budget, federal funding is also critical to the New York City Housing Authority, Health + Hospitals, and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Here, critical questions include:

- What specific federal programs has the Administration identified as most vulnerable to cuts and what planning is under way to assure that the City continues to meet the needs of New Yorkers served by those programs?
- Have any City agencies—particularly those facing the greatest risks—been asked to prepare contingency plans to address potential loss of funding?
- What is the Administration doing to protect public health as the federal administration reduces support for the prevention of communicable diseases?
- Many federal workers who oversee program administration and process payments have



lost their jobs and more are threatened. Has the City noted any slowdowns in the processing of funds it expects to receive?

State Funding Affected by Federal Cuts

The absence of a final State budget further complicates the picture. With recent reports that the State budget might not be finalized until May, close to \$3 billion in requests for asylum seeker aid and childcare assistance by OMB remains up in the air.ⁱⁱ Reductions in federal aid for New York State layer additional risks on New York City. The State funded 17% of the City's fiscal year 2025 budget, and federal funding totaled 38% of the State's budget last year. Public education appears to be at particular risk, with 41% of DOE's budget funded by the State, including federal dollars that flow through the State. With this in mind, some important questions include:

- What assumptions is the City currently making about FY 2026 funding from the State in the absence of an enacted State budget?
- Given the specific cuts and planned closure of the federal Department of Education, how does the Administration plan to fund the 3,700 new teachers it just [announced](#) would be hired in Fiscal Year 2026 to meet the State's class size mandate?
- Governor Hochul recently indicated the federal Department of Homeland Security has revoked hundreds of millions of dollars in [infrastructure resiliency programs](#), including millions of dollars that flow to the City. How will the City address critical capital budget priorities to prevent and respond to future natural disasters?

Risks to the Nonprofit Sector

Finally, the City's nonprofit sector faces mounting fiscal stress as many organizations reel from material cuts to their own budgets, while simultaneously witnessing devastating policy changes aimed at the communities they serve. These providers operate with thin margins and delayed reimbursements. The Administration should articulate a clear strategy for supporting this critical sector in the face of compounding risks.

Conclusion

In closing, the serious fiscal uncertainties facing the City have real implications for the services all New Yorkers rely upon. Now more than ever, New York City needs a budget process that is transparent, realistic and focused on long-term stability. IBO remains committed to providing analysis to support policymaking and responsible fiscal management. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We welcome your questions.



ⁱ Federal funding also accounts for between 10% and 30% of the budgets for these seven Departments: Emergency Management, City Planning, Health & Mental Hygiene, Small Business Services, Aging, Homeless Services, and Social Services.

ⁱⁱ Based on a response by OMB Director Jacques Jaha on April 2, 2025 to a request from IBO Director Louisa Chafee, the City has made several requests to the State for funding for 2026. These include \$1 billion to cover costs of services for asylum seekers and \$1.9 billion for childcare assistance.





JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS

**TESTIMONY OF PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS
TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEES ON FINANCE AND
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION
APRIL 16, 2025**

Good morning,

My name is Jumaane D. Williams, Public Advocate for the City of New York. I want to thank Chairs Brannan and Restler and the members of the Committees on Finance, and Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation for holding this hearing today.

Every day, the Trump administration pushes our city and our country at large deeper into uncertainty. With actions taken from a playbook that aims to disrupt and unravel our very democracy, we find ourselves fielding attacks on several fronts: education, healthcare, our social safety nets, our economy, our civil and political rights. In light of these attacks, we must be proactive and this hearing is one vital step forward in ensuring that New York City can face the coming (and ongoing) crisis. There are many troubling developments I could comment on, but I will keep it limited to three main areas of concern: housing, cuts to scientific research and healthcare, and finally the attacks on our education system including the ongoing threats to the independence of our higher education institutions.

At a time when New York City faces a deep housing affordability crisis, cuts to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which left “just one field policy and management employee at the New York City office,” are not only deeply irresponsible but also unbelievably dismissive of the plight that every day New Yorkers face.¹ These cuts, directed by Elon Musk, who was neither appointed by Congress nor elected by the people, put countless New Yorkers in our public housing system at risk, with the remaining staff person at HUD unable to process rental assistance benefits and other housing related matters.

On the subject of healthcare, the Trump administration has effectively acted to upend decades of scientific progress and advances made in the eradication of dangerous diseases, not only here in the U.S. but around the world. Through a series of disastrous executive orders, this administration has suspended the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), dismantled the U.S. Department of Aid (USAID) and pulled us out of the World Health

¹ www.nydailynews.com/2025/03/10/huds-nyc-office-left-with-just-1-management-employee-after-trump-cuts/



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Organization (WHO). Compounding cuts have led to the closure of small clinics around the country and the suspension of countless research grants to our top research universities working on critical research in countless fields. Extensive cuts to Medicare and Medicaid are now being discussed as part of the effort to cut federal spending, imperiling the health of millions of New Yorkers. As a densely populated city, we know that New York City is incredibly vulnerable to health epidemics – it was only five years ago that the streets of our city were silent, COVID-19 ravaging our hospitals and upending our daily lives. We simply cannot leave ourselves defenseless and yet, this administration has left us vulnerable.

The dismantling of the Department of Education is particularly chilling; this threatens to not only disrupt the education of our children for years to come, but also their ability to take out loans and go to college, to take advantage of prestigious scholarships and fellowships that have served as foundational steppingstones for our country's diplomats, lawyers, elected officials, social workers and countless other professions. Revoking student visas, kidnapping students from campus dorms, withholding funds to extract concessions from school administrators – these attacks on our colleges and universities are part of a concerted effort to silence us and instill fear in our communities – especially our immigrant communities.

The federal government has already stripped New York City of \$80 million, but we face even deeper cuts and fiercer threats down the line. I am concerned that the Mayor has not taken the potential continuous federal cuts into consideration in preparing for budget negotiations. We must be prepared for the worst case scenario. I hope to learn in today's hearing what concrete steps the administration is taking to prepare the city against these threats. Additionally, I would like to know what needs have been identified and how my office and the Council body at large can assist in these preparations. Thank you.



NYSFAH Testimony
NYC Committees on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation and Finance
Joint Oversight Hearing: Preparing for Changes in Federal Funding
April 16, 2025

Thank you, Chairs Restler and Brannan and Committee Members, for the opportunity to testify regarding the City’s planning, risk mitigation and fiscal strategy in preparation for potential shifts in federal funding. I am Jolie Milstein, President and CEO of the New York State Association for Affordable Housing (NYSFAH).

NYSFAH was founded in 1998 by affordable housing industry professionals who had the foresight to recognize the need for a greater public-private partnership. We are a membership organization of over 400 businesses representing for-profit and not-for-profit developers, lenders, investors, attorneys, architects, and others active in the financing, construction, and operation of affordable housing.

I appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on the emergent issue of potential cuts to federal affordable housing programs and their devastating impact on New York City’s housing portfolio, economy, and future development.

As the City Council noted in its Fiscal Year 2026 Preliminary Response to the Mayor’s Budget, “Low vacancy rates, coupled with a lack of housing options for low- and middle-income residents, has led to a situation where 30 percent of all renters pay greater than 50 percent of their income on rent.” The report also rightly underscored, “High housing costs and limited housing options present a difficult choice for New Yorkers: Either find the means to pay for housing to remain in the city or leave.” As the City Council continues to prioritize greater investment in affordable housing, we must also be able to depend on our federal government partners to bring the full spectrum of resources to bear on solving the affordable housing crisis.

Federal aid through an array of capital and operating programs, rental housing assistance, and other grants and subsidies are the backbone of affordable housing production and preservation in our city. We can innovate and lead through landmark measures such as the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity, but to succeed we need the full backing of the federal government to further affordable housing production and preservation.

THREAT TO HOUSING PROGRAMS

The mere threat of cuts to key affordable housing programs, closure of U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Regional Offices and staffing reductions will raise uncertainty and lead to

increased financing costs, as lenders and investors are forced to quantify and mitigate risk. External factors such as potential fluctuations in federal funding and shifting political priorities affect market conditions and impact a developer's ability to secure funding and more favorable lending terms. The convergence of these factors only serves to exacerbate existing housing shortages and drive up already skyrocketing costs.

THREAT TO RENTAL ASSISTANCE

Delays and disruptions in rental assistance for low-income families who rely on Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers to remain stably housed are deep and far reaching. Housing providers must continue honoring lease terms and mitigate cash flow issues that negatively affect financial obligations and threaten overall property maintenance.

THREAT TO THE LOW-INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDIT (LIHTC)

We were encouraged by the recent introduction in the U.S. House of Representatives of the "Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act of 2025," a bipartisan measure that aims to improve federal LIHTC. However, we must remember that instability in the affordable housing market only serves to undermine these best efforts and the equity pricing of this critical investment tool. The viability of LIHTC-backed projects requires sustained and predictable federal support to attract private investment. Overall LIHTC allocations are imperative, but equally as important is creating a stable environment to ensure credits command the highest value to maximize affordable housing production.

THREAT TO THE INDUSTRY

The housing industry, from for-profit and not-for-profit developers to general contractors, lenders and local governments, depends on the reliability of federal investment. Disruption in funding would cause:

- **Delays or cancellations of shovel-ready projects**, costing thousands of construction and permanent jobs.
- **Financing gaps that deter private investors**, particularly in mixed-finance projects that combine LIHTC with Section 8 or other subsidies.
- **A chilling effect on future development**, as uncertainty makes long-term planning and lending riskier.
- **Stunted pipeline of affordable housing units**, worsening the shortage and pushing vulnerable residents further into housing insecurity.

We are already seeing signs of this disruption, such as lenders tightening underwriting standards, developers pausing projects midstream, and not-for-profit organizations bracing for a pullback in service delivery due to anticipated revenue shortfalls.

RISK MITIGATION & FISCAL STRATEGY

The risk mitigation and fiscal strategy in anticipation of potential federal funding cuts or policy disruptions must simultaneously commit to a strong advocacy campaign, but also a renewed pledge to strengthen the programs and policies within local and state purview.

1. Advocate against federal cuts to affordable housing in coordination with the Mayor's Office, State Legislature and Congressional delegation.
2. Enact a Ten-Year City Capital Strategy that commits to sustained investment in the out years to strengthen local housing investment and shield against the impact of any potential federal disinvestment.
3. Support the New York State Senate's one-house budget proposal to appropriate capital resources for an Affordable Housing Relief Fund that will help preserve at risk properties.
4. Work with the Mayor, the Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to release updated term sheets, financing terms and underwriting standards. This will allow for greater predictability and maximize development and preservation opportunities.
5. Accelerate the development process on the city level by streamlining the permitting process, reducing the number of agencies involved and cutting down on the time it takes to receive approvals. This will help get projects off the ground more quickly and reduce costs associated with holding land and maintaining project timelines. It will also allow for greater unit production.
6. Engage in cross-sector partnership with private lenders, philanthropy, and the development community to mitigate any federal disruption.

Affordable housing is not optional, it is an essential infrastructure. The city cannot build or preserve its way out of this crisis without sustained, dependable support from all levels of government. NYSFAH remains steadfast as a partner in delivering affordable housing opportunities for all New Yorkers.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comment.

Contact: Jolie Milstein, NYSFAH President/CEO, at jmilstein@nysafah.org or [REDACTED]

**Brooklyn
Headquarters**

150 Court St, 3rd Fl
Brooklyn, NY 11201
T: (718) 643-8000
F: (718) 797-0410

**Atlantic Ave
Community Center**

384-386 Atlantic Ave
Brooklyn, NY 11217
T: (718) 643-8000

Queens

37-10 30th St, 2nd Fl
Queens, NY 11101
T: (718) 643-8000
F: (347) 808-8778

Queens 2

37-14 30th St, 2nd Fl
Queens, NY 11101
T: (718) 643-8000
F: (347) 808-8778

Bronx

966 Morris Park Ave, 2nd Fl
Bronx, NY 10462
T: (718) 643-8000

**AAFSC @ the NYC Family
Justice Centers**

Bronx: (718) 508-1222
Brooklyn: (718) 250-5035
Manhattan: (212) 602-2800
Queens: (718) 575-4500
Staten Island: (718) 697-4300

**TESTIMONY OF THE ARAB AMERICAN FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER BEFORE
THE CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, STATE
& FEDERAL LEGISLATION JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
April 16, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chair Restler, and members of the Committee on Governmental Operations, State, and Federal Legislation. My name is Naima Dahir, and I am here on behalf of the Arab American Family Support Center (AAFSC). AAFSC provides culturally and linguistically competent, trauma-informed, multi-generational social services to the growing Arab, Middle Eastern, North African, Muslim, and South Asian (AMENAMSA) communities across NYC. With locations in all five boroughs and services available in over 30 languages, AAFSC provided comprehensive support to more than 20,000 individuals last year.

A few months into the new federal administration, devastating changes are already taking a toll on the communities we serve. As AAFSC continues to navigate these challenges, I am testifying today with an urgent request: Community-based organizations (CBOs) like AAFSC need your immediate support to continue serving vulnerable New Yorkers.

Federal Funding for Critical Services Is in Jeopardy

Our federally funded mental health and domestic violence case management programs are facing unprecedented uncertainty. Federal funding cuts—including anticipated reductions to the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)—threaten essential programs like our domestic violence case management program. With federal funding freezes and uncertainties, AAFSC faces a anticipated shortfall of **\$1.1 million**. Like many CBOs, AAFSC does not have an endowment or reserve funds to cover these gaps while waiting for federal decisions. If this funding disappears, critical services—including mental health counseling and domestic violence intervention—are at risk.

How NYC's Immigrant Communities Are Affected

As it's becoming increasingly challenging to do our work, we are also seeing a drastic increase in need. Recent federal policies have placed immigrant communities in immediate danger---eliminating protections for undocumented individuals, escalating enforcement actions, and limiting access to essential services. These policies disproportionately target the Muslim, Arab, Palestinian, Black, and South Asian communities we serve.

The federal administration's aggressive immigration agenda is becoming alarmingly clear. Quotas now require 75 ICE arrests per field office per day, while targeted deportations have been fast-tracked through the use of the Alien Enemies Act—stripping individuals of due process protections. Temporary Protected Status (TPS) has already been revoked for several countries, including Haiti and Venezuela, with more terminations expected. USCIS has mandated the registration of undocumented individuals, a move that raises serious concerns about surveillance and echoes troubling historical precedents. Additionally, the IRS has entered into an agreement with USCIS to share tax information for the purpose of immigration enforcement. Meanwhile, the mass revocation of student visas is yet another signal that this administration intends to criminalize and marginalize immigrant communities. These actions collectively send a chilling message: our neighbors are being deliberately targeted. We are bracing for widespread enforcement sweeps that will tear families apart, destabilize communities, and drive people further into the shadows—away from the services and protections they need most.

We are already seeing the impact:

- Students are afraid to leave shelters.
- Families are withdrawing from public benefits like food stamps due to fear of data sharing.
- Since inauguration day, we've seen an 80% increase in mental health referrals and a 20% increase in legal service requests.
- We risk losing \$1 million in federal funds, potentially forcing the furlough of 14 staff.
- Despite growing need, our ability to support survivors of domestic and gender-based violence with safety planning, housing support, legal aid, and crisis services is at serious risk. We currently support over 4,000 survivors each year.

In response, we have scaled our mental health, legal services, and community outreach efforts, strengthened security at our facilities, implementing double sets of locking doors to screen visitors and ensure that no enforcement action occurs without a judicial warrant. We have also trained our staff to respond appropriately should ICE officers attempt to enter our spaces.

Protecting AAFSC from Federal Harassment

We anticipate that federal agencies will intensify scrutiny of nonprofit organizations like ours, using audits and regulatory hurdles to disrupt services. To prepare, we are actively seeking **pro bono legal support** to review our policies, government contracts, insurance coverage, and regulatory reporting.

This work is unfunded but necessary to ensure that AAFSC remains a resource for thousands of vulnerable families across New York City.

How You Can Help

As a New York City Council Member, you are in a unique position to protect community-based organizations like AAFSC and the communities we serve. We urgently need the City's support to sustain our critical programming—especially our high-risk services, such as domestic violence case management and mental health support—which are essential to meeting the growing needs of immigrant communities and communities of color.

In addition to our full slate of FY 2026 funding requests, we want to underscore the urgent need to increase support for programs that are at risk due to anticipated federal cuts, particularly our federally-funded Anti-Violence Program and our SNAP Enrollment Program.

To that end, we respectfully request:

- **An increase to \$400,000 for our Anti-Violence Program through DOVE funding.** The city has long supported our city-wide domestic violence case management work and this year, we hope you will increase your support as the federal government cuts theirs.
- **An increase to \$150,000 for our SNAP Enrollment Program,** to offset the impact of anticipated federal funding reductions and ensure continued access to food assistance for low-income families.
- **Renewal of \$150,000 for our Mental Health Initiative** – AAPI Community Support, which offers direct, in-language counseling sessions for AAPI community members facing mental health challenges.
- **A first-time investment of \$85,000 for our Immigrant Support Initiative,** a comprehensive program providing legal services, adult education, mental health resources, and other essential supports for immigrant New Yorkers.

Now is the time for bold action. Our communities are scared, our resources are stretched thin, and the challenges ahead are immense. We ask for your partnership in ensuring that New York City stands strong against federal intimidation and continues to be a place of refuge for all.

We are grateful for your leadership and look forward to working together to protect the most vulnerable among us.



Asian American Federation

Committee on Finance, jointly with the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation The New York City Council

Written Testimony

Thank you, Chairs Restler and Brannan, and members of the City Council, for holding this important and timely hearing on Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding. My name is Andrew Sta. Ana. I am the Interim Co-Executive Director at the Asian American Federation, representing the collective voice of more than 70 member nonprofits serving 1.5 million Asian New Yorkers.

We are here today because New York's Asian community faces a trifecta of crises that signal the brewing of a coming storm: a sharp rise in anti-immigrant policies, wild swings in the economy from job losses to tariffs, and, of course, draconian cuts in federal funding. AND - While our member organizations continue to exhibit resilience and extraordinary courage in this unstable climate to serve, house, feed, educate, and protect low-income Asian New Yorkers, our community is signaling that the clouds are gathering and the sky is darkening. As the Council discusses the need to create a "Rainy Day" Fund, we believe that day is fast approaching.

Asian New Yorkers contribute to the vibrancy of New York City in myriad ways from businesses of all sizes, public service, education, healthcare, and culture. However, despite the model minority stereotype that inaccurately depicts Asian Americans' wealth and success, our community faces significant hardship.

- Two-thirds of Asian New Yorkers are foreign-born, and nearly 27% of our community is non-citizens.
- From 2010 to 2020, our population surged by 34.5%, yet one in three Asian residents lives in low-income households, and we are twice as likely to experience poverty compared to white New Yorkers.
- Overall, 48% of Asians have limited English proficiency in New York City, compared to a citywide rate of 23%.
- Currently, 42% of Asian older adults are low-income, making them among the city's poorest seniors.
- According to the Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence, up to 55% of Asian women in the U.S have experienced some form of physical or sexual violence in their

lifetime, while 18% of AAPI women experienced rape, physical violence or stalking by an intimate partner.

- Finally, in New York State, suicide is the second-leading cause of death for Asian Americans ages 15-24, and the third leading cause for Asian Americans ages 10-14 and 25-34. Research has also indicated that Asian Americans experience higher rates of depression as compared to White Americans.

Our member organizations provide a critical service bridge and human connection to our community that experiences fear, hunger, poverty, isolation, and hate violence. In addition, we know across the city that community members are hesitant to access services due to fears of unwarranted ICE raids. They are disenrolling from benefits, avoiding seeking medical care from hospitals, and disengaging from the community. Drastic cuts to federal funding to serve Asian New Yorkers will only make matters worse. Below are a handful of ways our member organizations rely on federal funds:

- To address food insecurity for older adults through the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)
- To put food on the table through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and funding for food pantries
- To protect survivors of domestic and sexual violence with language- and culturally competent services through the Office of Violence Against Women (OWV)..
- To educate low-income youth through HeadStart and other early childhood development and family-focused programming
- To house those most vulnerable and keep them out of shelter, through key Federal Block Grants.

AAF believes it is more critical than ever that the city reinforce its support for addressing these interconnected issues by supporting the community-based organizations that provide these services. From the turmoil and tragedy of 9/11 to the 2008 financial crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the resurgence of Asian violence, our member organizations have consistently protected our community and provided a literal lifeline.

Recommendations:

1. Protect funding for community-based organizations that have met the basic needs of our community members during ever-evolving times of crisis.
2. Strengthen partnerships with Asian-led, Asian-serving nonprofits that understand the needs of their communities to address long-term food insecurity, violence prevention, poverty; housing, social service and healthcare gaps.
3. Maintain Support AAF's work and priorities through:

- a. AAPI Community Support (**\$250,000**)
 - b. Communities of Color Non-Profit Stabilization Fund (**\$150,000**)
 - c. CUNY Citizenship NOW! Program (**\$250,000**)
 - d. Hate Crimes Prevention (**\$200,000**)
 - e. Immigrant Health Initiative (**\$100,000**)
 - f. Mental Health Services for Vulnerable Populations (**\$140,000**)
 - g. Speakers Initiative (**\$400,000**)
 - h. Support Our Older Adults (**\$100,000**)
 - i. Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative (**\$700,000**)
4. Support funding for the AAPI Community Support Initiative at **\$7.5 million**. AAF requests a budget allocation of **\$250,000** from this Initiative to support ongoing support for our Hope Against Hate Campaign.
 5. Continue to fund the Communities of Color Nonprofit Stabilization Fund at \$7.5 million. AAF requests a budget allocation of **\$150,000** from this initiative to support our technical assistance work.
 6. Fund the development of a worker cooperative for Asian language interpretation (**\$700,000**). We also ask, in partnership with African Communities Together, Masa, and New York Immigration Coalition, for **\$2.25 million** to support a community interpreter bank (CIB).
 7. Invest **\$120,000** to support the operation and expansion of AAF's small business programs, such as technical assistance and merchant organizing.

Finally, during oral testimony, in response to a question about community members' fear of accessing services, I discussed the urgent need for language-accessible and culturally competent legal services. Below, I have outlined a request AAF has made to the City Council to bolster the need for Immigration Legal Services.

Implementing RISE: Rapid Immigrant Support and Empowerment Program to Protect Vulnerable Asian Immigrants

AAF's leadership also developed a solid infrastructure to respond to attacks on New York's vibrant immigrant community. Between 2017-2019, AAF built a rapid response network with 10 Asian-led, Asian-serving nonprofits to increase access to immigration legal services for low-income, vulnerable Asian New Yorkers. In FY 2026, our **RISE: Rapid Immigrant Support and Empowerment** initiative will leverage our track record to implement a multi-pronged rapid response program to increase Asian immigrants' access to critical immigration-related services and support the nonprofits that serve them. Specifically, we will: 1) Convene an Immigration Referral Network by strengthening the internal capacity of our member nonprofits to provide immigration-related services, connecting organizations to legal service groups, creating stronger networks with experts, and supporting community education and outreach projects. This network

will enhance case management support for limited-English-proficient individuals and families. 2) Provide Know Your Rights and best practices compliance training to Asian-serving groups, equipping them with the knowledge and resources needed to protect their clients and organizations. 3) Launch an in-language media strategy to combat rampant misinformation and disinformation within Asian communities regarding immigration policies and their impact—or lack thereof—on public benefits and public systems.

By integrating these efforts, we will create a more robust and coordinated support system for Asian immigrants and the organizations that serve them.

The challenges are complex, and we recognize no easy answers. Please hold the line for New York City as we weather what may come together. Thank you for your vital and courageous leadership at this time.

Testimony for New York City Council Hearing on Federal Funding

Submitted by Sabrina Hargrave, Vice President of Programs, Brooklyn Org (BKO)

Good morning Chairs Brannan and Restler and members of the Committees of Finance and Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation. My name is Sabrina Hargrave and I am the Vice President of Programs at Brooklyn Org - a partner and platform for local philanthropy, supporting Brooklyn's nonprofits by giving everyone a part to play in creating change from the ground up. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Brooklyn's rich diversity makes it a true microcosm of New York City, and thus a powerful lens through which to understand the impacts already being felt in our communities by an arbitrary halt of federal funding to the city's nonprofits.

From legal aid providers safeguarding constitutional due process rights to community organizers supporting our most vulnerable neighbors, Brooklyn's nonprofit sector has increasingly shouldered responsibilities that fundamentally belong to government - while being forced to do more with ever-dwindling resources.

We're witnessing alarming consequences of the current political climate – surging demands for mental health services, vulnerable community members too fearful to collect weekly groceries from food pantries, residents missing critical medical appointments, and children withdrawing from supportive youth programs that provide essential stability.

As federal funding faces unprecedented volatility, our city must recognize that when we outsource essential public services to nonprofits, we inherit an obligation to ensure their financial stability. When City Hall delegates its fundamental duties to community organizations, it must follow through with sustainable funding—not as charity, but as fulfillment of its core responsibility to the residents of Brooklyn and beyond.

Today, nonprofits need reassurance that they will have the resources to operate. Our role at Brooklyn Org is to stand firm, provide stability, and mobilize greater support in this moment of crisis. We are committed to working relentlessly to serve as a counterweight to the chaos.

We will work to galvanize donors and stakeholders to increase their giving and fund nonprofits at higher levels to close the gaps that the federal government creates.

However, this cannot be our burden alone—the City must embrace its role as a true partner, matching our commitment with meaningful fiscal support and policy action that recognizes nonprofits not as vendors, but as essential collaborators in meeting our shared obligation to our communities.

Again, I thank the committee Chairs and members for the opportunity to stand here before you today and appreciate your consideration of this testimony.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

191 Joralemon Street, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Testimony of Joseph Rosenberg, Executive Director Catholic Community Relations Council

**New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations and the Committee on Finance
Preparing NYC for changes in Federal Funding
April 16, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chair Brannan, Chair Restler and members of the Finance Committee and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation. I am Joseph Rosenberg, the Executive Director of Catholic Community Relations Council (“CCRC”) representing the Archdiocese of New York and the Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens on local legislative and political matters.

Thank you for holding this hearing. Its focus could not be timelier.

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York and Catholic Charities of Brooklyn and Queens have been providing shelter, food, and clothing to New Yorkers for more than one century, not just during disasters such as Superstorm Sandy and the COVID 19 pandemic, but on every day of every year. We also assist thousands of immigrants in New York with legal services and operate the New Americans Hotline and the MOIA Immigration Legal Support Hotline that serve more than 160,000 people annually.

In late March we were notified that 80% of our legal services contract with the federal government to assist unaccompanied minors was being terminated, resulting in the loss of \$4.3 million. We also learned that our \$1.45 million federal contract to provide workshops, legal consultation as well as pro se assistance in NYC’s three Immigration Courts has been cancelled. We will try to find ways to continue to represent unaccompanied minors and asylum seekers without having to rely on the federal government, but it will be a daunting and long-term challenge.

Both Catholic Charities combined operate over 80 food pantries throughout the 5 boroughs and serve more than 8 million meals annually. We have faced many challenges assisting New Yorkers over the last century, but we currently face a crisis in hunger and food insufficiency that we have not seen before. This is due to the rising poverty rate of New Yorkers, the dramatic increase of New Yorkers who are rent burdened, and even more significantly, the unprecedented federal attacks on many programs that protect our clients. Two of these are the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)

SNAP provides essential funding to address food insecurity for vulnerable Americans. The proposed Congressional reduction of nearly \$230 billion from the program is particularly troubling and will have significant consequences by increasing the number of Americans who face hunger on a daily basis.

The Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) is also a crucial federal resource for our food programs. This program was placed on “hold” by the federal government in March, and as a result, both Catholic Charities have sustained a loss of over \$850,000 each, a challenging blow to our ability to feed our clients.

We have seen the number of New Yorkers at food pantries increase significantly. We are not just assisting more working families, seniors, and children at our pantries. Newer clients include college students, recent college graduates who are either unemployed or underemployed, youth aging out of foster care and new migrants, many of them with infants.

The plight of hungry children is particularly heartbreaking, with more than 1 in 4 children in our City living in poverty. This is why with more New Yorkers going hungry, we urge that \$20 million in emergency funding for food pantries be included in FY'26 New York City Budget for both Catholic Charities as well as our partners, Met Council, and the Hispanic Federation.

While the skyrocketing increase in food insecurity caused by the pandemic has partially subsided, demand remains extremely elevated from pre-pandemic levels. Spurred on by rapid food inflation, our clients, as well as the pantries serving them, have all been negatively impacted financially.

As a result, we have difficulty providing as much fresh food to clients as in previous years due to increased costs. With more New Yorkers relying upon our pantries, we are often forced to distribute dry goods and canned and jarred products rather than fresh produce to ensure that clients do not leave empty handed.

An additional challenge that all nonprofit human service providers face is the lack of prompt payment when awarded social service contracts. With unprecedented federal budget cuts targeted at nonprofits, it is especially important that the City expedites all late contract payments. Otherwise, New Yorkers will not receive the services they need. There is no justification for funds to be provided months or years after a contract has been awarded, and to tolerate a "business as usual" mentality when it comes to paying providers especially during these unprecedented times.

Our City faces daunting challenges but few of us would disagree that one of our most important priorities must be to ensure that the residents of our City do not go hungry. We therefore call for your support in including this essential \$20 million emergency food pantry program in the FY'26 City Budget.

Thank you.



520 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10018
p. 646.386.3100
f. 212.397.0985

Courtney Bryan, Chief Executive Officer

innovatingjustice.org

**Center for Justice Innovation
New York City Council
Joint Committees on Finance and
Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation
April 16, 2025**

Good morning Chairs Brannan, Restler, and esteemed members of the Committees on Finance and Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation. My name is Hailey Nolasco and I serve as the Senior Director of Government Relations for the Center for Justice Innovation (the Center). Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Each year, millions of people struggling with substance use, mental illness, housing insecurity, and other life challenges cycle through the criminal justice system. Yet typical responses to crime like fines and incarceration often fail to address these root causes, leaving people no better off than when they came into the system.

The Center provides community-based programming that improves public safety and connects young people and adults to resources like mental health counseling, addiction treatment, housing and employment support and more. Our programs work to address the underlying conditions that result in justice system involvement with the ultimate goal of creating safer communities.

We have long advocated for a community-based approach to public safety, focused on providing individuals with the tools necessary to live safely and successfully in community. While we recognize the looming risks to the funding that supports such programming, we urge the Council to continue supporting this vital work, rather than reverting to carceral responses.

For more than 30 years, we have partnered with courts in New York, New Jersey, and across the country to develop evidence-based alternatives that promote safety, accountability, and better outcomes for both participants and their communities. Our teams work throughout all stages of involvement with the criminal legal system, using community level engagement and working within systems to connect people to community-based services that meet their underlying needs and reduce the likelihood of future harm.

Some of our programs, like Project Reset, focus on building pathways out of the justice system and into community-based care for people charged with low-level crimes, often before they step foot in court. Others, like the Brooklyn Mental Health Court and Manhattan Justice

Opportunities, offer safe, meaningful alternatives to jail and prison for people dealing with more complex needs.

We work with the court, local prosecutors, defense attorneys and community-based service providers to address an array of participant needs, including complex mental health, substance use, employment, and housing needs. Clinicians and other onsite staff conduct independent assessments; prepare recommendations for programming and supervision; provide referrals to community-based providers; offer rigorous ongoing case management, supervision, and compliance monitoring; and pilot new services. Ultimately, we work to end the cycle of harm, reduce the use of prison and jail, decrease recidivism and achieve lasting public safety and community wellness

The data from our Alternative to Incarceration (ATI) programming shows that the City's collective desires to produce safer communities and decrease incarceration are not at odds with each other. Our programs boast high levels of compliance as well as meaningful impacts on recidivism. In 2024, 82 percent of our Felony ATI participants across the Center completed their programming successfully. Since inception, 75 percent of successful participants in the Center's Manhattan Justice Opportunities Felony ATI program graduated with no criminal record. 95 percent were able to avoid a felony conviction.¹

At Brooklyn Mental Health Court, which specifically serves those with serious mental illness, over 1,400 participants have received treatment, satisfied program requirements, and graduated, all outside of the carceral setting. Active participants had a 76 percent compliance rate, along with a statistically significant reduction in re-arrests for active participants; and a 17 percent reduction in likelihood of reconviction versus a comparison group.² Additionally, the Court-Involved Youth Mental Health initiative of Brooklyn Mental Health Court provides specialized support to youth ages 18 to 24, who have unique social and cognitive needs and represent a growing percentage of the cases we serve. Since 2017, more than 191 youth in this age range have been served by Brooklyn Mental Health Court.³

Our Alternatives to Incarceration programming boasts similar results for lower level crimes. Our misdemeanor ATIs feature the same rigorous monitoring and case management in addition to tailored referrals to services. The Center also manages Project Reset, which offers people a meaningful path out of the legal system before they even appear in court. Participants complete community-based programming, based on restorative justice principles, avoiding the negative impacts to housing, employment, and education that a traditional court process or brief period of incarceration could have.

From 2015 through 2024, Project Reset has helped more than 10,000 cases avoid court and the consequences of a criminal record, and 5,500 cases last year alone. This figure includes

¹ Center for Justice Innovation. (2025). Justice Center Application and Reset referral database. [Data file].

² Rossman, S.B., J. Buck Willison, K. Mallik Kane, K. Kim, S. Debus-Sherrill & P.M. Downey (2012, July). Criminal Justice Interventions for Offenders with Mental Illness: Evaluation of Mental Health Courts in Bronx and Brooklyn, New York. New York, NY: Urban Institute.
<https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/25576/412603-Criminal-Justice-Interventions-for-Offenders-With-Mental-Illness-Evaluation-of-Mental-Health-Courts-in-Bronx-and-Brooklyn-New-York.PDF>

³ Center for Justice Innovation. (2025). Brooklyn Mental Health Court Database. [Data file].

our traditional pre-arraignment model of Project Reset, as well as our same-day at-arraignment Rapid Reset programming. This Rapid Reset model has become increasingly popular, as clients are not always able to be reached prior to their appearance in court. Despite this, with the Rapid Reset model, clients can still earn a “decline to prosecute” by completing programming, simply at-arraignment rather than before.

As of 2024, the program has a 96 percent attendance rate of those scheduled.⁴ An evaluation of 16- and 17-year-old Project Reset participants in Manhattan found they were significantly less likely than defendants in a comparison group to be convicted of a new crime within one year. It also documented improved case processing times and case outcomes, as well as positive perceptions of the program. More than 95 percent of participants said they had made the right decision by entering the program and that they would recommend Project Reset to someone in a similar situation.⁵

These programs hold people accountable for their actions while promoting healing and strengthening public trust in the justice system. As evidenced by the reduction in re-arrests and convictions, these programs solve the problems that result in justice system involvement and benefit individuals and communities for years to come.

Should federal funding cuts come to fruition, we respectfully request that City Council steps up to fill the financial hole. New Yorkers rely on these programs to decrease recidivism and produce safer, healthier communities. We cannot backtrack on years of progress, particularly in light of the mandate to close Rikers Island. Alternative-to-Incarceration programs are an essential component of this conversation. The data shows that these programs are effective at reducing recidivism and diminishing incarceration. Just one of our programs, Manhattan Justice Opportunities Felony ATI program, has prevented at least 700 collective years of incarceration with 291 successful graduates.⁶ We urge Council to remain steadfast in their commitment to these life changing programs.

⁴ Center for Justice Innovation. (2025). Justice Center Application and Reset referral database. [Data file].

⁵ Cadoff, B. & K. Dalve (2019, January). *Project Reset: An Evaluation of a Pre-Arraignment Diversion Program in New York City*. New York, NY: Center for Justice Innovation.
<https://www.innovatingjustice.org/publications/projectreset-evaluation>

⁶ Center for Justice Innovation. (2025). Justice Center Application and Reset referral database. [Data file].



240 West 35th Street ■ Suite 302 ■ New York, New York 10001

How New York City Should Prepare for Changes in Federal Funding

Submitted to the New York City Council, Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation and Committee on Finance

April 16, 2025

Andrew S. Rein, President, Citizens Budget Commission

Good morning. I am Andrew Rein, President of the Citizens Budget Commission (CBC), a nonpartisan, nonprofit think tank and watchdog devoted to constructive change in the finances, services, and policies of New York State and City governments. Thank you for the opportunity to offer recommendations on how the City should prepare for federal funding and policy changes.

The range of possible federal cuts is broad and the magnitude uncertain. Cuts in direct funding to City government will not be the only challenge. Possible funding reductions will affect the State, New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), and NYC Health + Hospitals (H+H), as well as New Yorkers who directly receive benefits from the federal government, including SNAP and enhanced Obamacare premium subsidies.

Additionally, regulatory changes and economic policies such as tariffs could lead to higher inflation and a greater chance of a recession, as a growing number of economists have warned.

CBC urges a proactive, forward-looking response to protect New Yorkers. The City should prepare now while resources remain available and flexibility remains intact. Waiting for clarity on which specific risks pan out would not be fiscally prudent and only increase potential harm to New Yorkers.

Federal aid cuts could have profound impacts. Federal aid comprises \$7.4 billion of the City's Fiscal Year 2026 Preliminary Budget, including funds for educating low-income students, childcare vouchers, school food programs, and family shelters.

NYCHA relied on \$1.4 billion in federal operating support for public housing last year, while \$2.7 billion in federal funds supported more than 133,000 housing vouchers across NYCHA and the City.

Additionally, the State receives \$91 billion from the federal government, primarily for public health insurance—Medicaid, the Essential Plan providing health coverage for lower income New Yorkers and certain immigrants, and Child Health Plus—as well as education. In response to federal aid cuts, the State may reduce its aid to the City or services it directly runs, such as unemployment insurance and State parks. Additionally, Medicaid and Essential Plan cuts may sap H+H revenues, while increasing demand for its services if New Yorkers lose public health insurance coverage.

The City will not be able to backfill all federal reductions. Rather, it should preserve the services that provide the most critical support for high-need New Yorkers, our economy, and quality of life. The City may rightly choose to shift funds from other programs to cover federal reductions to critical services, meaning federally funded programs are not the only ones at risk.

CBC recommends that the City:

1. Hold the line on new spending in the Executive and Adopted Budgets;
2. Buttress the General Reserve with at least another \$1 billion in fiscal year 2026 to help absorb the immediate blow of federal cuts;
3. Strengthen the Rainy Day Fund by depositing \$500 million and reserve the Fund for a short-term emergency like a recession, not for temporary mitigation of recurring federal cuts;
4. Implement a Program to Eliminate the Gap (PEG) to restrain spending growth, focused on streamlining administration, increasing efficiency, and shrinking programs that deliver less value to residents; and
5. End the budget gimmickry and present accurate, reasonable estimates of expenses and revenue, as required by the City Charter.

These recommendations do not call for blind austerity—they are designed to strategically manage risk, protect critical services New Yorkers need, and build resilience.

Unfortunately, these actions are more challenging because the City has already increased spending to levels it cannot afford in the future, even without federal cuts. The City spent \$1.1 billion more on fiscal year 2024 obligations than it received. Furthermore, the City has obfuscated its budget challenges. Underbudgeting has grown to \$4 billion a year, which understates future budget gaps by billions of dollars.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I would be happy to answer any questions.

ADDENDUM: Federal Funding for New York and New Yorkers (Selected)

New York City Budget

The fiscal year 2026 budget, as of the January Preliminary Budget, includes \$7.4 billion in federal funding. Two-thirds of this funding supports the Department of Education (\$1.9 billion), Department of Social Services (\$1.6 billion), and Administration for Children’s Services (\$1.3 billion). (See Table 1 for agency-level information and major federal grants.)

Services such as childcare vouchers, school food programs, and family shelters rely substantially on federal aid. While agencies that receive the most funding from the federal government may experience the largest budget impacts, federal revenue supports operations across the City and reductions could also affect smaller agencies. For example, although only 1 percent of the City’s federal revenue is allocated to the Department for the Aging, these funds account for 18 percent of that department’s fiscal year 2026 budget. Furthermore, if the City shifts funding to preserve high-priority services currently supported by federal aid, funding for current City-funded programs would be reduced.

Direct Aid to New Yorkers

A number of federal programs provide benefits directly to New Yorkers outside of the City budget. These support 1.8 million New York City residents receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, 351,000 receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), 152,000 receiving temporary cash assistance, and 88,000 enrolled in qualified health plans and receiving premium subsidies under the Affordable Care Act.

New York State

A reduction in federal aid to the State could affect City residents, through reductions in State aid to the City (of either federal pass-through aid or State funds), or reductions in services directly to City residents, such as unemployment insurance, parks, public health, road and bridge projects, higher education, and mental health.

The State expects to receive \$91 billion in federal aid for fiscal year 2026. The area most at risk is health care, given federal proposals to reduce spending in this area and the substantial funds the federal government provides New York for health programs. Approximately 80 percent of federal aid to New York State is for Medicaid (\$58 billion), the Essential Plan, which covers lower income New Yorkers not eligible for Medicaid and some immigrants (\$13 billion), and Child Health Plus (\$2 billion). These programs provide health insurance to 5.3 million City residents: 4 million covered by Medicaid, 1 million covered by the Essential Plan, and 254,000 covered by Child Health Plus. Many City health care providers also rely heavily on Medicaid reimbursement. For example, Medicaid provides more than half of patient services revenues for safety net hospitals in the City.

Federal aid also supports a portion of all other areas of the State budget, including \$2.9 billion for capital spending on State-owned roads and bridges. Reduction of federal funds to the State not only jeopardizes those areas that rely on those funds directly but all areas of the budget, as the State may need to shift State funds to cover critical needs.

New York City Housing Authority

Last year, \$1.4 billion in federal public housing operating subsidies comprised 45 percent of NYCHA's operating budget. NYCHA also receives approximately \$730 million a year in federal capital subsidies for public housing properties. NYCHA also runs the nation's largest Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, which received nearly \$2 billion in federal funds to pay rental subsidies for over 96,000 units in 2024. This is separate and in addition to the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development's Section 8 program, which expects \$703 million in federal funding this year to provide housing vouchers to over 37,000 households.

NYCHA's Preservation Trust and Permanent Affordability Commitment Together programs rely on multiple federal housing programs, including vouchers authorized under the Rental Assistance Demonstration program, tax-exempt bond financing, and multifamily lending programs of the government-sponsored entities like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which may be privatized.

NYC Health + Hospitals

The City has been increasing its support of H+H. Reductions to federal funding for health services could significantly affect H+H, leaving the City to make a choice of whether to provide additional City support.

In fiscal year 2024, the City provided \$925 million to H+H in unrestricted subsidy and funding for collective bargaining. This is more than double the \$398 million provided in fiscal year 2022. The City also paid \$290 million for H+H debt service in fiscal year 2024.

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

While the MTA does not receive federal funds to pay for operations, federal resources support a significant share of its capital investment. Federal funds have ranged from 20.1 percent to 29.5 percent of the last three MTA five-year capital plans, totaling \$27.3 billion over 15 years.

The MTA includes \$14 billion in federal funding for its 2025-2029 Capital Plan, which is focused on the critical investment needed to get to and keep the system functioning reliably and safely. Any shortfall in federal support will impede the system's ability to fund essential capital projects and may have a great impact on the MTA's infrastructure and daily operations. Further, congestion pricing is expected to support \$15 billion of funding for the 2020-2024 Capital Plan and remains at risk.

NYC Fiscal Year 2026 Federal Revenue Budget Including Detail for Grants Greater than \$100 Million, as of January 2025 Financial Plan

(dollars in millions)

Agency (Federal Grant)	Federal Revenue	Share of Total
Department of Education	\$1,965	27%
Title I	\$679	9%
Free & Reduced Price Lunch	\$423	6%
Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA)	\$291	4%
School Breakfast Program	\$115	2%
Other Federal Grants	\$457	6%
Department of Social Services	\$1,621	22%
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	\$984	13%
Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid)	\$247	3%
Other Federal Grants	\$390	5%
Administration for Children's Services	\$1,254	17%
Child Care & Development Block Grant	\$513	7%
Foster Care, Protection, and Prevention (Title IV-E)	\$295	4%
Social Services Block Grant (Title XX)	\$176	2%
Adoption Assistance	\$102	1%
Other Federal Grants	\$168	2%
Housing Preservation and Development	\$712	10%
Section 8 Housing Vouchers	\$606	8%
Other Federal Grants	\$107	1%
Department of Homeless Services	\$622	8%
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	\$614	8%
Other Federal Grants	\$8	0%
Mayoralty	\$367	5%
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	\$295	4%
Other Federal Grants	\$72	1%
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene	\$302	4%
Debt Service	\$118	2%
Build America Bonds Reimbursement	\$118	2%
Department of Youth and Community Development	\$98	1%
Department of Transportation	\$90	1%
Department for the Aging	\$76	1%
All other agencies	\$146	2%
Total	\$7,371	100%

Note: Reflects federal funds by revenue agency. Revenue of one agency may be used to fund programs in other agencies, such as the Community Development Block Grant which is revenue of the Mayoralty but funds programs at many agencies, including the Department of City Planning, and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

Source: City of New York, Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, *January 2025 Financial Plan: Revenue* (January 16, 2025).



TESTIMONY OF CITYMEALS ON WHEELS

**Before the New York City Council Committee on Finance and New York City Council
Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation**

Chair Justin Brannan and Chair Lincoln Restler

Joint Oversight – Preparing New York City for Changes in Federal Funding

April 16, 2025

Submitted by:

Emma Bessire

Senior Associate, Policy and Advocacy

Citymeals on Wheels

Citymeals on Wheels works in partnership with the City and the network of home-delivered meals providers to fill a significant gap in the City's nutrition services for homebound older adults. In addition, Citymeals is a citywide emergency responder bringing food to homebound older adults in localized and citywide emergencies and supporting the most vulnerable older New Yorkers with additional food programs. In FY24, Citymeals provided over 2 million meals to 22,000 older adults across all five boroughs.

Of the 1.8 million people aged 60 and older in New York City, 18% live below the poverty line and an increasing number are immigrants, women, and people living alone with limited social support.¹ Food insecurity among older New Yorkers has emerged as a crisis and existing nutrition assistance programs such as food pantries and SNAP are largely inaccessible to older adults who are unable to shop for groceries regularly or prepare their own meals. And our recent research found that the City's congregate and home-delivered meals programs simply do not go far enough with 60% still experiencing some level of food insecurity.²

Citymeals is just one of many organizations that is set to lose some federal funding in FY26. Federal threats to SNAP, Medicaid, the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (ESFP), and others

¹ [1 U.S. Census Bureau. 2022. Population 60 Years and Over in the United States. American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0102. Accessed at: https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S0102?q=S0102&g=160XX00US3651000](https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S0102?q=S0102&g=160XX00US3651000)

² [Older Adult Hunger, Food Services, and SNAP Participation in New York City. Citymeals and CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute, 2024](#)

have plunged the sector into uncertainty about what programs will remain open and the future of nutrition assistance. As the Council and the Administration work to negotiate their priorities in response to this challenge to our City's safety net infrastructure, we cannot lose sight of the needs of homebound older New Yorkers, who experience hunger out of sight and behind closed doors. Therefore, we respectfully request that the Council:

1. **Restore over \$100m in cuts to NYC Aging's Budget.**
2. **Pass Intro. 770 and invest \$20.6 million** to expand the City's home-delivered meals program so it provides a meal 365 days a year.
3. **Invest \$57 million in congregate meal programs** at Older Adult Centers and \$7.3 million in home-delivered meals programs.
4. **Increase baseline funding for the Community Food Connection (CFC) to \$100 million.**
5. **Renew \$500,000 in funding for Citymeals' emergency food program** through the Council's Older Adult Clubs, Programs, and Enhancements initiative.

The two main food programs targeting older New Yorkers generally provide one prepared meal on weekdays only; one program operates in a congregate setting at Older Adult Centers, and the other provides home-delivery of these meals to those who cannot regularly get to a center. Last year, 153,220 older New Yorkers attended an older adult center and 24,472 received home-delivered meals (HDM).³ These food programs were established in 1965 through the Older Americans Act, which still only requires that they serve one meal a day, five days a week. We have long known that this falls short in meeting the needs of the most food insecure older adults who cannot regularly access additional food. In a national survey from 2018, 66 percent of home-delivered and 54 percent of congregate meal recipients reported that these meals provide half or more of their daily food intake.⁴

³ Preliminary Mayor's Management Report. January 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/operations/downloads/pdf/pmmr2024/dfta.pdf>

⁴ Administration on Community Living. FY18 Older Americans Act Report to Congress. Accessed at: https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/about-acl/2021-06/ACL_FY2018%20OAA%20Report%20to%20Congress.pdf

While other food programs such as SNAP and food pantries are available and used by many older adults, they were not designed to meet the needs of the most vulnerable who are not regularly able to shop for groceries, prepare food, or cook their own meals. Furthermore, as federal funding for food pantries is paused, rescinded, or discontinued and programs like SNAP are cut, any assistance these programs did provide will be limited. We have already heard directly from meal recipients that they are afraid their regular home-delivered meals will not continue. We know that without that one meal a day, hunger will increase dramatically, worsening an already severe crisis of food insecurity among older New Yorkers.

The House of Representatives is seeking to cut \$230 billion of the USDA's budget over the next 10 years. Meanwhile, \$880 billion in funding under the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which includes Medicaid, is at risk.⁵ A draft budget from the Trump administration also revealed plans to eliminate the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which helps people pay their energy bills and lower costs with home improvements.⁶ For homebound older adults who are unable to get to cooling centers in New York City's summer months, this is especially dangerous. To compound attacks on our safety net, \$40 billion in cuts have been proposed to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, impacting Section 8 vouchers.⁷ For low-income, homebound older adults, losing or having any of these benefits reduced would drastically impact their ability to pay for food to stay healthy.

In addition to cuts to funding, reductions in workforce and the elimination of the Administration for Community Living (ACL), which coordinates aging services across the country, will hugely impact the ability of programs like home-delivered meals to operate.⁸ As many as 10,000 jobs were cut at the Department of Health and Human Services, which houses ACL and will result in a loss of knowledge and coordination of the programs that help older adults age in place through the Older Americans Act.

⁵ [What is Medicaid and why is it a Republican target for cuts? | CNN Politics](#)

⁶ [Trump administration eyes elimination of program that helps low-income people heat and cool their homes](#)

⁷ [White House Eyes Overhaul of Federal Housing Aid to the Poor - The New York Times](#)

⁸ [RFK Jr. Plans 10,000 HHS Job Cuts in Major Restructuring of Health Department - WSJ](#)

All these factors are certain to negatively impact older New Yorkers, who already must make decisions about spending their money on health care, rent, and food. Our recent survey of the City’s participants in home-delivered and congregate meal programs found that 65% of respondents were living on \$15,000 or less annually. A majority of respondents reported receiving SNAP benefits, yet one third said that it was not enough to meet their needs. Only 18% reported using a food pantry, with one focus group respondent sharing, “I can only access [pantries] when there are volunteers that bring it to me.”⁹ *Our infrastructure is already failing homebound older adults. We must be doing more to address food insecurity among this population, such as funding a 365-day HDM program, mobile grocery deliveries, and an additional meal per day for those with the highest need.* Citymeals has piloted two new programs to address this heightened need: a 30-meal monthly Breakfast Box and an 18-meal mobile grocery delivery offering some client choice.

Privately-funded organizations like Citymeals can play a critical role in this moment. We stand ready to meet the needs of homebound older adults who will likely see the programs they rely on diminished. We have a proven track record of serving vulnerable New Yorkers, especially in times of crisis. As one of the city’s designated emergency responders, we have the flexibility and experience to get nutritious food to those most in need. Since our founding, Citymeals has never turned anyone away and we are committed to never refusing a request from a provider for emergency meals, even as federal funding cuts threaten nutrition programs. We expect that these wide-ranging cuts and the elimination of ACL will impact providers and force some to cut services, resulting in an increased demand for our emergency meals. We are prioritizing filling that need in the coming year.

Citymeals stands ready to continue our emergency food response as necessitated by ongoing federal cuts that threaten the very existence of many of our provider partners and hope that we can count on our partners in government to do the same. As the City braces for federal cuts, we must prioritize those in most need for the resources we do have. Home-delivered meals, for example, is a hugely impactful program. Our recent research showed that 87% of participants

⁹ [Older Adult Hunger, Food Services, and SNAP Participation in New York City. Citymeals and CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute, 2024](#)

say that HDM allow them to remain in their homes, 85% say that it helps them eat more healthily, and 81% say that they help them manage one or more health conditions.¹⁰ A full year of home-delivered meals costs the equivalent of just one week in a hospital or a month in a nursing facility. Investing in this program is a smart and effective way to support older New Yorkers who will deeply feel the impact of federal cuts.

Given the rapidly rising number of older New Yorkers and years of disinvestment in aging programs, any further cuts would be devastating to older New Yorkers. **We call on City Council to restore over \$100 million in funding to NYC Aging, fund the Community Food Connection at a baseline of \$100 million, invest \$20.6 million in a 365-day home-delivered meal program and \$57 million in congregate meal programs. We also ask that the Council renew funding for Citymeals' emergency meals program.** The CFC and the City's home-delivered and congregate meal programs are lifelines to this city's older adults, and our emergency meals program, along with our pilot programs, will be a critical resource when federal cuts impact providers. We must strengthen these lines of defense against food insecurity, which will only continue to deepen as federal programs are cut. In addition to funding these necessary programs, we urge the City Council to advocate against any cuts to the Older Americans Act, Medicaid, and SNAP with their federal counterparts. To maintain an effective safety net and eliminate service gaps, we must upgrade our infrastructure and ensure that the City's food programs are accessible to older adults and present a comprehensive approach to hunger.

¹⁰ [Older Adult Hunger, Food Services, and SNAP Participation in New York City. Citymeals and CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute, 2024](#)



Blanca J. Ramirez
President/CEO

Comunilife, Inc.
Testimony to the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Hello, my name is Blanca Ramirez, and I am the President and CEO of Comunilife. I would like to thank the Council members for the opportunity to present testimony to the Committee on Finance, in collaboration with the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation, today. I appreciate your leadership on issues that significantly affect New York City's housing and social service organizations.

Comunilife, which opened in 1989, is a non-profit organization in New York City dedicated to providing vulnerable residents with housing and culturally sensitive supportive services. We believe that no one should be without the housing and support necessary to lead a healthy, meaningful life. Our programs assist over 4,000 New York City residents each year, ranging from Latina teens as young as 11 at risk of suicide to 90-year-old formerly homeless seniors living with mental illness, many of whom have been residents of Comunilife supportive housing for over 30 years.

Although Comunilife receives limited direct federal funding, we are deeply concerned about the potential impact of cuts from the federal government. These funding reductions could lead to a significant decrease in essential resources, ultimately compromising the delivery of vital housing, healthcare, and social and educational services to our city's most vulnerable residents. The ripple effects of these budgetary changes could hinder our ability to support those in need, even without direct federal assistance. If the City loses federal funding for NYCHA, schools, healthcare, and senior services, it will be forced to make difficult funding decisions regarding which services and populations will have access to programs. In a worst case scenario, Comunilife would be forced to lay off 47% of our staff.

We are worried that our 1,100 units of city-funded supportive housing may face contract reductions or cuts, which could lead to the complete closure of programs or significant limitations that would force us to choose between staffing the programs or providing rental subsidies. Both scenarios would result in formerly homeless individuals—the most vulnerable New Yorkers—losing the support systems that help them remain stably housed and out of hospitals. In a short period, the City's budget would be further impacted by increased emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and a rise in the shelter population. Further, the loss of City funding could endanger the lives of 300 vulnerable teens annually who receive suicide prevention activities through our Life is Precious™ program. LIP's closure could result in increased suicide behaviors and hospitalizations. Ultimately it could result in unnecessary death.

It is my hope that the City council will make every effort to maintain services on which millions of New York City residents rely.

Thank you

For questions/more information: Illyse Kaplan, VP of Development, ikaplan@comunilife.org



Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies

**Written Testimony Submitted by:
Dr. Sophie Charles
Associate Executive Director, Downstate**

**New York City Council Committee on Finance
Jointly with the Committee on Governmental Operations,
State & Federal Legislation
Wednesday, April 16, 2025**

The Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA) serves as the principal representative for nearly all not-for-profit organizations that provide foster care, adoption, family preservation, and juvenile justice services in New York State. COFCCA is comprised of over 100-member organizations, varying in size from small community-based programs to the nation's largest multi-service agencies, all united by the mission of serving children and families. More than 50 of our member agencies work with various city agencies to support children and their families, including contracting with the NYC Administration for Children's Services to deliver child welfare services across the five boroughs of New York City.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this Committee. We acknowledge and appreciate the Council's leadership and ongoing support for nonprofit human services organizations that keep children and families safe and supported in New York City. In this testimony, we will highlight several ways in which nonpayment for City services and potential changes in Federal funding will drastically impact the ability of NYC nonprofits to remain viable, serve families, and maintain a workforce of over 80,000 residents.¹

Historically, the federal government has served as a crucial fiscal partner to New York City nonprofits, both through direct federal contracts and via City and State pass-through funding streams. In many cases, nonprofits were able to promptly access payments for federally contracted services without delay. Fortunately, these timely Federal payments have been instrumental in helping nonprofits sustain their program operations during a period when New York City was significantly behind in compensating agencies for their services.¹ Without these timely payments from the City, the potential for impending federal cuts could impact NYC nonprofits like a fiscal tsunami. The combination of delayed payments from the City and the potential federal cuts could result in New Yorkers losing access to a wide range of essential safety and protective services.

Nonpayment for Nonprofit Services

Prior to discussing the impact of Federal cuts to nonprofit agencies in New York City, we must first address an urgent issue facing contracted service providers: delayed and delinquent payments for services already rendered. It is both unacceptable and unsustainable for the City to fail to pay nonprofits on time.

COFCCA member agencies are consistently faced with procurement and contract issues that disrupt program operations. Several of these concerns are highlighted below.

Delayed and Delinquent Payments

- Late payments to contracted agencies significantly impact service delivery and create major challenges for human services organizations. Delayed payments lead to difficulties in keeping agency doors open, operating programs, and meeting payroll obligations.²

¹ [https://www.justpayny.org/facts-and-research#:~:text=The%20human%20services%20contract%20workforce,and%20women%20\(70%20percent\)](https://www.justpayny.org/facts-and-research#:~:text=The%20human%20services%20contract%20workforce,and%20women%20(70%20percent))

² <https://www.thecity.nyc/2024/11/26/nonprofit-debt-layoffs-passport/>

- According to the Human Services Council, 90% of nonprofits report delayed payments totaling \$365 million, making it nearly impossible to sustain fully operational programs.³
- Providers are often compelled to obtain and utilize lines of credit to sustain program operations, only to incur interest on the loans without a means to recover the associated fees. As a result, they end up subsidizing City contracts.

Partnering with City and State Government

This is budget season in New York City and State, marking the peak of advocacy campaigns as nonprofits communicate their funding priorities to elected officials. The sustainability of nonprofit agencies heavily relies on the continued delivery of Federal pass-through funding to maintain organizational solvency and fiscal security. Nonprofit leaders clearly recognize that potential cuts to Federal funding may reduce numerous major block grants and undermine City and State budgets. It is imperative for City and State government leaders to engage with nonprofit leaders to develop a collaborative strategy that prepares for potential cuts in funding, thereby minimizing cuts to essential social services for children, families, and communities in New York City.

Human services organizations depend on Federal pass-through funding streams to help the City maintain a healthy social fabric. Currently, the scale of uncertainties arising from a rapidly and dramatically changing Federal landscape, places most human services providers on high alert regarding potential threats to several of the most significant funding streams, including The Social Service Block Grant (SSBG), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG).⁴

Threats to Block Grants from Federal Funding

Block grants are fundamental to maintaining critical funding streams to public and nonprofit agencies. Cuts to any of the following block grants will create substantial gaps in the City's budget and threaten to significantly disrupt the delivery of services by contracted providers.

- Social Services Block Grant (SSBG): A significant source of funding for child welfare funding is distributed through the SSBG, which is Federal funding that provides supportive services to children and families. This funding is currently at risk of being cut, and the FY 2025 budget includes \$246 million in federal funds for this program.⁵
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a Federal program that provides states with block grants to operate cash assistance and employment support programs for low-income families with children. Cuts to this program would potentially strip millions of dollars from child welfare programs, shelter services, summer youth employment, and essential assistance supports for families.⁶

³ https://humanservicescouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/111924_HSC-City-Procurement-Survey-Results.pdf

⁴ https://www.childwelfareonk.com/p/acf-staff-cuts-and-child-welfare?img=https%3A%2F%2Fsubstack-post-media.s3.amazonaws.com%2Fpublic%2Fimages%2Fc6b2b376-45d6-464f-96e4-38dd4f885cfd_1146x782.png&open=false

⁵ <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/nycs-federal-funding-outlook-under-trump/>

⁶ *ibid.*

- The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): In 2024, New York City received over \$263 million from the CDBG to support housing, community development, and housing preservation initiatives. Federal cuts to this program could devastate lives and push many individuals into precarious housing situations. ⁷

Monitoring Changes in Federal Funding

New York City must act swiftly to safeguard resources for underserved and under-resourced New Yorkers. According to a report issued by NYC Comptroller Brad Lander, the City's FY 2025 November budget includes \$9.6 billion in federal revenue, which constitutes 8.3% of the City's total budget of \$115 billion. Eighty percent of this federal funding is allocated to five NYC agencies: The Department of Education (DOE), the Department of Social Services (DSS), the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), the Department of Homeless Services (DHS), and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). ⁸ COFCCA's member agencies derive the majority of their funding from City contracts specifically issued by these agencies.

Typically, these federal pass-through funds provide a wide range of support for children, youth, families, unhoused individuals, and general child welfare programs. However, this funding is currently at risk of being cut. Child welfare providers are already facing a series of Federal funding reductions and are bracing for further cuts.

Impact of Federal Changes on Nonprofit Organizations

The challenges faced by nonprofits extend far beyond financial difficulties. Providers are navigating ongoing federal changes. Agencies are also confronted with:

- Checklists for Tracking Federal Cuts: Nonprofit agencies with Federal grants and contracts are monitoring potential changes to their funding. Federal administrative actions are occurring at such a rapid pace that nonprofits must allocate staff time and resources to monitor Federal cuts, determine the necessary steps upon notices, and seek support from State and City governments. Contracted providers are forced to confront the reality of having to adjust program operations. ⁹
- Closing of ACF NY Regional Office: The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) provides oversight, technical assistance, and cost allocation plans to child welfare agencies. Recent Federal budget cuts have led to the closure of five Regional Offices, including the one in New York. ¹⁰ This office offered important services to agencies serving children and families, and currently, there are no replacement service options available to New York. This situation poses a significant obstacle to the provision of child welfare services.

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ <https://www.childwelfarewonk.com/p/acf-staff-cuts-and-child-welfare>

¹⁰ <https://www.hhs.gov/press-room/hhs-restructuring-doge.html>

- Section 8 Vouchers for Youth in Foster Care: On March 21, the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) notified child welfare agencies of a pause in the submission of Section 8 applications. Due to uncertainties in Federal funding, the Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) will not process Housing Choice vouchers for youth in care received after April 11. This represents a significant aftercare resource that will no longer be available to young people aging out of foster care.
- COVID Relief Grants: The City government has been awarded over \$26 billion in total to be allocated by FY 2028, which includes FEMA reimbursements and other pandemic relief funds. ¹¹ COVID Relief Grants have provided critical support to children and families across NYC. Unfortunately, providers were recently affected by federal actions that terminated the COVID Relief and supportive funding. Efforts to restore this funding are currently being pursued in court.
- Head Start Programs: In New York City, providers have faced challenges in accessing payments due to slowdowns in Federal Payment Management Services. These payment disruptions have raised concerns among providers and families regarding the future funding of Head Start Programs. ¹²
- Food Insecurities: Some community-based organizations with food pantries that provide weekly nutritional support to families have experienced funding cuts and are now struggling to afford food for those in need. Dwindling community-based food resources are occurring at a time when there is an increase in the number of families seeking food pantry services. ¹³

These are just a few examples of how New York City may need to intervene to address budget shortfalls resulting from potential reductions in Federal aid to New York State.

Nonprofits as Employers

Human services organizations employ approximately 80,000 New Yorkers, of whom 75% are workers of color and 70% are women. ¹⁴ NYC contracted agencies face significant challenges in reducing staff turnover, achieving pay parity for an underpaid workforce, and retaining qualified and experienced employees. These agencies have invested substantial resources in training and preparing their workforce to support children and families who receive services from programs that may become targets of Federal budget cuts. The potential for Federal cuts could devastate the nonprofit workforce and exacerbate unemployment throughout the City.

Impact on the Workforce

Notwithstanding the potential for unemployment due to possible Federal funding cuts, many human service workers are beneficiaries of federally funded programs such as SNAP, housing subsidies, child care vouchers, and other public benefits. A predominant workforce of women and people of color may be subjected to the loss of employment, housing, and food insecurity, making them as vulnerable as the populations they currently serve.

¹¹ <https://www.checkbooknyc.com/>

¹² <https://apnews.com/article/head-start-trump-funding-budget-cuts-education-204077e046329eb22c71445d57ba002b>

¹³ <https://www.cityharvest.org/hunger-in-nyc/>

¹⁴ [https://www.justpayny.org/facts-and-research#:~:text=The%20human%20services%20contract%20workforce,and%20women%20\(70%20percent\).](https://www.justpayny.org/facts-and-research#:~:text=The%20human%20services%20contract%20workforce,and%20women%20(70%20percent).)

Agency Preparation for Federal Budget Cuts

Nonprofit employers are confronting significant financial challenges as they evaluate their ability to remain solvent amid a deluge of threats to Federal funding streams. Before the announcement of cuts to Federal funding, a 2025 Pace University study of COFCCA member agencies titled “The Financial Health of Nonprofit Child Welfare Organizations in New York State” revealed that 47% of the organizations surveyed had less than 30 days of cash reserves available for emergencies.¹⁵

Currently, several human service organizations, including child welfare agencies, are preparing for potential Federal budget cuts by:

- Conducting staff town halls to provide open communication and information.
- Checking lines of credit to assess availability and usage.
- Taking inventory of the terms and conditions of all current contracts.
- Reviewing current fiscal challenges and risks with the Board of Directors.

New York City nonprofit providers are taking significant steps to prepare for potential funding reductions to human services programs. The total number of fiscal challenges facing nonprofits cannot be overly stated. Children, youth, families, communities, and nonprofit human services providers require the assistance and collaborative planning from their government partners to navigate impending funding deficits posed by the Federal government.

Recommendations

- COFCCA requests for the City to urgently expedite all overdue contract payments to human services providers in anticipation of potential significant Federal budget cuts.
- COFCCA urges the City to coordinate a strategic and expedited plan for the drawdown of Federal funding it receives, in coordination with nonprofit organizations that hold human services contracts.
- COFCCA strongly encourages the City and State to coordinate a comprehensive counter-strategy in response to the anticipated mass cuts to Federal human services funding.

In conclusion, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony outlining the impact of Federal funding cuts on the nonprofit human services sector. COFCCA welcomes the opportunity to engage the Council in a conversation to discuss our testimony. We are available to answer any questions or concerns that you may have about how supports for children and families may be particularly threatened by impending cuts.

¹⁵ https://cofcca.wildapricot.org/resources/COFCCA_Final%20General%20Report%20Jan2025.pdf

Sophie Charles, PhD
Associate Executive Director, Downstate
Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies
scharles@cofcca.org
(212) 929-2626, ext. 212
254 West 31 Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10001



Testimony of FPWA

Presented to:

**Committee on Finance and Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal
Legislation**

Oversight hearing: Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding

Chairs Restler and Brannan

April 16 2025

**Jennifer Jones Austin
Executive Director/CEO**

**Prepared By:
Brad Martin
Senior Fiscal Policy Analyst**

40 Broad Street, 5th Floor
New York, New York 10004

Phone: (212) 777-4800

Fax: (212) 414-1328

We are grateful to the members of the Council Committee on Finance and Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation for holding this hearing, and to Chairs Restler and Brannan for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of FPWA (Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies).

FPWA is a leading anti-poverty, social policy and advocacy organization dedicated to strengthening human services organizations and faith institutions and advancing economic security and justice for New Yorkers with low incomes. Since 1922, FPWA has driven groundbreaking policy reforms to better serve those in need. We work to dismantle the structural and systemic barriers that impede economic security and well-being, and we strengthen the capacity of human services agencies and faith organizations so New Yorkers with lower incomes can thrive and live with dignity.

FPWA has a membership network of 170 faith and community-based organizations. We support our members by offering workshops and training on topics such as leadership development, organizational management, and trauma-informed approaches to service delivery. FPWA provides a range of financial assistance grants through our member network, working to support individuals and families at the ground level. These grants provide direct support to New Yorkers in the form of scholarships, financial assistance for aging adults, funding for organizations providing HIV/AIDS related services, and more.

FPWA has also long been tracking the impact of federal funding on our city through our [NYC Funds Tracker](#). The NYC Funds Tracker is a data tool designed to shine a light on the fiscal workings of the city government, to help advocates, policy makers and community members fight for a budget that ensures physical, social, and economic wellbeing for all New Yorkers. Its origins go back to the first Trump presidency in 2019, when we first launched the Federal Funds Tracker in light of expected federal cuts that would impact the city's human services sector. We see this tool as vital, as local communities once again brace for the impact of federal spending cuts and seek to find new solutions that overturn long-term underinvestment in communities. The NYC Funds Tracker helps community members identify underinvestment by providing an overview of where the City's money comes from and where it goes.

This oversight hearing, focused on preparing New York City for changes in federal funding, comes at a critical time. According to a recent Urban Institute report, 62% of New York City households are economically insecure today. This means that nearly two-thirds of all households in New York City struggle to pay their bills and housing costs, afford health care and child care, and save for their futures. The number increases to a staggering 72% for households with children. This is unacceptable, and we know that the proposed federal cuts to critical income supports and programs will only exacerbate the high rate of

economic insecurity faced by New Yorkers. Despite understanding these changes in the City’s budget, we still believe that the City has an obligation to meet this challenge, and ensure economic security for all New Yorkers, regardless of their race, gender identity, immigration status, or other characteristics.

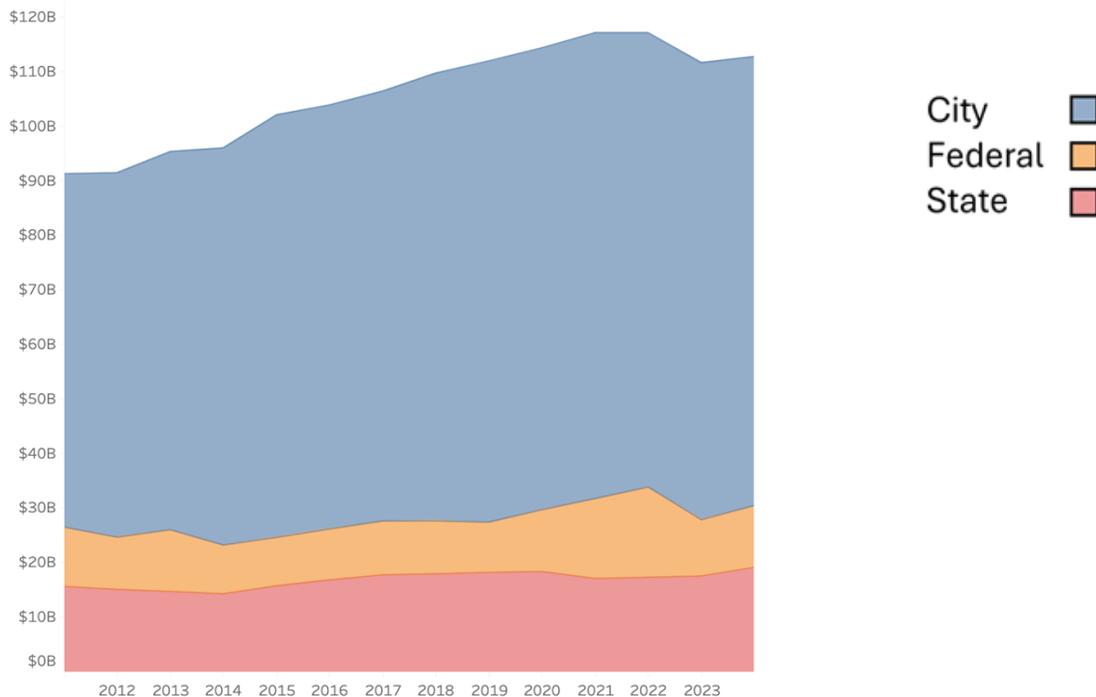
This hearing presents an opportunity to discuss how we can advance that goal despite the uncertainty facing our city from the federal administration. To achieve this, we call on the City to:

- Improve economic and budgetary management, including scenario planning for federal funding changes
- Bolster the City’s own revenue sources
- Focus on ensuring economic security, not austerity
- Respond to threats by standing up for the values that New Yorkers hold dear.

The City must employ stronger budgetary management and planning

Through our [NYC Funds Tracker](#), we know that about 10% of the City’s budget is directly at risk from potential federal funding cuts. We also know that even more is indirectly at risk through the federal funding that is channeled through the state budget (approximately a third of the state budget consists of federal funding).

Overview of NYC Budget funding sources



Source: NYC Funds Tracker

In this light, the City must do all it can to prepare for these potential changes. This starts by first having strong economic management and transparency in its budgeting process. The known underbudgeting of certain expenses, such as NYPD overtime, with other funds hidden elsewhere in the budget impacts transparency and the ability of the New York City community to work with accurate and complete information. We specifically call on the City to:

- undertake **scenario planning**, to work out how it will respond when the cuts do inevitably come and ensure the city is ready.
 - The OMB Commissioner said that he does not have a ‘Plan B’ if Federal dollars are cut, and at last month’s Preliminary Budget hearing, admitted that the City had not undertaken scenario planning to prepare for potential cuts. This is not acceptable when faced with the threat that NYC is currently staring down.
- **improve transparency and management of its ‘rainy day fund’** and be ready to fill any gaps that may arise.
 - Currently the City holds about \$2 billion in the fund.
 - A lack of transparency about the fund’s use and where else in the budget the City may be storing reserve funds hurts the ability of the community to plan accordingly.
- improve its **timely payment of contracts** for human services.
 - We recognize the progress that has been made to clear backlogs of contract payments. The City must continue to improve these processes as it is one thing that the City can do that is in its own control. Community Based Organizations should not have to be waiting on funds from the City at the same time they are facing federal funding cuts.

The City must bolster its own revenue sources

With the threat to federal funds, the City’s own revenue sources become more important than ever, accounting for 73% of the City’s revenue in FY24. Despite their importance, using the NYC Funds Tracker to examine these sources shows evidence of stagnation since the COVID-19 pandemic. While sales and corporation taxes are on an upward trend, real estate and personal income taxes are still below pre-pandemic levels after adjusting for inflation.

Overview of trends in top City revenue sources

	Adjusted Rev. in 2024	% Change from 2023	% Change from 2019
Real Estate Taxes	\$33B 29.2% 	↑ 0.9%	↓ -3 %
Personal Income Taxes	\$14B 12.5% 	↓ -8.3%	↓ -14 %
General Sales	\$10B 8.8% 	↑ 0.7%	↑ 4 %
General Corporation	\$7B 6.5% 	↑ 9.0%	↑ 27 %

Source: NYC Funds Tracker

While the City faces a combative federal administration, changes to its own revenue settings require only changes at the state level, or in some cases, entirely in its own control.

To this end, opportunities to improve the progressivity and amount of revenue generated from the City's two largest taxes are available. Options include a suite of modest reforms that would raise the personal income tax rate for the top 1% of earners as well as provide for more equitable taxation of real estate¹ [raising an additional \\$1 billion in revenue](#).

Ensuring its own revenue sources are stable, progressive and growing, will help the City stabilize its budget and ensure it is less vulnerable to the whims of other levels of government. Suring up its own revenue sources will also enable the City to invest in economic security.

The City must focus on economic security for all, not austerity

A city's budget should reflect the needs of its residents. Now, more than ever, the Administration must **resist calls to implement austerity measures** in response to federal funding constraints. The City should continue to fund the vital services we need and seek to ensure economic security. It can do this by enhancing processes for access to cash

¹ While some claim that such tax reform would cause the wealthy to leave the city, eroding the city's tax base, [studies have shown that is the cost of living, not tax that causes New Yorkers to leave](#).

assistance and SNAP, investing in the human services workforce, and other policy advancements as outlined in our testimony [to last month's preliminary budget hearing on general welfare](#).

When people have economic security they can fully participate in society and the economy. This has flow on effects that will only improve the city's prosperity and its own tax revenues in the longer term.

For example, as mentioned above, New York City collects a large proportion of its revenue from income tax (\$12.5b or 14%). This revenue draws heavily on middle-income earners, a sizeable portion of the tax base that is increasingly being squeezed by economic insecurity.

Over the last five years, New York has lost a net of more than 76,000 jobs paying middle-income wages – with remaining middle-income earners experiencing slower rates of real wage growth, relative to other income groups.

Improving economic security would allow more tax-paying New Yorkers to stay in the state, reversing the negative trend in personal income tax, and bolstering the city's revenue and economy.

The City must stand up for all New Yorkers and the values we uphold

Finally, all of the above-mentioned steps are necessary to enable **the administration to stand up for New Yorkers** when they need it most. This means stepping in to support and fund vital programs including for migrants, diversity, equity and inclusion, and the LGBT+ community that are being particularly targeted by federal funding cuts. It means defending New York's role as a sanctuary city, not supporting President Trump's ICE enforcement efforts. It means being on the front foot to fight back in the face of illegal funding claw backs.

Conclusion

It is true that the city is staring down potentially devastating cuts, but there are many levers inside its own control that it must fully use to prepare. Taking these steps outlined in our testimony would put New York on a path to ensuring economic security for all.

We thank you for your time and attention to these critical issues, and FPWA looks forward to working with you to respond to the changing federal funding landscape.

TESTIMONY

The New York City Council

Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Re: Federal Funding Changes Impact on Grand Street Settlement

Grand St. Settlement
80 Pitt Street
New York, New York

April 16, 2025



Testimony of Grand St. Settlement
To the New York City Council Committee on Education
Regarding Changes in Federal Funding

April 16, 2025
Aaron M. Sanders

Introduction

Thank you, Chair Restler, Chair Brannan, and members of the New York City Council Committees on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation, and Finance, for convening this necessary hearing, and for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding recent changes in federal funding.

Grand St. Settlement (Grand Street) is a 109-year-old multi-service Settlement House. We serve over 18,000 New Yorkers through vital early childhood, youth, and older adult programs infused with impactful benefits assistance on the Lower East Side, Manhattan, and the Bronx.

Today, we are testifying about the importance of federal funding sources on Grand Street's programs, and how a funding reduction would negatively impact the communities we serve. We also urge the City Council to work in partnership with the federal administration on behalf of community-based organizations to sustain the federal funding that our neighbors rely on. Nearly half of our operating budget is comprised of direct federal Head Start funding. Currently, Grand Street operates eight programs that either receive direct or indirect federal Head Start funding. This funding allocated to Grand Street supports the academic and socioemotional development of children.

Benefits of Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded child care program supporting low-income families. Children from birth through kindergarten receive free, high-quality education, health screenings, nutritional support, alongside professional and personal support for parents, and much more. Statistics show that Head Start is one of the most successful programs to have come out of the

war on poverty in the 1960s. A study published in December 2022 in the [*Journal of Political Economy*](#) concluded that Head Start children have higher educational attainment, lower teen pregnancy, and less criminal engagement on average. These findings complement other data definitively concluding that Head Start benefits the children it serves. Children who enroll have been more successful in nearly every aspect of life. Head Start adopts a whole-child, whole-family model, designed to address the comprehensive needs of a family. To date, Head Start has served nearly 40 million children. The historic success of this program shows how damaging federal cuts would be.

Grand Street Settlement Head Start Funding

As a recipient of federal direct and indirect Head Start funding from the Office of Head Start and the New York City Department of Education, we are deeply concerned about potential cuts to the program. Cuts to our federal Head Start grant would have a dire, generational impact on families who depend on Grand Street for high-quality early childhood education services. Grand Street and child care providers throughout the country are now faced with funding cuts despite our record of providing robust child care services. For several years, Grand Street was lauded by parents, education experts, and elected officials for our successful Head Start Model. This January, Governor Kathy Hochul visited Grand Street and commended us on our early childhood education program and its life-changing impact on families. However, adequate federal funding is critical to continuing this work. With appropriate funding for the Office of Head Start, we can disrupt systemic barriers that hinder children from excelling and becoming successful, contributing members of society.

Other Programs at Risk

Our participants could also be impacted by a reduction of other federally funded programs that would impact the communities we serve. For example, programs like Single Stop USA will be impacted by proposed funding cuts. Single Stop is a nationally renowned benefits assistance program that supports eligible individuals and families in accessing federally subsidized benefits such as SNAP and Medicaid. Our community relies on programs like Single Stop to gain access to life saving services. Funding for these essential services equips Grand Street case managers with the resources that are needed for families and individuals soliciting support. SNAP is acknowledged as an anti-hunger food program, and research indicates that access to SNAP is correlated with better health outcomes for families; however, funding for this vital benefit is at risk as well. Changes in federal funding may impact communities' ability to access much-needed healthcare through federal health insurance programs such as Medicare, which are lifelines for older adults and younger adults who have disabilities. Similarly, many of the Older Adults that we serve are concerned about significant cuts to their Social Security income. Federal funding cuts like these would prove catastrophic for our most vulnerable communities.

In closing, we encourage the City of New York to continue to work with the federal administration to ensure that community-based organizations and families have access to the funding and programs they deserve.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY PROVIDED BY HOUSING AND SERVICES, INC. (HSI)

Submitted to the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Government Operations
April 16, 2025

Introduction to HSI

Housing and Services, Inc. (HSI) is a New York State nonprofit organization with 38 years of experience providing permanent supportive housing. We currently support more than 700 formerly homeless New Yorkers, combining stable, affordable housing with on-site services that promote health, safety, and long-term recovery.

HSI operates four congregate supportive housing residences in Manhattan and the Bronx, as well as a 100-unit scattered-site program funded by HRA, serving households in market-rate apartments across Upper Manhattan and the Bronx.

Our work is supported by a range of government partnerships, including HRA/DHS SRO Supportive Services contracts, DOHMH services contracts, and HRA/HASA housing and services contracts. All four congregate sites have received substantial capital investment from the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD).

HSI employs approximately 125 full-time staff who deliver housing and services with a unified commitment to stability, dignity, and equity.

Acknowledgements

HSI is a proud member of the Supportive Housing Network of New York (the Network), the statewide advocacy organization representing New York's supportive housing community. We fully support the Network's recommendations for this hearing.

Summary of Testimony

1. Restore Critical HUD Funding

HUD funding accounts for 48% of HSI's operating revenue. Cuts to these grants and to HUD staffing would directly jeopardize housing stability for hundreds of medically vulnerable tenants and HSI's financial stability. We urge the City Council to work with federal and state partners to reverse these cuts.

2. Defend the Housing First Model

We call on the Council to uphold Housing First as the foundation of our homelessness response. It is an evidence-based model that saves lives and reduces public costs.

3. Ensure Timely Contract Registration and Payment

Delays in contract registration and payment, particularly for human services contracts,

pose severe challenges to provider solvency. HSI urges the Council to increase MOCS capacity and demand performance accountability.

HUD's Role in HSI's Operations

In FY25, HSI projects that 48% (\$9.9 million) of its total operating revenue will come from HUD sources:

- 46% for rental assistance, including:
 - Section 8 (tenant- and project-based), administered by NYCHA and HPD
 - Project-based rental assistance through NYC's HUD Continuum of Care (CoC)
 - HASA rent subsidies funded via NYC's HUD HOPWA allocation
- 2% for on-site services, including:
 - A HUD Supportive Housing Program grant awarded through the NYC CoC

The Importance of the Housing First Model

New York City helped pioneer the Housing First model in the early 1980s. The model is based on the principle that housing is a human right—not a reward for treatment or sobriety.

Before Housing First, abstinence-based programs dominated, requiring sobriety or service participation before granting housing. These models, while effective for some populations (younger, work-ready individuals), do not meet the needs of the chronically homeless—who are on average older, with complex behavioral health challenges, trauma histories, and physical health vulnerabilities.

Housing First eliminates these barriers and recognizes housing as the foundation for recovery. The results are clear: more than 95% of participants remain stably housed, and use of shelters, emergency rooms, and jails declines significantly.

HSI's Approach to Supportive Housing

At HSI, we bring the Housing First model to life through a deeply integrated, on-site approach that prioritizes both safety and stability. Every aspect of resident support—from case management and front desk coverage to maintenance and crisis response—is delivered in-house by dedicated HSI staff. This cohesive model ensures consistency, accountability, and alignment around a single mission: helping people stay housed and live with dignity.

Our approach includes:

- Voluntary, trauma-informed case management that connects tenants to physical and behavioral healthcare, income supports, and substance use services
- Community-building and socialization programming to reduce isolation and promote recovery through connection
- 24/7 front desk and security staffing, with trained personnel always on duty to ensure building safety and support tenant well-being
- On-site crisis response and coordination with first responders (FDNY, NYPD, EMS) to de-escalate emergencies and prevent avoidable hospitalizations or arrests

This model is evidence-based, person-centered, and fiscally responsible. In New York City, recent studies suggest that supportive housing reduces public costs by up to \$16,282 per unit annually—savings that nearly offset the full cost of providing housing and services. In other words, this is a model that not only works—it pays for itself.

A Regressive Shift Threatens Proven Results

Despite its demonstrated success, the Housing First model is now under threat. Project 2025, a policy agenda endorsed by the current federal administration, seeks to dismantle Housing First and redirect funding toward abstinence-based, recovery-only models. HUD has already announced that it will no longer enforce Housing First requirements in its grant programs.

This shift is not grounded in evidence—it is driven by ideology and misinformation. It threatens to reverse decades of progress in ending chronic homelessness. Abstinence-based models have consistently failed to meet the needs of individuals with the greatest barriers to housing stability—those living with complex health conditions, co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, and histories of trauma.

Reinstating these models would not only exclude the most vulnerable, it would also increase dependence on less effective and more expensive systems: emergency departments, psychiatric institutions, jails, and shelters. Street homelessness would rise, and outcomes would worsen.

Housing First works. It reduces homelessness, improves health, and saves public money. Turning away from it is not just a policy mistake—it's a costly step backward.

The High Cost of Inaction

Recent studies show:

- A person experiencing street homelessness can cost the City \$45,000 annually in emergency services

- A single adult in a DHS shelter costs over \$35,000 per year

In contrast, permanent supportive housing reduces these costs and improves health and housing outcomes. If HUD funding is not preserved, the City will be forced to either:

- Use local dollars to maintain essential services, or
- Let programs falter—triggering greater downstream costs and strain on public systems

Delayed City Contracts and Payments

Even providers that withstand federal cuts cannot survive persistent delays in City contract registration and payment. HSI deeply appreciates the Council's support of efforts to improve MOCS' and contracting City agencies capacity, but measurable performance improvement is urgently needed.

As of December 31, 2024, HSI was owed \$5.8 million in outstanding receivables on NYC government contracts—representing 55% of our current assets:

- \$2 million is over one year old
- \$616,000 has been outstanding for more than three years

This is not sustainable. Current assets are a key measure of financial liquidity, and City receivables now make up a disproportionate share. If left unaddressed, this pattern will force providers to reduce services, lay off staff, or shut down altogether.

Conclusion

HSI urges the City Council to:

- Oppose HUD cuts and fight for restoration of federal support
- Defend Housing First as the cornerstone of NYC's housing strategy
- Invest in contracting infrastructure to ensure providers are paid on time

New York's supportive housing system saves lives, strengthens communities, and saves public money. We must protect it.

Submitted by: Housing and Services, Inc. (HSI)

April 18, 2025



HOMELESS SERVICES UNITED

307 W. 38TH STREET, 4TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10018
T 212-367-1589
www.HSUnited.org

**Homeless Services United's Written Testimony for the New York City Council Joint
Hearing on Federal Funding**
April 16, 2025

My name is Victoria Leahy, and I am the Director of Policy & Planning at Homeless Services United. I would like to thank the members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify before you today and for your leadership on issues that deeply impact human service organizations here in New York City.

Homeless Services United (HSU) is a coalition representing over 50 mission-driven, homeless service providers in New York City. HSU advocates for the expansion of affordable housing and prevention services and for immediate access to safe, decent, emergency, and transitional housing, outreach, and drop-in services for homeless New Yorkers. Homeless Services United promotes effective solutions to end the crisis of homelessness in New York City.

Federal Funding Risks

As the City is aware, vital housing programming is at risk with projected federal funding losses.

The House Budget Resolution includes a reduction in federal funding for Section 8 by up to \$357 million (which would impact rental assistance for more than 17,000 households) and overall funding for NYCHA by up to \$ 111 million. More than 136,000 households rely on federally funded Section 8 vouchers for their housing and thousands of landlords receive rental subsidies. These subsidies pay supers, maintenance workers, security guards, property taxes, utilities, purchase supplies, and so on. Without rental subsidies – or the income supports that tenants use to pay their share – landlords cannot cover their costs. Staff will lose their jobs, buildings will fall into disrepair, and tenants will be at risk of homelessness.

The proposal includes a 10% cut to the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program, as well as the elimination of the TANF Contingency Fund. The Department of Social Services (DSS) received \$1.8 billion in TANF funding to support shelter and Public Assistance for low-income and housing insecure families. 160,000 New York City residents rely on TANF for their livelihood, including nearly 100,000 children.

However, it is crucial to remember that many nonprofit providers contract directly with the federal government as well. Our members' budgets include up to 22% of federal dollars. The reported staff cuts to HUD will only cause further interruptions to federal grants that local providers rely on. Providers have mentioned how federal funding cuts are already impacting their programming. For example, cuts to the Emergency Food and Shelter Program have caused providers to either limit their rental assistance programs that keep families in their home or food pantries. Cuts to members' federal funding have been proposed by many agencies including NIH, SAHMSA, Veterans Administration, DOL, DOE, FEMA, Medicaid, and others.



HOMELESS SERVICES UNITED

307 W. 38TH STREET, 4TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10018
T 212-367-1589
www.HSUnited.org

Members are having an extremely difficult time amending fiscal plans as cuts are quickly rescinded. So much is unknown.

What is also troubling is the programmatic implications that come with contracting with the federal government. As providers have seen with their Continuum of Care contracts, the federal government is using these funds to promote the agenda and reach of the administration. Providers are now in the difficult position of accepting these federal restrictions and potentially violating their city and state obligations, or rejecting these funds and therefore reducing their programming, staff count, or staying open altogether.

Chronic Late Payment Issues

As HSU has mentioned before, providers are in a cash flow crisis due to chronic late payments on city contracts.

HSU worked with a sample of twelve DHS-contracted providers to assess the outstanding budget actions. Out of this sample group, **these 12 providers have over \$170,000,000 in outstanding budget actions from FY19 to FY25**. Some providers have stopped bidding on new DHS contracts because the risk of doing further business with the City is simply too high. **Other providers are now on a timeline for insolvency, for some, as soon as 2 months.**

Providers routinely experience delayed contract registration, delayed approvals for budget modifications and invoices for review, and repeated requests for supporting documentation, only for there to be continued delays once submitting requested documentation. The lack of normalcy when it comes to payments puts organizations like ours at risk. It makes it difficult to pay staff, vendors, and run programs for clients. Organizations are often forced to take out lines of credit just to relieve cash flow issues, only to then have to pay interest.

Federal contracts have reportedly been the most consistent in paying providers on time. While providers may wait months on end to receive payment from the City, they could rely on federal funds to keep their organization operating. Given the uncertainty of federal resources and proposed cuts, it is all the more important that the City registers contracts in a timely manner and pays nonprofit homeless service providers for their services on time to not further threaten the insolvency of nonprofits.

Recommendations

We join the many other nonprofits providers today in making the following recommendations:

- The City must urgently expedite all late contract payments in City contracts with human services providers in anticipation of impending mass and unprecedented Federal cuts.
- The City should plan a strategic and expedited draw down of the Federal funding that it receives in coordination with human services nonprofit contract holders.
- The City and State must coordinate a comprehensive counterstrategy to the anticipated mass cuts to Federal humans' services funding.



TESTIMONY

New York City Council Committee on Finance Jointly with Committee on Governmental
Operations, State, & Federal Legislation

Oversight Hearing on Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding.

April 16, 2025

Submitted by:

Human Services Council of New York (HSC)

INTRODUCTION

We urge the City of New York to act now to protect critical human services from mass Federal cuts that would impact millions of New Yorkers. This must include: urgently expediting all delayed City contracting/payments with human services providers; strategic and rapid draw downs of City-managed Federal funds; prioritizing human services in the use of emergency reserves; and a comprehensive counter-strategy organized with the State.

To achieve this, City leaders need a common approach and message across all local government entities that manage Federal resources, and close coordination with nonprofits and community lifelines.

HSC is a coalition of 185+ nonprofit providers in New York representing the human services sector. **Our sector's collective contracted work with the City offers lifelines to millions of New Yorkers and maintains a workforce in the hundreds of thousands.** We have witnessed how decades of inequitable resource sharing, coupled with severe contracting issues, produce dire impacts on an exhausted human services infrastructure.

We are bracing for a perfect storm of pre-existing government-sanctioned fiscal crises in our sector, mixed with Federal cuts to human services across the board. We need you to address the issues that are in your control, and invite you to join us in preparing to respond to the ones that are not.

BACKGROUND

Impacts of Federal Funding Cuts on City Contracts

We face proposed cuts in nearly every facet of human services. Providers hold contracts with several NYC agencies that maintain programs under threat from Federal actions, including but not limited to *DSS-HRA, DOHMH, NYC DHS, HPD, DFTA, NYC DOE, NYCHA, and H+H.*



These agencies, and nonprofit providers, receive direct and indirect funds for human services from Federal agencies that are experiencing, or are projected to experience, proposed cuts. These Federal agencies and funding streams include, but are not limited to:

- *HHS* (including CDC, NIH, FDA, ACF, ACL, CMS), especially Medicare, Medicaid, SSBG, Head Start, TANF, HEAP, and public health grants
- *HUD*, especially CDBG and other housing programs
- *USDA* (including FNS), especially SNAP, WIC, and other food security programs
- *US DOE*, especially grants to local DOE programs and student loan programs
- *FEMA*, especially grants related to asylum seekers and disaster response/recovery/mitigation
- *SSA*, especially Social Security programs

We know reductions in Federal aid to the State and City will create gaps that providers will be expected to fill without the resources to do so. The scale of those impacts may be unknown, but we know they are already here and will worsen. In the face of this reality, there has been a lack of consistent and proactive communications across City agencies with nonprofit contract holders likely to be impacted. More often, contract holders have prompted agencies regarding cuts and plans of action to prepare. Providers are also sometimes unclear on which Federal lines support City-managed contracts.

Compounding Late Contracting Issues

An article released this week by *City and State* stated that our colleagues in human services at United Neighborhood Houses were owed \$88.9 million among 15 settlement houses because of retroactive contracts. This is a snapshot of trends we see across nearly all subsectors of human services. A survey of HSC membership at the close of 2024 found similar troubling trends among respondents:

- 90% had delayed payments from the City, totaling \$365 million
- Over 32% had payments delayed for over 6 months
- Over 48% took out loans or lines of credit valued at \$87 million with ~\$6 million in interest
- 50% reported that the City's delayed procurement was "the worst it has ever been"

There has been progress since this 2024 report, but a recent HSC sample poll of only 20 of our 185+ member organizations showed they were owed \$132 million in March 2025. The City must significantly speed up the pace of these efforts, ensuring it extends across all human services subsectors.

ADVOCACY

The City has concrete options to respond to this moment, including the following:

- 1. Urgently expedite all late payments and resolve contracting issues in City contracts with human services providers** in anticipation of continued mass Federal cuts

2. Carry out a strategic and expedited drawdown of Federal funding that the City receives, in coordination with human services nonprofit contract holders

3. Prioritize critical human services in the use of existing and new emergency reserves, as gathered from emergency reallocations, revenue streams, fundraising, and other mechanisms for emergency budgeting

4. Coordinate a comprehensive counter-strategy to the anticipated mass cuts to human services funding, including:

- Immediately assess all contracts impacted by current and proposed Federal cuts, clearly indicating the at-risk Federal agency/funding source affiliated with each City-managed contract
- Provide these risk assessments to contract holders, and share aggregate data on risks to providers to support sector-wide emergency planning and advocacy
- Direct City entities to have all contract managers work with contract holders at risk to identify continuity of operations and discuss options for more flexible budgeting/deliverables
- Coordinate with State leaders, such as the Office of the NYS Attorney General, and other stakeholders, such as state and national nonprofit coalitions, that are challenging Federal actions that are dissolving agencies and cutting critical funding sources

CONCLUSION

Imagine our City without its human services lifelines. In that version of NYC, caregivers are without childcare or support for aging loved ones. New Yorkers struggling to survive our housing, economic, and public health crises are without safe and dignified shelter, food, health services, care coordination, advocacy, and more. And thousands fall through the cracks of disasters and everyday emergencies. A version of this future is on the table. City leaders need to act now and act fast to help us mitigate the impacts of this polycrisis, and prevent that possible future from becoming our present.

SOURCES

- *National Council of Nonprofits:* [Table of Executive Orders](#); [Summary of Impacts](#); [FAQ](#)
- *NYC Office of the Comptroller:* [Tracking Federal Funding for Human Service Agencies](#); [Protecting NYC - Risk Analysis](#); [NYC's Federal Funding: Outlook Under Trump](#)



Testimony of Sierra Kraft, Executive Director, ICARE Coalition
NYC Council Committee on Governmental Operations and Finance

Oversight Hearing
“Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding”
April 2025

Good after, Chair Restler and Chair Brannan for holding this oversight hearing and the opportunity to provide testimony. My name is Sierra Kraft, and I’m the Executive Director of the ICARE Coalition. We are a citywide collaborative of legal service providers dedicated to ensuring that unaccompanied immigrant children in New York have access to free legal representation.

I’m here today to speak about the devastating fallout from the near-total termination of the federal Unaccompanied Children Program, or UCP. Almost all federal support for legal screenings, representation, and court support for unaccompanied children in ORR custody was eliminated overnight. And the consequences here in New York are immediate, severe, and still unfolding.

In NYC alone, more than **1,100 children with open immigration cases** lost access to legal services overnight. These are young people who are already living in our neighborhoods, attending school, rebuilding their lives, and trying to recover from the trauma they’ve experienced. Most live in Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx. And now they’re being forced through complex deportation proceedings, without a lawyer, often without understanding what’s being asked of them or what’s at stake.

Statewide, the cut amounts to nearly \$18 million in lost funding, \$10 million of that in NYC alone. That funding supported legal services for more than 26,000 children nationally, and nearly 8,000 here in NYC. Many of these organizations impacted have spent decades doing this work and have built trust and infrastructure needed to support immigrant children. But some providers have already had to lay off staff. Others are struggling to decide whether they can keep programs running at all.

And still, many providers are continuing to represent these kids, even with no funding, because ethically, they can’t just walk away. Staff are working off the clock, cases are being handled pro bono, and we’re burning through what’s left of an already overstretched system. But it is not sustainable. If we don’t act now, the legal safety net for unaccompanied children in NYC will be dismantled.

And all of this is happening as the climate for immigrant youth is growing more hostile. Children are telling us they no longer feel safe. Under new federal guidance they’ve become enforcement priorities. ICE is conducting home visits, in what they call “wellness checks”, at sponsor homes across the city. Children are afraid at school, and they’re afraid at home.



We cannot normalize this. We cannot keep expecting frontline providers to shoulder this burden with no funding, no relief, and no plan. These kids are being sent back into danger, not because they don't qualify for protection, but because we failed to give them access to the legal support that could have saved their lives. With an attorney, their chance of remaining safely in the U.S. is over 90%. Without one, that drops below 15%.

These are our kids. They are contributing to our communities, enrolled in our public schools, and showing up in our courts. They are New York's responsibility. And we are failing them if we don't act.

We can't wait for someone else to fix this. We are urging the Council to increase support for ICARE providers through the Unaccompanied Minors and Families Initiative (UMFI) to **\$6.297 million**. This funding is critical to stabilize the city's legal safety net and ensure immigrant children don't fall through the cracks.

Because this isn't just about legal access, it's about dignity, safety, and stability for young New Yorkers. Thank you for your time and leadership. I'm happy to answer any questions.

In Solidarity,

Sierra Kraft
ICARE Executive Director
skraft@icarecoalition.org
www.icarecoalition.org



Defend Their Future: Fund Legal Services for Immigrant Children

Who We Are: ICARE is a coalition of legal service organizations dedicated to expanding access to legal representation for immigrant children facing deportation in New York City, while advocating for universal access to counsel.

The Challenge: Every year, thousands of children—some as young as infants - appear in NYC immigration courts without an attorney. New York ranks 4th nationwide in unaccompanied arrivals released to sponsors, yet many must face the system alone.

Most of the children and families we represent are fleeing extreme violence, trafficking, and persecution, seeking safety in the U.S. Without an attorney, they have only a 15% chance of winning their case. With ICARE representation, their success rate jumps to over 90%.

At the same time, immigration court backlogs have hit record highs, leaving children and families in legal limbo for years. Federal policy shifts have created new legal hurdles, requiring providers to expand services to meet emerging needs. Without City Council’s continued investment, thousands of children will be left to represent themselves, leading to deportation and life-threatening consequences.

What We Do: With City Council’s help, ICARE provides **free legal services** for immigrant children and families fighting deportation in NYC. Our services include: **Know-Your-Rights trainings, legal screenings, direct representation** and **connections to city & social services**, ensuring vulnerable New Yorkers don’t face the immigration system alone.

Our Impact (Since 2014)	Screened over 14,000 children for relief	Represented over 3,000 children	Obtained relief for 1,500 children	Secured over \$24M in public funding for legal services
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ICARE FY26 Discretionary Funding Request: \$6,297,250

Despite overwhelming demand, ICARE providers have not received a funding increase in six years. This year’s funding request is the difference between safety and deportation for 2,013 children and families.





**New York City Council
Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation
Committee on Finance**

Oversight - Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding

April 16, 2025

Thank you, Chairs Brannan and Restler, and members of the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation for the opportunity to submit testimony at this critical hearing preparing NYC for changes in federal funding.

JASA is a not-for-profit agency that honors older New Yorkers as vital members of society, providing services that support aging with purpose and partnering to build strong communities. For over 50 years, JASA has served as one of New York's largest and most trusted agencies serving older adults in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens. JASA has a comprehensive, integrated network of services that promotes independence, safety, wellness, community participation, and an enhanced quality of life for New York City's older adults. These programs reach over 40,000 clients of diverse backgrounds and include home care, case management services, senior centers, NORC supportive services, home-delivered meals, caregiver support, continuing education, licensed mental health, senior housing, advocacy, legal services, adult protective services, and guardianship services. JASA also has an extensive history of providing information and referral services and benefits and entitlements assistance to ensure older New Yorkers are aware of and take advantage of the vast array of services available.

JASA's mission is to sustain and enrich the lives of the aging in the New York metropolitan area so that they can remain in the community, with dignity and autonomy. Inherent in our mission is embracing an age-friendly New York, identifying the needs of older adults, and working with the City to foster an environment where older adults are integral and thrive.

The Impact of Federal and State Budget Uncertainty on Critical City Services

JASA delivers vital services that support the health, safety, and dignity of thousands of vulnerable older New Yorkers. Our programs are primarily funded through government contracts with the City and State, many of which are underpinned by federal dollars. These contracts are administered through a complex network of agencies, including the NYC Department for the Aging, NYC Human Resources Administration, NYC Housing Preservation and Development, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, NYS Office for the Aging, NYS Office of Mental Health, the NYS Unified Court System, the NYS Department of Law's Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP), and the IOLA Fund.

These public investments fund an array of essential programs that JASA operates across New York City, such as; Adult Protective Services, case management, home-delivered meals, caregiver support, legal assistance, mental health services, Older Adult Centers, and Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs). These services are not optional—they are lifelines that enable older adults to age safely and with dignity in their own homes and communities.

The scope of our impact in 2024 underscores the scale of what's at stake:

- 2,608 homebound older adults received daily nutritious meals delivered to their doors
- 17 Older Adult Centers served over 7,000 participants with meals, social engagement, and wellness programming
- 4,500 individuals received comprehensive case management
- 1,646 vulnerable individuals were protected through Adult Protective Services
- 1,000 older New Yorkers accessed free legal services to prevent eviction, combat fraud, and address elder abuse

These are not just numbers—they represent real people whose well-being depends on stable, continuous, community support. Any disruption in funding—no matter how small—has immediate and potentially devastating consequences. Even modest federal cuts can trigger cascading effects across state and city budgets, forcing reductions in contracts that sustain critical safety net services. For JASA and other frontline providers, this means uncertainty in staffing, service continuity, and ultimately, our ability to safeguard the most at-risk members of our community.

We are deeply alarmed by the growing instability in the federal funding landscape. Without adequate and timely resources, our city risks failing those who need us most. Now more than ever, federal, state, and local leaders must prioritize the continuity of essential services and protect the nonprofit infrastructure that upholds the safety and dignity of older adults across New York.

Unresolved Fiscal Obligations and Organizational Strain

Compounding the uncertainty we face is a significant and ongoing financial strain due to unresolved payment discrepancies with the NYC contracts. Although JASA has an approved indirect cost rate of 20.89% for Fiscal Years 2023–2025, we continue to be reimbursed at outdated and significantly lower rates across many contracts. These include:

- 13.60% for caregiver and case management services
- 10.89% for elder justice, geriatric mental health, home-delivered meals, and legal programs
- 17.83% for NORCs and Older Adult Centers

This persistent underpayment has resulted in a \$3.7 million funding gap, directly tied to unreimbursed indirect costs incurred from FY23 through FY25. These are real, documented expenses essential to the operation and administration of critical programs serving older adults.

No nonprofit, no matter how mission-driven or efficient, can sustain a shortfall of this scale without compromising the stability and continuity of services. The longer this issue remains unresolved, the greater the risk to the health and well-being of thousands of older New Yorkers who depend on these programs every day.

We strongly urge the Administration to act with urgency: resolve this prolonged funding delay and fully honor the City's commitment to reimburse providers at the approved indirect cost rates. As federal support remains volatile and community needs continue to rise, the strength of our local partnerships are more vital than ever.

JASA is deeply grateful to the New York City Council and the Speaker for their strong response to the preliminary budget. As we look toward FY26, we hope that, even in the face of budget pressures beyond the City's control, the final budget will continue to reflect the urgent needs of a growing older adult population and an increasingly vulnerable constituency.

Molly Krakowski
Senior Director Government Affairs
JASA
mkrakowski@jasa.org
www.jasa.org



Good Afternoon Chairs Brannan, Restler, and Council Members,

My name is Jeehae Fischer, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Korean American Family Service Center (KAFSC), a leading nonprofit organization that has supported immigrant survivors of gender-based violence across New York City for over 35 years.

I am here today to share our growing concern about the devastating impact of federal funding cuts, specifically the projected loss of our grants from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). These funds have been critical in supporting KAFSC's core services, including our 24-hour bilingual hotline, trauma-informed counseling, legal advocacy, economic empowerment, and transitional housing programs.

By the end of September 2026, KAFSC is expected to lose up to \$2 million in federal funding. This represents nearly 44% of our operating budget and has already forced us to freeze key hires and re-evaluate essential programming. We are deeply concerned about how we will continue to meet the needs of the 3,000 survivors and families we serve annually.

This moment is defined not only by financial strain but by fear and instability. As we navigate this uncertainty, the need for our services only continues to grow. In 2024 alone, KAFSC responded to nearly 5,000 hotline calls related to domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse - calls that often represent a survivor's first and only attempt to seek help.

These cuts disproportionately impact immigrant survivors, especially those with limited English proficiency who rely on organizations like KAFSC for culturally and linguistically specific services.

We urge the City Council to recognize this moment for what it is: a crisis for our communities. We respectfully call on you to increase investment in community-based, culturally specific organizations that serve survivors of gender-based violence. Without this support, organizations like KAFSC will be forced to scale back at a time when our communities need us the most.

We are committed to doing everything we can, but we cannot do this alone.

Thank you for your time.



Testimony of Lawyers For Children to the New York City Council
Committees on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation and Finance

Oversight Hearing on Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding

April 16, 2025

Submitted by:

Karen Freedman
Founder and President
Kfreedman@lawyersforchildren.org

Betsy Kramer
Public Policy Project Director
Bkramer@lawyersforchildren.org

110 Lafayette Street, 8th floor
New York, NY 10013
(212) 966-6420

Thank you, Chairs Brannan and Restler, and to the members of the Committees on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation, and Finance, for holding this important hearing to respond to the threats of federal funding cuts impacting the most vulnerable New Yorkers. We are deeply grateful for the City Council's initiative and funding for legal services for the Unaccompanied Minors Initiative--a critical program that has served thousands of migrant children since 2014. Because of federal funding cuts, including a recent decision by the Trump Administration to eliminate over \$300 million in funding to represent young people in their immigration cases, we urge the Council to increase funding to support the Immigrant Opportunity Initiative (IOI) Unaccompanied Minors program.

Founded in 1984, Lawyers For Children (LFC) is a not-for-profit legal corporation that represents children in voluntary foster care, abuse, neglect, termination of parental rights, adoption, custody, guardianship, paternity, and youth justice proceedings in family court. This year, we will represent children and youth in more than 3,000 court proceedings. In addition to representing children in individual cases, LFC works to effectuate child welfare reform through impact litigation and legislative advocacy.

Twenty years ago, LFC established an Immigration Rights Project to help protect the rights of our clients who were facing immigration issues. For many years, the two attorneys and staff social worker who were assigned to that project helped to screen all of our clients for immigration issues, obtain family court orders needed to regularize their status, and ensure that the clients were connected to an immigration attorney who could assist them in immigration court. Today, the number of clients we represent with immigration issues has grown so dramatically that our entire legal and social work staff is working to screen clients for immigration issues, obtain the necessary family court orders necessary and, ensure than the youth is represented by an immigration attorney.

As the Council is aware, over the last several years, New York City has experienced an influx of unaccompanied minors--children who arrive in the country alone. Over the last 5 years, the federal government has released over 30,000 unaccompanied minors to sponsors in New York State.¹ The City's Administration for Children's Services also has been caring for approximately 500 young people in foster care with an immigration issue at any given time². LFC, together with dedicated immigration attorneys, helps many of these youth obtain legal status that permits them to apply for work authorization, and to obtain legal permanent residency status.

Created by Congress, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, "SIJS," is a critical immigration protection, for undocumented immigrants under the age of 21 who have been abused, neglected or abandoned by one or both parents and for whom New York's family court has found that it would not be in their best interest to return to their country of origin. They include:

¹ <https://acf.gov/orr/grant-funding/unaccompanied-children-released-sponsors-state>

² <https://citylimits.org/as-city-sees-uptick-in-unaccompanied-immigrant-youth-lawmakers-probe-gaps-in-services/>

C., whose parents regularly beat him with a stick while he slept, whose uncle beat him with a piece of tire until he bled, and whose stepmother attempted to poison him in an effort to ensure her inheritance upon his father's death. When he was just 17 years old, C's father bought him a one-way ticket to Morocco, with instructions not to return. C. made his way to the United States, where he is living in a foster home, enrolled in high school and hoping to get a job.

S., who was brought to the United States from Ecuador by her mother, who returned home, leaving S. here, to fend for herself in the care of a man who sexually abused her. S.'s father, who is abusing drugs, is not willing to care for her and there are no other family members in Ecuador or the United States who are willing to provide a safe home for her. S. now is in a foster home, where she is thriving and hopes to be adopted by her foster parent.

M., who is from Guinea, and last saw his mother when he was nine years old and she left him at his aunt's home. He has never had any contact with his father, and has no other family members who are willing or able to care for him. He has been in the United States since his aunt sent him away at age 15, making it very clear that she no longer wished to care for him. He is now living in a foster home in New York, where he attends high school, is learning English, and hopes to be either a doctor or a nurse one day.

Without having a path to legal status and the ability to obtain work authorization, all of these young people are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, trafficking, becoming homeless, and victims of crime.

For each undocumented child we represent, LFC may seek to obtain the family court orders needed to apply for SIJS relief, but the children must also have an immigration attorney who can assist with the rest of the process. Navigating the complex immigration legal system is challenging for adults, but is near impossible for young people who do not have an attorney at their side. Consequently, it is not surprising that unaccompanied minors who receive legal representation are up to 24 times more likely to obtain immigration relief and avoid deportation than those not represented by counsel³. Appropriately, an Administration for Children's Services policy requires "all youth in foster care who are found to be non-US citizens or do not have documentation of lawful permanent residence must be **referred promptly by the provider agency to immigration legal services providers.**"⁴ While LFC represents the vast majority of these unaccompanied children in family court, several organizations in New York City do this critical work in federal immigration court, including, for example, The Door, Kids in Need of Defense, and the Safe Passages Project.

In March, the Trump Administration announced that it was cancelling contracts totaling over \$300 million to legal services providers who represent children in immigration proceedings. This funding has helped support many of the organizations we rely on to provide immigration assistance, and those organizations have announced plans to significantly reduce (if not

³ <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/homesec/R43599.pdf>

⁴ ACS Policy, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status and Immigration Services, *Policy and Procedure 2013/05*, <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/acs/policies/init/2013/A.pdf> (emphasis in the original).

eliminate) their legal staff. Although the federal government has temporarily ordered a 6-month postponement to the funding cuts, the threat to our clients is real and the potential harm is devastating.

For over 10 years, the City Council's funding has helped screen thousands of young people for immigration issues and provided them with legal services. With funding under threat like never before, we urge the Council to bolster funding for the Unaccompanied Minors Initiative to ensure the greatest number of young people can receive legal representation in their immigration proceedings. Helping put these young people on a path to legal residency makes sound fiscal sense for New York City.



LENOX HILL NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE

**Testimony for the Committees on Finance and on Government Operation, State, and Federal
Legislation
Wednesday, April 16, 2025**

Thank you, Chairs Brannan and Restler and esteemed members of both the Committees on Finance and on Government Operation, State, and Federal Legislation/Committee on Finance, for your continued support and investment in early childhood education in New York City.

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House is a 131-year-old settlement house dedicated to improving the lives of New Yorkers through education, nutrition and wellness, and mental health services. The organization was founded as a kindergarten for immigrant children, and education and care for the children of low-income New Yorkers remains a key part of our mission, now through our Head Start Program, the Early Childhood Center (ECC).

The Early Childhood Center provides an exceptional social, emotional and educational development experience and a wide range of integrated services for 147 preschool children ages 3 to 5 and their families. The core philosophy of our program is to address each child and family individually and tailor our interdisciplinary services to address the full range of strengths and needs so that each child can excel. We offer a wide range of supportive services for the whole family, including legal assistance, health screenings, English language classes, support groups, cooking workshops, parenting education and more. The program addresses the whole child and family, from their health and nutrition to family dynamics and the successful transition to kindergarten. Children and families benefit from our wonderful teaching teams and social workers and other Lenox Hill Neighborhood House services including Visual & Performing Arts, Healthy Foods & Wellness and more.

The loss of Head Start funding would force us to close the program, leaving some of the city's most vulnerable without support. Our Head Start grant is \$2,183,295, which represents almost 10% of our FY25 organizational budget. The loss of this funding would be catastrophic for the Neighborhood House and, more importantly, the clients we serve. Cutting Head Start would force millions of families to scramble for alternatives for childcare and education or be forced to stay home to care for children. Head Start has wide, bipartisan support across the nation; there are programs in every district across the country, sometimes as the only childcare program free to low-income residents. As threats to federal funding are announced, we are increasingly concerned about leaving behind this population of very low-income children and families. Every child deserves the chance to learn and grow up in a safe space in their community.

We were encouraged by [Mayor Eric Adams's and NYC Department of Education officials' pronouncement](#) that Head Start programs will be protected with City funds should federal cuts occur. We ask the Council to prioritize this commitment in the adopted budget or in subsequent modifications as discussions in Washington, DC unfold. Thank you.



City's First Readers

An initiative of the New York City Council

"OVERSIGHT HEARING ON PREPARING NYC FOR CHANGES IN FEDERAL FUNDING," THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL APRIL 16, 2025

Uncertainty can be paralyzing. Not knowing what is coming means not knowing how to plan. And right now we live in very uncertain times. None of us know what this will really mean - not for our individual selves, and as nonprofits, not for the programs we provide.

One thing is for certain, however. Children will continue to be born. All of those children deserve the opportunities of healthy brain development, emotional stability and the experiences that will prepare them to be ready for school. Some of those children will be born into poverty, which diminishes the likelihood they will have those key experiences. Some will be born with neurological wiring that requires specialized approaches to learning.

A second certainty. It is far more effective and far more economical to provide preventative programming earlier than more expensive interventions later. For starters, it is better for the individual child who needs extra assistance to get it early rather than to struggle for several years, sometimes longer, falling behind classmates and losing confidence in their ability to learn. It increases their odds for success to receive that additional support at the earliest possible moment. It's better for their peers and classmates too!

A third reality: 80% of a child's brain development takes place by age three; 90% by age five. There are several essential elements to generating the healthy brain development needed for school readiness, among them are nutrition, a strong relationship based on trust with an adult parent or caregiver, and activities that stimulate curiosity. The latter two often go hand in hand.

A fourth fact. During the pandemic, we prioritized, and not very successfully, grade level learning. There was scant attention paid to the infants, toddlers and preschoolers who were isolated at home, frequently in settings lacking educational resources or stimulation. Further, we did, systematically, nothing special to prepare those children, their teachers or their classroom agendas for responding to the inevitable consequences of that COVID isolation. That omission is playing out in PRE-K, K and early grade classrooms across the country where educators report that pupils are far below social and developmental norms. This fall's incoming Kindergarten class was born in 2020; next term's second graders were two when the world shut down and they were stuck at home, often in households experiencing food insecurity or other significant stress, a known impediment to healthy brain growth. These kids, no matter how resilient they may seem, are not exactly "bouncing back."



City's First Readers

An initiative of the New York City Council



Arab-American Family Support Center





City's First Readers

An initiative of the New York City Council

All of this is to say, no matter what happens at the federal level, no matter what the consequences are for the state and city budget, it is penny wise and pound foolish to make significant cuts to effective early childhood literacy programs.

We, all of us, will pay for those cuts down the road. The children who cannot access programs because they have been eliminated will pay most dearly. The adults who love and care for them. The taxpayers will fund more extensive and expensive interventions at later dates. And when those children are adults with low literacy levels, the cycle will repeat itself as those individuals need more public assistance, have poorer health outcomes and are less engaged in civic life.

When this Council sets its FY26 priorities, do not gloss over early childhood education. Do not underplay the consequences of reducing or cutting these essential programs.

City's First Readers provides precisely the kind of programming that supports healthy brain development, focusing on families with children from birth through 5 years. **City's First Readers** has earned the endorsement of the American Academy of Pediatrics for its approach to strengthening early literacy. Using the power of 17 early literacy partner organizations, we collaborate and [our impact is citywide](#). Unlike some groups testifying today, as a City Council initiative, the only early literacy initiative by the way, **City's First Readers** is not directly funded with federal allocations. But we know that the impact of federal reductions, withholding, and intentional disruption of educational programs at the federal level will affect every aspect of municipal government.

We urge this body to take the long view and expand the effective early childhood programs that are proven to demonstrate an amazing return on investment. **"High-quality birth-to-five programs for disadvantaged children can deliver a 13% return on investment."**¹ What other public expenditure can make that claim?

On behalf of the City's First Readers partner organizations,

Emmanuel Novy
Chief of Strategic Initiatives



[Visit our programs!](#) | www.lincnyc.org

5030 Broadway, Suite 641
New York, NY 10034

¹ Heckman, James. <https://heckmanequation.org/resource/13-roi-toolbox/>





**New York City Council
Committee on Finance and Gov Ops
Chair Brannan and Chair Restler
April 16th 2025
- Preparing NYC for changes in federal funding.**

My name is Kevin Kiproviski and I am the Director of Public Policy at LiveOn NY. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

LiveOn NY's members include more than 110 community-based nonprofits that provide core services under the NYC Aging portfolio and many other home and community based services in our city.

Background

The federal government is slashing resources from many programs that keep older New Yorkers in their homes and communities and is proposing cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, Housing programs and SNAP. Medicaid alone brings in almost 40 billion dollars in funding to NYC through coverage of New Yorkers. Over 400,000 households with an older adult in our city rely on SNAP benefits to meet their basic nutritional requirements. Over 1 million New Yorkers over the age of 65 receive Social Security benefits. Cuts to these programs will cause disproportionate harm to the over 20% of New Yorkers who are over age 60. We will see people who have lived in our city for most of their lives, or who have been here for decades lose their homes, lose access to stable nutrition, and lose access to their medical care.

Recommendations

- **Don't cut NYC Aging's already low budget.** There is currently over 100 million dollars in proposed cuts to the NYC Aging system that will close up to 90 older adult centers if allowed to go through, endangering the only safe system that can truly mitigate the harmful impacts of these cuts.
- **Invest in securing and expanding NYC's incredible aging service network.** The aging services network is one of the most effective tools we have to mitigate the impacts of federal cuts. We currently invest less than half of one percent of the budget and increasing the city's share of the investment even by a small percentage would save and expand the system to meet anticipated needs.
- **Put the stories of older New Yorkers up front in your advocacy and make their voices heard.** In a recent Siena poll almost 70 percent of all demographics of voters said that aging in place should be a top priority and almost 30 percent said it should be THE top priority second only to affordable housing of anyone running for mayor. New Yorkers are deeply concerned



about this issue and we need to make it more visible and more of a priority for the city.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

For questions, please email Kevin Kiprovski, Director of Public Policy at LiveOn NY, kkiprovski@liveon-ny.org

LiveOn NY's members provide the core, community-based services that allow older adults to thrive in their communities. With a base of more than 100 community-based organizations serving at least 300,000 older New Yorkers annually. Our members provide services ranging from senior centers, congregate and home-delivered meals, affordable senior housing with services, elder abuse prevention services, caregiver supports, case management, transportation, and NORCs. LiveOn NY advocates for increased funding for these vital services to improve both the solvency of the system and the overall capacity of community-based service providers.

LiveOn NY also administers a citywide outreach program and staffs a hotline that educates, screens and helps with benefit enrollment including SNAP, SCRIE and others, and also administers the Rights and Information for Senior Empowerment (RISE) program to bring critical information directly to seniors on important topics to help them age well in their communities.



Joy. Power. Possibility.

The Lower Eastside Girls Club connects young women and gender-expansive youth of color throughout New York City to healthy and successful futures through free, innovative year-round programming and mentoring. Together, we are building a just and equitable future filled with "Joy. Power. Possibility."

101 AVENUE D • NEW YORK, NY 10009 • 212-982-1633 • WWW.GIRLSCLUB.ORG

**Testimony from the Lower Eastside Girls Club
City Council FY 26 Preliminary Budget Hearing
Committee on Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation
Jointly with the Committee on Finance
April 16, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chair Brannan and members of the Committee of Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation, and the Committee on Finance. My name is Jenny Dembrow, and I am the Executive Director of the Lower Eastside Girls Club. I've been with the organization since its founding in 1996. Initially, there were three Boys Clubs but no Girls Club. We operated out of a basement, community rooms, schools, and over two dozen locations until we moved into our current 35,000 sq ft facility in 2013. Over nearly 30 years, thousands of young women, gender-expansive youth, and their families have benefited from our free programming.

The Lower Eastside Girls Club (LESGC) has created a safe space of "Joy, Power, Possibility" where young people can dream big, find their passions, and connect to peers and careers through free, year-round programming and mentoring. In 2022, we launched our Center for Wellbeing & Happiness (CWBH), expanding our mission and service population with a core belief that the well-being of our members is intimately connected to the well-being of their family, community, and world. Through CWBH we offer wellness services with a healing-centered approach to all generations and genders on the Lower East Side. 10,000+ individuals benefit annually from LESGC's programming, services, and initiatives.

In the post-pandemic period, LESGC has seen operating costs escalate due to inflation. Essential salary increases were implemented to align with COLA and retain our dedicated staff. Revenue has failed to keep pace with expenditures in recent years. Funds from donors, foundations, and the government are declining, expenses are rising, and demand for services is growing. The expiration of federal pandemic-era aid — coupled with inflation, staffing shortages/rising wages, and declines in giving, are creating an uncertain financial landscape for nonprofits. NYC nonprofits are facing financial challenges that are leading to hiring freezes, program cuts, layoffs, mergers, acquisitions, and closures. According to NY Council of Nonprofits' 2024 State of the Sector report, 62% of NY Nonprofits are concerned about funding basic operations (up from 50% in 2023), and 25% of NY Nonprofits are considering reducing services.

City government contracts, including DYCD contracts, have become unreliable, as have Federal and State funding sources in light of the recent stream of Executive orders. With New York City and State budgets tight, reimbursements for services/programming are increasingly delayed, complicating cash flow for nonprofits. NYC currently has \$500 million in unregistered contracts. As of March 2025, LESGC has \$760,426 in outstanding City government contracts for programming and services that have already been rendered. At the State level, we are awaiting over \$825,000 in reimbursements from DASNY and REDC. Delayed payments have put LESGC and nonprofits across NYC in a precarious financial position.



Joy. Power. Possibility.

The Lower Eastside Girls Club connects young women and gender-expansive youth of color throughout New York City to healthy and successful futures through free, innovative year-round programming and mentoring. Together, we are building a just and equitable future filled with "Joy. Power. Possibility."

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The NYC Department of Youth and Community Services (DYCD) also cut key programs in FY24, negatively impacting youth service providers. Specifically, LESGC lost two DYCD grants: Compass Explorer (\$65,765) and Adolescent Literacy (\$108,274). We also only received half of our EFSP funding for our food pantry this year (\$7,000 of \$14,096). The EFSP program has been frozen with recent federal policy decisions impacting FEMA. These contracts, while not fully covering program costs, are essential to our overall funding model. Beyond the government funding, the recent attack on DEI initiatives and general post-election fiscal uncertainty have also negatively impacted philanthropic giving among corporate and private foundations. Amid these challenges, our strategies for ensuring financial stability include exploring partnerships with mission-aligned organizations, evaluating real estate leasing opportunities, and actively pursuing major philanthropic gifts.

These fiscal challenges pose a direct and imminent risk to our ability to provide the vital services and innovative programming so many rely on at a time when the need is greater than ever. NYC youth have been particularly impacted by the socio-economic tumult of recent years. According to the Citizens Committee of Children of NYC: *Keeping Track on New York Children 2024 Report*, growing income inequality keeps hundreds of thousands of NYC children living below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). In NYC, more than 80% of families with a child under 12 cannot afford child care or after-school care costs. More than 100,000 public school students are living in temporary housing. Black and Latiné youth are disconnected from school and employment at more than double the rate of their white peers. And 38% of NYC High School youth report having symptoms of depression. We know when your basic needs are not met you experience increased health issues. Community-based youth programs, such as LESGC, are essential to addressing the youth mental health and affordability crises in NYC. Operating outside of schools and within neighborhoods, these organizations are valuable assets for youth, families, and communities alike (Gootman & Eccles, 2002; Vandell et al., 2015).

Our innovative model of community youth development has attracted visitors from around the globe. We have made great strides; every day, I have the privilege of witnessing our members challenge the status quo and actualize the future they deserve, all while joyfully shining and thriving. And yet we are currently facing a moment where girls', women's rights, and the rights of marginalized people are being taken away. We must not back down in our fight for a just and equitable future for all New Yorkers.

Currently, LESGC is navigating a challenging financial reality and stands at a critical inflection point. We are requesting \$2.5 million from the City Council in FY 26 to support the stabilization of the organization. Our mission to provide Joy, Power, and Possibility is more urgent than ever. Our community-driven approach fosters long-term resilience, addressing the root causes of hardship and providing a holistic solution for the youth and families we serve. As we search for a way forward, we aim to secure our legacy as a transformative force in New York City and expand our impact for generations to come.



**MET
COUNCIL**

Feeding the hungry. Serving the poor.
Changing lives.

**New York City Council Joint Hearing of the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation, and the Committee on Finance
Oversight Hearing on Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding**

Chair Restler, Chair Brannan and fellow members of the New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation, and the Committee on Finance.

Thank you for holding this oversight hearing to Prepare New York City for Changes in Federal Funding. Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty (Met Council) is the largest provider of emergency kosher and halal food in New York City. Due to current and anticipated sweeping cuts in federal funding, we urgently request that the City Council allocate \$20 million of emergency funding for food pantries in the Fiscal Year 26 New York City Budget for both Met Council as well as our partners, Catholic Charities and the Hispanic Federation. During this time of expected cuts to the safety net and elimination of supports for the poor, this funding will allow us to provide essential resources for communities that are often left out of the traditional emergency food system. Additionally, we want to express our support for the council's decision to call on the administration to baseline the funding of Community Food Connection (CFC) at \$100 million and highlight the importance of this program.

For over 50 years, Met Council has been America's largest Jewish charity dedicated to fighting poverty. We operate ten departments, ranging from 100% affordable housing to our award-winning family violence program, comprehensive Holocaust survivor assistance, senior programming, crisis intervention, and the country's largest kosher emergency food network. Over the past five years, we have also expanded our emergency food network to halal-observant communities and now regularly serve a network of halal pantries meeting the needs of Muslim New Yorkers. Met Council provides a wide array of support to over 320,000 New Yorkers annually, including those with religious dietary restrictions.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, at the height of need and significant uncertainty, New York City Council wisely created a special fund for emergency food — allowing for an injection of additional resources that allowed for targeted support to go to hard to reach, historically underserved communities.

This funding allowed us to deploy needed resources to areas with limited pantry and social service infrastructure in communities that are not part of the traditional emergency food system, as well as to programs that facilitated increased access through the use of innovative models that lead to an efficient and productive emergency food system. Due to the success of this initiative, Met Council, Catholic Charities, and Hispanic Federation are urging City Council to commit \$20 million to continue and expand on the important work that has been done.

Unfortunately, providers are once again seeing unprecedented levels of need in New York City. Amid an ever-growing affordability crisis, many New Yorkers turn to emergency food providers to feed their families. An estimated 1.3 million New Yorkers experience food insecurity and according to the most recent True Cost of Living Report, 63 percent of households with children cannot consistently meet

their basic needs. Additionally, a new report by the New York Health Foundation found that the rate of food insufficiency is now higher for all income groups than it was in 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Alongside these alarming statistics, New York City is also home to the largest Jewish population and one of the largest Muslim populations in the country. Research shows that poverty within the Jewish population tracks alongside general poverty and that Muslim Americans face food insecurity at a higher rate than nearly all other religious groups in the country, which means hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers are kosher-observant or halal-observant, and low income. (Pew Research Center, May 11, 2021, "Jewish Americans in 2020"; Met Council, March 2023, "Food Insufficiency and Halal Observance Among American Muslims"). New Yorkers observing religiously informed diets are often put in a position to compromise their religious observance or go without food when they try to utilize the emergency food system which does not meet their needs. It is essential that the New York City Council adequately funds programs that enable frontline emergency food providers to access a wide variety of kosher and halal food in order to meet the needs of their communities.

Emergency food providers are working to meet continuously growing demand but are facing widespread cuts to the federal funding sources on which they rely. The NYS Ag & Markets program New York Food for New York Families (NYFNFF) has been cancelled, a significant portion of the USDA Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) has been frozen with no end date or guarantee of reinstatement, and major cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are predicted later this year.

Met Council's ability to provide kosher and halal food to hundreds of thousands of hungry New Yorkers is directly tied to funding from the federal government. Through just one federal program, the Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Program (known as NYFNFF in New York State) Met Council procured and distributed approximately \$928,000 worth of food in FY2024 to date. This food was purchased directly from New York State farmers. This is on top of the 1.75 million pounds of food received through TEFAP and distributed through Met Council's Food Pantry Network. Both of these programs enable Met Council to provide New Yorkers with the food they need to feed their families. Without these programs emergency food providers will be facing increased need with severely reduced resources.

In addition to the federal funding that supports Met Council's Food Programs, federal resources play a critical role in advancing the work of Met Council's Crisis Intervention and Benefits Access departments. The Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP), funded by FEMA, provides cash assistance to Met Council's clients facing eviction. The Targeted Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (T-SNAP), a state program that receives federal funding, supports Met Council's Benefits Access work doing SNAP enrollment, skimming refunds, and recertification. Both of these programs are either at risk of cuts or have already been frozen. In tandem with the federal funding that supports Met Council's Food Programs, millions of dollars of vital funding have either been cut or is at risk.

Due to continually increasing need and cuts in federal funding, Met Council is joining other anti-hunger leaders in expressing our support of City Council's decision to call for baseline funding of \$100 million for CFC. Unlike many other state and federal programs, CFC enables pantries to select the food that meets the needs of their communities. The flexibility of CFC funding is particularly valuable for kosher and halal food providers, as it enables them to procure foods for their communities that are not accessible through other streams of funding. Nearly 20 percent of New Yorkers are Muslim or Jewish.

Thirty-five percent of American Jews keep or prefer kosher and 83 percent of American Muslims keep or prefer halal (Met Council, March 2023, "Food Insufficiency and Halal Observance Among American Muslims"). As mentioned previously, Jewish and Muslim New Yorkers face poverty and food insecurity at a rate similar to or higher than the national average. By continuing and expanding the funding for CFC, New York City Council can take steps toward a more equitable emergency feeding system that adequately serves the kosher and halal observant populations in New York City.

In this uncertain moment, when federal anti-hunger programs are under attack, it is essential that the City Council step in to fill the gap that federal cuts will leave behind. For Met Council, the importance of this funding cannot be overstated. Frontline emergency food providers are a last resort when New Yorkers need to feed their families. When emergency food providers do not have the resources to meet the need, New Yorkers go hungry. By committing \$20 million in discretionary funding for emergency funding for food pantries and baseline funding CFC at \$100 million, this committee could provide great benefit for food-insecure New Yorkers, particularly those with religiously required dietary restrictions.

We thank you for taking the time to review our testimony, and we hope to continue to work with this committee and the City Council to better meet the needs of all New Yorkers experiencing food insecurity.

Thank you,

Hannah Lupien

Hannah Lupien
Managing Director of Food Programs
Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty



new destiny
housing

**TESTIMONY OF NEW DESTINY HOUSING
TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS,
STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION AND COMMITTEE ON FINANCE OVERSIGHT
HEARING ON PREPARING NYC FOR CHANGES IN FEDERAL FUNDING**

**Gina Cappuccitti, Sr. Director of Housing Access and Stability Services
April 16, 2025**

Thank you, New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation Chair Restler, Committee on Finance Chair Brannan, Council Members, and Council Central Staff for convening this oversight hearing on preparing NYC for changes in federal funding, and for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

ABOUT NEW DESTINY

Founded in 1994, New Destiny's mission is to end the cycle of domestic violence and homelessness for low-income families and individuals by developing and connecting them to safe, permanent, affordable housing and services.

New Destiny is the only organization in New York City solely dedicated to the solution of permanent housing for survivors of domestic violence. We are the largest provider of supportive housing for survivors in New York, and we operate the first federally funded rapid rehousing program for those impacted by domestic violence in our city (HousingLink).

We are also a co-convenor of the [Family Homelessness Coalition \(FHC\)](#), a collective of mothers who have experienced homelessness and organizations committed to tackling housing insecurity among families in our city. New Destiny is also a member of the Supportive Housing Network of New York and the Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HOMELESSNESS

Domestic violence and homelessness are fundamentally connected. As New Destiny documented in its report: [A Crisis Compounded: The Dual Crises of Domestic Violence and Homelessness](#), domestic violence is the leading cause of family homelessness in New York City, pushing more families into shelter than evictions.

Due to the lack of permanent housing options, which are compounded by the devastating long-lasting effects of abuse, survivors may linger in shelter for years. In 2023, only 9% of survivors moved from Human Resources Administration (HRA) domestic violence emergency shelter to a permanent home and more than half left for another shelter, upon reaching the State-mandated limit of 180 days. One in 4 survivors and their children had to move from HRA domestic violence emergency shelter to a Department of Homeless Services family shelter, where the average length of stay is over a year, according to the Fiscal Year 2025 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report.

With no certainty of how long they'll be homeless, survivors are forced to make the impossible choice between entering the shelter system or remaining in abusive situations, putting their lives at risk. In 2023, 1 of every 5 homicides were domestic violence homicides in New York City, where the victim was either an intimate partner or a family member.

FEDERAL FUNDING CUTS

The federal government removed information on essential funding opportunities from the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women in February, and it has also issued a series of workforce reductions to multiple agencies that provide critical services to survivors of domestic violence. Key branches in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) have been decimated, which will interrupt functions and threaten lifesaving resources for survivors.

Since 2019, New Destiny has received HUD funding through the New York City Continuum of Care (CoC) to operate the first rapid rehousing program for domestic violence survivors in the five boroughs: HousingLink. This program provides housing navigation help, temporary rental assistance, and supportive services to promote long-term housing stability. In 2022, New Destiny added a second rapid rehousing program dedicated to survivors with housing vouchers, such as CityFHEPS, FHEPS, and Section 8. At any given time, we are supporting 300 domestic violence households across these two contracts.

Like the other 165 CoC programs in New York City, New Destiny's rapid-rehousing programs are a lifeline for New Yorkers, including thousands of survivors. We are worried about HUD's ability to properly manage these contracts when the job cuts go in effect next month, as well as the imminent threat of budgetary reductions. While funding for CoC programs has been appropriated already, the [Trump administration has made attempts](#) to make it difficult for nonprofits to access these funds.

New Destiny is also deeply concerned about the ending of the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program. EHV's are a form of Housing Choice Vouchers, more commonly known as Section 8. The program was created as a 10-year initiative in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic to house 70,000 households nationwide, focusing on those in most dire need, like people living in the streets and survivors trying to flee an abusive relationship. Agencies across the country were notified in March that funding for the EHV program is ending this year. [Close to 8,000 New Yorkers](#) depend on this vital housing resource, including nearly 1,700 domestic violence survivors.

New Destiny was among the nonprofits selected to provide voluntary housing navigation to EHV recipients. In less than 2 years, we helped house over 700 domestic violence survivors with EHV's. New Destiny went a step further and secured private funding to make available aftercare to the survivors we placed. We know firsthand how vulnerable many of them are to return to homelessness or their abuser if they were to lose their voucher.

While we are pushing Congress to allocate funding to sustain the EHV program in 2026 and beyond, HPD, NYCHA, and DSS must plan for contingencies to ensure these New Yorkers remain stably housed.

This year, more than ever, we need our city leaders to step up and protect New Yorkers impacted by domestic violence by:

EXPANDING CITYFHEPS ELIGIBILITY

A shelter stay is often required to qualify for rental assistance programs, which effectively excludes survivors who are fleeing abuse and have never spent time in shelter. As it is the case for countless survivors without children, who are often members of the LGBTQIA+ community, trafficking survivors, and older adults, and often unable to access domestic violence emergency shelter. Expanding all voucher program eligibility to include survivors who are escaping an abusive situation and regardless of family size, as the federal EHV program did, is vital. This will help open a path EHV recipients to transition to the CityFHEPS program as needed.

We thank the Council for their leadership in passing the CityFHEPS legislative package in 2023, which scaled up the rental assistance program to include households at risk of eviction or experiencing homelessness, among other key enhancements. Such modification would expand access to CityFHEPS for survivors who are fleeing domestic violence. However, Mayor Adams refuses to implement the bills, and the case continues to be litigated in court.

The Adams administration must fully enact the CityFHEPS legislative package to ensure survivors fleeing abuse. For noncitizen New Yorkers or those in mixed-status households, where at least one member of the family is a U.S. citizen or eligible immigrant, it can be difficult – if not impossible – to access sufficient housing support. This includes countless immigrant survivors of domestic violence, who lack equitable access to housing resources and, as a result, tend to stay in shelter for longer.

INVESTING IN SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS: EXPAND NYC 15/15

Supportive housing is one of the safest and most cost-effective housing solutions for survivors of domestic violence. Federal funding cuts make investment in city-funded supportive housing even more critical now.

Abuse has long-lasting detrimental effects on the physical and psychological well-being of survivors. Survivors are [31% more likely to develop cardiovascular disease](#) and 51% are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes compared to those who have not been impacted by domestic violence. At least half of survivors experience posttraumatic stress disorder and depression; moreover, [survivors can sustain head trauma more often than football players](#), but they are rarely diagnosed. In fact, research shows that almost [75% of domestic violence incidents involve brain injury](#), and the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) now recognize intimate partner violence as a [leading cause of traumatic brain injury](#).

Supportive housing provides survivors with a home they can afford and the support they need to heal and thrive. After years of tireless advocacy from New Destiny and partner organizations, in August 2024, the Adams administration included domestic violence survivors as an eligible population for New York City 15/15, the latest city-funded supportive housing program.

As of 2024, 100% of NYC 15/15 congregate units had already been allocated, which means that organizations like New Destiny cannot develop supportive housing for domestic violence survivors under this critical program.

As the [Supportive Housing Network of NY recommends](#), we urge the city reallocate a portion of the remaining scattered site units to congregate.

Thank you for your leadership and the opportunity to submit written testimony. We are happy to answer your questions.



**New York Lawyers
for the Public Interest, Inc.**
151 West 30th Street, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10001-4017
Tel 212-244-4664 Fax 212-244-4570
TTY 212-244-3692 www.nylpi.org

**Testimony of Justin Wood, Director of Policy
at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest to the New York City
Council Committees on Governmental Operations and Finance
April 16, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chairs Brannan and Restler and members of the Council. My name is Justin Wood, and I am the Director of Policy at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI). We appreciate the opportunity to testify today.

1. Our clients and partners are directly harmed by federal funding cuts:

NYLPI's community-driven legal programs are responding to and impacted by the threat of federal funding cuts to New York City. Our Health Justice program provides direct immigration legal services and organizes an extensive volunteer Medical Providers Network focused on immigrant health. Our Pro Bono Clearinghouse works with a network of thousands of attorneys at nearly 80 member law firms both to increase our internal capacity and to provide crucial legal services to hundreds of community-based organizations around the City that collectively serve over 1.5 million low-income and marginalized New Yorkers. Our Environmental Justice program similarly works with frontline community organizations directly impacted by federal freezes on funding for local climate and environmental justice initiatives. Our Disability Justice program includes representation and advocacy for New Yorkers impacted by threats to funding for special education, accessible transit systems, and mental health services.

The Trump Administration is singularly focused on exacting retribution from local government agencies, elected officials, nonprofit organizations, judges, and law firms that challenge their anti-immigrant agenda or seek to challenge executive decisions by asserting the rule of law.

The human cost to New York's immigrant communities and to nonprofit services and legal organizations that support or defend New Yorkers is already severe. NYLPI is supporting and providing services to community-based organizations that are currently the direct targets of federal agencies. We are standing up against those attempting to conduct raids, chill advocacy organizations, and claw back or freeze vital funding for services to immigrants and low-income New Yorkers.

We are asking the Council to restore and enhance funding for the Immigrant Health Initiative, which has saved lives and improved health across our city. **Due to the growing and ever-changing complexity of immigration cases and the challenges placed on immigration processes, especially given the arrival of thousands of migrants to the City in recent years and a hostile federal administration, we are seeking a \$650,000 allocation from the City Council's Immigrant Healthcare Initiative in CFY 2026.**

2. Nonprofit Defense Network:

Community-based organizations, nonprofits, faith institutions, and businesses serving or employing immigrants must continue to come together and form a critical shield in this unprecedented atmosphere of fear. NYLPI plans to continue our work building and expanding a resource center and defense network for nonprofits, healthcare providers, small businesses, and other entities serving or employing immigrant New Yorkers. We will continue to issue practical legal guides, host workshops, and connect those in need with legal representation. We're providing New Yorkers with the information and guidance they need today - on topics including workplace rights during an attempted raid; confidentiality and data privacy (including HIPAA, FERPA, and City sanctuary laws); responding to Congressional investigations; IRS challenges to nonprofit status, and other critical questions from stakeholders. **With a City Council grant of \$500,000, NYLPI could train or support 600-800 organizations across the City this fiscal year, with an additional multiplier effect of sharing online content.**

3. New York State and City Legislative Solutions:

The drastic cuts to federal funding for FEMA resiliency grants, Medicaid, transportation infrastructure, and renewable energy being carried out and planned by Congress and the Trump Administration could have a severe impact on New York City and State's ability to support vital services and capital investments.

Our City and State officials must speak with one voice to oppose this ideologically driven austerity and to continue implementation of independent state and local policy solutions that will protect our financial health and our ability to achieve lived equality for all New Yorkers.

One major win-win success is Congestion Pricing, which is expected to generate \$12 billion in capital funding for urgently needed MTA projects while substantially reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air quality and street safety.

We similarly applaud the City Council's call for new capital funding for Local Law 97 Compliance Assistance that would help small and moderate-income apartment buildings make

upfront investments in efficiency and renewable energy while creating thousands of good, local jobs.

New York State can bolster local climate investments and protect the emerging renewable energy economy by immediately publishing regulations and advancing the Cap and Invest Program mandated by the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). This program is expected to generate \$3-6 billion in energy affordability rebates and climate investments statewide, a substantial portion of which would flow to New York City communities. We ask that the City Council and the Adams Administration join us in pushing for immediate advancement of this program.

4. Nonprofit contracting reform:

Finally, as the nonprofit legal and human services sector faces a bleak and unstable funding environment, City government can take action to increase transparency, timeliness, and funding in nonprofit contracting. We are privileged to receive support from New York City for direct legal representation we provide to New Yorkers with serious health conditions especially those who face major barriers to accessing health insurance and care.

Nonprofit contractors play a major role in delivering essential and in many cases life-saving services and goods to New Yorkers, especially disadvantaged New Yorkers facing the steepest health, mental health, and environmental burdens. Despite comprising a major part of our social safety net, human services providers face arbitrary delays in contract registration, payment, and lack of transparency from City agencies. We support the calls from our sector to find legislative opportunities to speed up contract registration, incentivize agencies to make prompt payments to contractors, and to improve parity between public and nonprofit pay scales.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify at this timely and urgent hearing and hope to continue working with the City Council to advance our shared goals of protecting New Yorkers and creating a more equitable, healthy, and sustainable city for all.

Yours,

Justin Wood
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
151 West 30th Street, 11th floor
New York, NY 10001
Jwood@nylpi.org

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For almost 50 years, NYLPI has fought to protect civil rights and achieve lived equality for communities in need. Led by community priorities, we pursue health, immigrant, disability, and environmental justice. NYLPI combines the power of law, organizing, and the private bar to make lasting change where it's needed most.

For more information visit: www.nylpi.org



N O N P R O F I T
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Nonprofit Staten Island
PO Box 141292
Staten Island, NY 10314
(347) 6-SINFPA [347-674-6372]
www.nonprofitstatenisland.org

April 23, 2025

**Testimony of Tatiana Arguello, Executive Director, Nonprofit Staten Island
City Council Oversight Hearing on Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding
April 16, 2025**

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Good morning, Chair Brannan, Chair De La Rosa, and members of the Committees on Finance and Governmental Operations.

My name is Tatiana Arguello, and I serve as the Executive Director of Nonprofit Staten Island, the hub for community-based organizations serving Staten Island’s most vulnerable residents.

I am here today because Staten Island is once again at risk of being left behind. I am testifying today on behalf of our 150+ member organizations and the thousands of Staten Islanders we collectively serve — many of whom are children, seniors, immigrants, and families already living on the margins.

Let me be clear: **we are not receiving our fair share**, and we cannot afford to absorb another dollar of lost funding — not now, not ever again.

This past fiscal year, Nonprofit Staten Island lost \$50,000 in discretionary funding in FY 25— critical, mission-driven dollars that directly supported nonprofit capacity building and leadership development in one of the city’s most under-resourced boroughs. When we examined the data, we saw that Staten Island received only **2% of the Speaker’s Fund**, a fund meant to support the city’s nonprofit ecosystem equitably. We are one of the only borough-based nonprofits not included in that list and at all in many other city wide initiatives in the portfolio— despite serving a borough that makes up **6% of the city’s population**.

This is just one example of a long-standing pattern. Staten Island’s nonprofit organizations — many of which are small, culturally competent, and community-embedded — are consistently underfunded, overlooked, and under-supported.

And now, as the city prepares for potential federal funding cuts, we are raising a red flag.

We cannot afford another dollar to be taken out of Staten Island. We are already not getting our fair share.

That population is changing rapidly, and the needs are growing faster than the resources. Our borough has:

- **23% of residents under 18**, comparable to the city average.
- **13% Asian residents, 1.4x higher than NYC overall**, including the largest Sri Lankan community in the U.S.



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Nonprofit Staten Island
PO Box 141292
Staten Island, NY 10314
(347) 6-SINFPA [347-674-6372]
www.nonprofitstatenisland.org

- **37.7% speak a language other than English at home** — that's 25% higher than NYC's average.

And yet:

The need in Staten Island is real, and it is growing. Our borough has:

- Some of the city's most persistent child care deserts;
- Only 4% of DYCD after-school programming;
- Just 3.8% of Older Adult Center programs, despite having the same median age and poverty rates among seniors as the rest of NYC;
- Zero funded geriatric social services;
- One city-funded health clinic; NO city hospitals.
- No local legal services for immigrants, and no funded immigrant-serving agencies — despite a rapidly growing and diverse population, including the largest Sri Lankan community in the country.

Even in citywide equity initiatives, we are missing:

Staten Island received **\$0** from the **\$5 million AAPI community fund**, and **\$0** from the **\$43.7 million Communities of Color Nonprofit Stabilization Fund in FY 24**.

Meanwhile, Staten Island's older adult poverty rate and median age mirror citywide numbers — but we have **only one vendor** providing senior case management services — for the whole borough.

This is not about scarcity — it is about choice. It is about prioritization. And it is about who gets to be seen in the eyes of this city. We cannot keep getting left behind.

We already operate with fewer Council Members and less political representation. We are often overlooked in citywide conversations. But the nonprofits that serve Staten Island are not invisible — and we will not be silent.

With federal cuts looming, Staten Island cannot and will not accept more funding being stripped away. We are already operating with far less than our peers, and our communities — communities of color, immigrant families, youth, and older adults — are paying the price.

This budget must start reflecting equity in more than name only. Staten Island deserves investment. We demand our fair share.

Sincerely,

Tatiana Arguello, Executive Director,
Nonprofit Staten Island, tatiana@nonprofitstatenisland.org, [REDACTED]

**City Council Oversight Hearing on Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding
Testimony Submitted by Celestine Cox, Director of Membership
Nonprofit Staten Island
April 16, 2025**

Good morning, Chair Brannan, Chair De La Rosa, and members of the Committees on Finance and Governmental Operations.

My name is Celestine Cox, and I serve as the Director of Membership at Nonprofit Staten Island. I'm grateful for the opportunity to speak with you today about the critical issue of federal funding and the devastating impact its reduction is having on the Staten Island community.

Nonprofit Staten Island represents a network of 150 nonprofit organizations that serve our borough across a wide spectrum of human services — from youth programming and mental health services to housing assistance, food security, immigrant support, and more. Since our founding in 2005, we have worked to strengthen Staten Island's nonprofit sector and amplify the voices of those who serve our most vulnerable populations.

I stand before you today deeply concerned. The reduction in federal funding is not just a line item change on a budget — it is a direct blow to the heart of our borough. The services that our member organizations provide are not luxuries. They are essential lifelines that keep families housed, children educated and safe, seniors cared for, and communities whole.

Although Staten Island's demographics have shifted and the needs of our residents have increased, the funding to support these needs has not kept pace. Quite the opposite — it has declined. And this decline is being felt across every corner of our nonprofit community.

Let me be clear: without adequate federal funding, many of our member organizations are in jeopardy. Some are already being forced to reduce programming, lay off staff, or in some cases, consider closing their doors entirely. This is not hypothetical — this is happening now.

At Nonprofit Staten Island, we ourselves have been directly impacted by these funding cuts. As the central support hub for our nonprofit sector, our ability to provide training, advocacy, and capacity-building to our members is threatened at the very moment they need it most.

And when organizations reduce services, it's not just numbers on a spreadsheet — it's a senior citizen who loses their home aide, a family who goes without food for the week, a teen who misses the opportunity to stay off the streets and on a path toward higher education.

Our member organizations are telling us every day: they are at a breaking point. They are being asked to do more with less. They are navigating skyrocketing demand for services in the face of shrinking budgets and unpredictable support. They are innovating, stretching, and sacrificing — but they cannot do it alone.

I urge the City Council to advocate vigorously at the federal level for the restoration and expansion of funding to support our nonprofit infrastructure. Investment in nonprofits is an investment in people, in safety, in equity, and in the future of Staten Island.

Our borough is resilient, but resilience has limits. We are calling on you to help us meet this moment — before more doors close and more lives are impacted.

Thank you for your time and for your continued commitment to the people of New York City. I welcome any questions you may have.

Oversight - Preparing NYC for changes in federal funding

Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

- Lincoln Restler, Chairperson

Committee on Finance - Justin Brannan, Chairperson

Wednesday, April 16, 2025 - 10 AM - Council Chambers - City Hall

TESTIMONY PROVIDED BY NORTHSIDE CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Council Members, I'm Paula Magnus, Deputy Director of Northside Center for Child Development, serving over 4,000 children and families each year. We are deeply concerned about the potential impact of proposed federal funding cuts to Head Start and Medicaid-supported behavioral health services. If these cuts are enacted without City replacement, the impact would be devastating. We would be forced to close 18 ACF Funded classrooms, which would also jeopardize the sustainability of our 6 Department of Education classrooms. This would lead to a cascading crisis across our programs and sites.

The loss of this funding would be the fatal death of our 80-year-old agency, forcing closures across the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan, and eliminating over 300 jobs.

Parents would lose childcare access, risking their employment and increasing food insecurity. The broader economic impact would include lost productivity, reduced tax revenue, and heightened demand for social services.

The immediate consequences would be devastating: 248 children would lose their placements in our ACF funded Head Start classrooms, and an additional 135 children would lose their placement in DOE classrooms. Thus, these children would be deprived of developmental screenings, mental health support, and proper nutrition.

These proposed cuts would do profound harm—not just to children and families in New York City, but to the economic and social fabric of our nation. In the long run, the cost of these cuts far outweighs any short-term savings.

We're not just fighting for funding, we're fighting for the future of our children, families, workforce, and city.

Please notice the below documentation that highlights the value of our Head Start Program.

Thank you for your time- and for standing with us in this critical fight.



Review

Mental Health and Social Development Effects of the Abecedarian Approach

Joseph Sparling^{1,2,*}, Sharon Landesman Ramey³ and Craig T. Ramey³

- ¹ Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC 27599, USA
- ² Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, Parkville, VIC 3010, Australia
- ³ Fralin Biomedical Research Institute, and Departments of Psychology, Neuroscience, and Human Development, Virginia Tech, Roanoke, VA 24016, USA; slramey@vt.edu (S.L.R.); ctramey@vt.edu (C.T.R.)
- * Correspondence: sparling@unc.edu

Abstract: The Abecedarian Approach is an early intervention and contains a broad-spectrum adult/child curriculum. The Approach has been studied in three longitudinal randomized controlled trials in the USA, starting in 1972 and continuing today. Recent research studies in multiple countries have examined the Abecedarian Approach during the first three years of life. The collective findings from these studies lead to the conclusion that human development is malleable, especially in the years before school entry, and that high-quality early intervention exerts positive, early, and long-lasting influences on human development, including social development and mental health.



Keywords: Abecedarian; mental health; social development; language development; equity

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1. Introduction

A broad-spectrum program such as the Abecedarian Approach attempts to influence multiple strands of development in a holistic way. “Broad-spectrum curricula exist because professionals who facilitate development recognize that each child is more than a collection of skills and attitudes. The ‘more’ can be seen in the pattern by which the skills fit together and reinforce each other. The broad-spectrum curriculum is congruent with the goal of developing an individual who is internally integrated and whose skills are generalized across many situations of life. Because of its emphasis on life situations, a young child’s broad-spectrum curriculum, when being implemented, looks like play. This type of curriculum comprehensively spans large blocks of time and is incorporated into all or most of the things the child does during the day” [1] (p. 2).

The Abecedarian Approach is distinctive in its design and research and in its persistent and pervasive focus on adult-child interaction. It is the only educational program that begins at the child’s birth, continues until the child enters school, is supported by over 40 years of high-quality scientific research [2], and has been effectively implemented through multiple methods of delivery (child care, home visits, and play groups). The Approach was first studied in three longitudinal randomized controlled trials in the USA: the Abecedarian Project [3], Project CARE [4], and the Infant Health and Development Program [5].

The Abecedarian Approach has been implemented in multiple countries. The Approach has been adapted and used as a birth to age three or birth to age five program in Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, France, India, Jordan, Mexico, Mongolia, Pakistan, Singapore, and Zambia [6–11]. Some of these uses were research studies while others were training and implementation applications. Each of these efforts provides new insights and creativity in making the Abecedarian Approach a useful and widely used resource.

Abecedarian studies that were conducted after the first study, were not traditional replications in that they did not simply repeat the original study at another time or place. Each study tried to produce new knowledge by varying some aspect such as the method of

program delivery, setting, length of treatment, or program staffing. These are components that have been varied across the Abecedarian research studies.

- Samples: children from low-resource families, children born prematurely and at low birth weight, children with cerebral palsy, children from various countries, Indigenous children, children in an orphanage.
- Method of program delivery: center-based group care, family child care homes, play groups, home visiting.
- Length of intervention: birth to 36 months of age, birth to school entry.

In the early 1970s, the original Abecedarian researchers asked the question: Could a positive early childhood experience really help historically low-achieving children develop in a pattern similar to the general population of children and have greater success in school? To begin the process of answering this question, the Abecedarian Approach was created to serve as the core of the “educational treatment” in the Abecedarian Project, a rigorous longitudinal research study. The investigators hypothesized that providing theory-based, active, contingent experiences to children across the very early years of development could significantly improve their academic achievement and social adjustment once they reached school. Full day child care was chosen as the platform for delivering these experiences in the first study because it allowed the researchers the opportunity to verify that the educational program was being delivered faithfully and in sufficient amounts.

The theoretical underpinnings of the Abecedarian Approach were derived from three classic sources. Vygotsky’s [12] concept of adult-mediated activities is the basis for the emphasis that Abecedarian places on the adult’s role in facilitating and adding emotional and education value to caregiving, play, and games. Scaife and Bruner’s [13] explanation of joint attention is the basis for the Abecedarian focus on graded prompts in early book reading and play. Piaget’s [14] sequencing of developmental progression provides specific behavioral goals for the Abecedarian activities, especially the Interaction Games. These concepts are embodied in the Abecedarian Approach through four core educational program elements.

2. What Is the Abecedarian Approach?

A key Abecedarian feature is that its educational program begins at birth [15] and supports this pivotal early period of learning and brain development. This dramatically separates it from other well-known early childhood programs that begin at age 3 or 4 years. At the time these other programs enroll children, the Abecedarian Approach has already had a significant part of its effect.

The adult-child curriculum of the Abecedarian Approach is a strong set of teaching and learning strategies implemented through intentional adult-child interactions that are explicitly described and illustrated in the Abecedarian program resources, activities, learning strategies, and training.

In creating this Approach for the Abecedarian Project in the early 1970s, we strove to capture the emerging scientific knowledge about how infants and young children grow and develop and to translate this technical information into playful activities and educational interactions. We attempted to create activities that could be understood and used by parents and by all adults working with and caring for young children. The Approach incorporated many features of a stimulating home environment as well as some features of a high-quality child care center.

These are the four elements of the Abecedarian Approach briefly described:

- Language Priority—making each part of the child’s day an opportunity for talking, listening, responding, and taking turns. Young babies’ glances and gestures are accepted as important parts of a two-way conversation.
- Conversational Reading—reading books interactively, emphasizing the child’s active role. The adult provides graded or hierarchical prompts to gradually elicit more developmentally advanced responses from the child. The word “conversational” emphasizes the back-and-forth, reciprocal nature of this type of reading.

- Interaction Games—playing interactively through adult-child games tailored to the child’s interests and developmental level. The games appear easy on the surface but challenge the adult to find just the right level and variation for the individual child. While the action of the game is simple, the significance to the child’s development can be profound.
- Enriched Caregiving—incorporating educational content and social-emotional connection into the child’s daily care routines such as feeding/eating, changing diapers/toileting, bathing/washing hands, getting dressed/undressed. Adults enhance the basic level of care they provide by emphasizing its social-emotional aspect as well as incorporating explicit educational content such as shapes, sizes, colors, numbers, and processes.

Each element is one way of looking at adult-child interactions. In the Abecedarian Approach, interactions occur intentionally, individually, and frequently. If the adults are educators, they have written plans. If they are parents, the “plans” may be more informal. This allows the adults to engage in the activities intentionally and focusing on individual children. Most of the interactions are performed one-on-one (or one adult to two children when the children are developmentally ready) allowing the adult to tailor content and responses to the child’s individual needs. Each of the elements of the Abecedarian Approach is incorporated into the child’s day multiple times, the repetition providing many opportunities for practice.

Since the Abecedarian Approach focuses on multiple strands of child development, one way to think about the Approach is to consider how the parts of the Abecedarian adult-child curriculum are intended to relate to the observed or hypothesized Abecedarian effects or outputs. Table 1 provides a summary this set of relationships in an Input-Output Map.

The map presents a rudimentary topographical view of the intersection between the Abecedarian Approach (the program inputs) and the Abecedarian child effects (the program outputs). The darker areas are hypothesized to be areas of strong influence, the lighter areas to be areas of moderate influence, and the unshaded areas to represent non-hypothesized or minimal influence.

Table 1. Abecedarian input-output map.

INPUTS (Program Components)	OUTPUTS (Child Effects or Pathways to Effects)									
	Cognitive Advantage		Executive Function		Motivational Advantage		School Behavior		Social Adjustment	
	Knowledge	Skills	Self-Talk	Planning	Locus-of-Control	Goal Direction	Attention	Task Orientation	Turn Taking	Relationships
Interaction Games	Dark	Light	Light	Light	Dark	Light	Dark	Light	Dark	Dark
Conversational Reading	Light	Dark	Light	Light	Light	Light	Dark	Light	Dark	Light
Language Priority	Dark	Dark	Dark	Dark	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light
Enriched Caregiving	Dark	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Dark	Light	Dark

Some child care providers who read about the Abecedarian Approach notice that some of the ideas in the four elements of the Approach seem familiar and are similar to some of their current practices. Their response is, “This is not special, I already do it” [16]. It is true that many of the Abecedarian practices may be seen in good child care programs. Yet, within most programs the practices are not used with enough individualization, frequency, and intentionality to produce the profound effects that are shown in the Abecedarian research. “The innovation of the Abecedarian Approach was in bringing together all the elements of high quality and holding them steady over an extended period of time at a level

of consistency that would yield significant, measurable, long-term benefits for vulnerable children and families” [17] (p. 6).

The research reported below does not imply that students from families of low economic and low educational backgrounds who do not participate in a program such as the Abecedarian Approach tend to have immutable developmental profiles that are not amenable to change by the school after age five. The research demonstrates that, on average, children from low-resource backgrounds who have experienced an early Abecedarian program enter school with a developmental and educational advantage compared to children from similar backgrounds who have not experienced the program and that the advantage accrues to their benefit throughout their school years and into middle adulthood.

3. Mental Health and Social Development Effects from Abecedarian Interventions

Since the Abecedarian Approach has been studied for a number of decades, there have been hundreds of peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters published on the research findings of this program. Multiple Abecedarian studies show that intervening broadly for children from low resource families yields a variety of early and long-lasting positive outcomes [2]. Often, the Abecedarian Approach has been viewed as a cognitive intervention, and indeed, it does have strong and lasting cognitive [18] and academic achievement [19] effects. However, that view masks the breadth of the Abecedarian intervention and the breadth of its effects. In this section we focus on research findings that reveal the other Abecedarian effects—especially those that are traditionally labeled as social development and mental health. The studies discussed below were chosen because they reach from the first year of life through the fourth decade of life and represent findings on various aspects of social development and mental health across that span.

3.1. Attachment

Because the first Abecedarian study, called the Abecedarian Project, was delivered through group child care, the researchers wanted to know if there was a positive or negative effect from the child care experience itself. At one year of age the infants and their mothers were observed in the Ainsworth Strange Situation paradigm [20]. This observational study, early in the history of the Abecedarian Project, showed that Abecedarian child care was not associated with increased insecure attachment and did not negatively change, and sometimes enhanced, the associations between the infant-mother attachment and the mother’s involvement and warmth toward the infant during the first year of life [21]. On another occasion the children who attended Abecedarian child care were observed in a situation designed to heighten attachment behaviors; both their mothers and a favorite infant-day-care teacher were present. Children overwhelmingly stayed near and interacted with their mothers rather than their teachers, indicating that the attachment bond to the mother had indeed been formed. Additionally, they chose their mothers as the help giver when faced with a mildly difficult problem [22].

3.2. Communicative Initiations

In the first Abecedarian study video data were collected on how 20-month-old infants from low resource families use intentional communication in a free-play setting. Children who received the Abecedarian program were compared to randomly assigned children who received other programs or stayed at home. They were also compared to a group of normally developing middle-class infants. The frequency of communicative initiations and the proportion of spontaneous communicative initiations—classified as “showing” and “requesting”—were used for the comparison. Receiving the Abecedarian Approach through child care significantly enhanced both the frequency and the developmental level of the communicative initiations of infants from low-resource families [23].

3.3. Language Development

A 2019 impact study sought to determine if the classic Abecedarian Approach, in the current time and in an on-going service setting, could improve the early developmental progress of historically underachieving Canadian children, including those of First Nations (FN) status. A treatment group received the Abecedarian Approach in a child care center supplemented by home visiting, and a control group received child care at other centers or care at home. Children were assessed on the language scale of a standardized instrument, the Brigance Screen [24] at enrollment and yearly thereafter. There were 80 children in the study ranging from two months to five years in age. Participation in the treatment program led to average scores on the language assessments. Although both genders in the treatment group experienced net increases over the control group in language development, the girls did better than the boys. Additionally, it is of particular interest that in the treatment group, the FN children began at a lower language level than the non-FN children, but both groups progressed at about the same rate. In contrast, under the control condition the non-FN children made slow progress and the FN children gained almost no ground. The gap between the FN treatment group and the non-FN control group at baseline was completely closed by year two of the study – at which point these two groups had identical scores [7].

3.4. Locus of Control

An academic locus-of-control measure [25], collected during the kindergarten and first grade years on the first two cohorts of the Abecedarian Project, showed that the untreated children had lower perceptions of control over their academic success than did their middle and upper socio-economic classmates. However, for the Abecedarian treatment children, beliefs in personal control over successful academic performance increased to approximately the same level as that of their low-risk classmates. For the treatment children in the study, academic locus-of-control was positively related to task-orientation, less distractibility, and internal motivation [26]—providing a possible explanation for how beliefs (locus-of-control) may be translated into positive classroom behaviors. Elementary school children who previously experienced the Abecedarian Approach may have a greater sense of internal control over their own academic performance.

3.5. Problem Behavior

A randomized clinical trial in eight states, the Infant Health and Development Program (IHDP), examined the Abecedarian Approach intervention with children born preterm and at low birth weight. The parents completed the Achenbach Problem Behavior Checklist [27] in each of their child's first three years of life. At 24 and 36 months of age, behavior problem scores for the IHDP treatment group were significantly lower than for the control group (Ramey et al., 1992). The Abecedarian intervention had a greater cognitive effect for children with higher initial behavior problem scores [28].

3.6. Cortisol

Cortisol is a hormone that has been used to study human responses to stress. During and following an Abecedarian intervention in the first three years of life in a Romanian Orphanage, researchers gathered saliva cortisol samples from treatment, control, and general population comparison children. Saliva samples were collected at 8 AM, noon, and 7 PM on two consecutive days at age two and again at age three. Saliva samples were also collected before, during, and after a stressful event. The cortisol levels indicated that children who had experienced the Abecedarian Approach were better at handling the general stress of the day and specific stressful events than were the control group. In addition, for the untreated group there were some negative correlations between cortisol levels and cognitive development [29,30].

3.7. Risky Behaviors

Subjects in the Abecedarian low birthweight study (IHDP) received a follow-up assessment at 18 years of age using questions from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System [31]. Items from this survey related to conduct problems, suicidal ideation/attempts, smoking, alcohol and marijuana use, and risky sexual activity. Youth who had received the Abecedarian Approach in the first three years of life had fewer risky behaviors at age 18 than the randomly assigned control group [32].

3.8. Depression

Young adults who were in the treatment and control groups of the Abecedarian Project completed the Brief Symptoms Inventory [33] at age 21. The group that received the Abecedarian early childhood treatment reported fewer symptoms of depression. The protective effects of the early childhood program were further supported by a significant home environment by treatment interaction. There were no significant mean differences in the home environments of the treatment and control groups, but the negative effects of lower quality home environments on young adult depressive symptoms were almost entirely offset by the Abecedarian treatment [34].

3.9. Healthy Life Style

Abecedarian young adults showed a significant treatment-related reduction in reports of recently using marijuana. Use of other drugs and alcohol were not different between the groups. There was a trend in the Abecedarian follow-up data for fewer individuals who had early childhood intervention to report being regular smokers in young adulthood compared with controls. Additionally, for participants who received the Abecedarian treatment, the odds of reporting a healthier, more active lifestyle in young adulthood were 3.92 times greater compared to participants from the control groups [18].

3.10. Criminal Behavior

A long-term follow-up study summarizing data gathered at ages 21, 30, 34 looked at the crime-reducing impacts of the Abecedarian early childhood program. Proportionately, more women than men who participated in the early childhood Abecedarian program had less criminal activity than the control group. This gender difference occurred because the home environments were worse for the girls, with corresponding greater scope for improvement by the program. For both genders, treatment effects were larger for the least advantaged children, as measured by their mother's education at the beginning of the early childhood intervention. The dollar value of the social cost of criminal activity averted was higher for men because they committed more costly violent crimes [35].

3.11. Social Services Benefits

The percentage of the Abecedarian treated and control groups at age 30 who worked full time for at least 2/3 of the preceding 24 months showed that the odds of being employed for those in the Abecedarian treated group were more than twice the odds for those in the control group. Similarly, the group with Abecedarian early childhood treatment had slightly higher job prestige scores than the control group but the difference did not reach statistical significance. Approximately a quarter of each group had married by age 30, but the odds of being the head of one's own household were almost twice as high for the treated group. Administrative data on use of government welfare funds showed that, within an 89-month time window, individuals in the control group were 6 times more likely to receive benefits at least 10% of the time [36].

3.12. Hypertension and Other Health Indicators

The Abecedarian investigators recruited all study participants for an adult physical examination whose findings could be compared as a function of early childhood treatment. At the time of the medical study, participant age ranged from 32 to 39 years and were

an average of 35.4 years. Findings for the study indicated that males who had received Abecedarian treatment had significantly lower blood pressure than did males in the control group. None of the males in the treatment group exhibited the complex of conditions called metabolic syndrome (large waist, unfavorable cholesterol levels, and elevated blood pressure) known to be predictive of heart disease, whereas 25% of the males in the preschool control condition did so. Females did not show the same treatment effects as males, but females who had been in the early childhood Abecedarian treatment group were less likely to be affected by abdominal obesity and were less likely to fall in the pre-hypertension category than were the control females [37].

3.13. Social Decision-Making

When the Abecedarian treatment and control alumni were in their early 40s, they and a sample of general population young adults played the “ultimatum game.” In this game they were asked to accept or reject offers that divided an amount of money between themselves and another (unseen) player. Social decision making was measured – especially in terms of how the subjects would choose to divide resources. The Abecedarian treatment alumni opted for greater fairness and equity in the division of resources than did the control group or a general population sample [38]. *Education Week* [39] summarized these findings as “Preschool lessons in fair play may last a long time”.

3.14. Does Participation in the Program and the Curriculum Really Matter?

The year-by-year levels of participation of individual children and families showed a clear association between participation levels and cognitive progress at ages two and three [40]. For each year from ages 1–3, the days attended by the child in an Abecedarian center, the number of home visits, and the number of parent meetings attended predicted cognitive advances above and beyond the child’s background characteristics such as maternal education and very low birth weight.

Knowing that the level of family and child participation in the low birthweight study made an impact, the original researchers looked further into program process variables. They especially used the data related to the learning activities that comprise the four elements of the Abecedarian Approach. They analyzed these curriculum-related records to see if for individual children a basic measure of curriculum such as a count of Abecedarian learning activities per child-care day and per home visit could predict child cognitive outcome. First, the researchers statistically equalized the effects of initial status variables (such as maternal age, maternal education, and child neonatal health status) and the effects of family and child participation. After all those effects were accounted for, the analysis showed that the rate of delivery of Abecedarian learning activities still added significantly to the prediction of child 36-month Stanford Binet IQ [41]. So, not only do families and children need to participate in the program, but they need to get sufficient amounts of the learning activities or curriculum while they are there.

Another group of researchers continued to look into this topic. They created an Active Experience Index comprised of the level of interest parents showed regarding the Abecedarian learning activities during home visits plus the degree of mastery of the learning activities that children achieved in the child care center. After controlling for child and family initial status variables, they showed that Active Experience improved the prediction of child 36-month IQ to even a greater degree than did the simple rate of curriculum delivery [42]. This analysis shows that it is important to involve both family and child and particularly to capture the interest of the family and assure the child’s mastery of educational activities.

3.15. Cognitive Advantage Plus Social Adjustment Plus Motivational Advantage

What early factors bear on later achievement in school and life? Following a mediation of effects strategy, an analysis of several early interventions showed that a predictive model comprised of cognitive advantage, plus social adjustment, plus motivational advantage

accounted for 100% of the preschool effect on years of education at age 21 for children who had received the Abecedarian Approach in the first five years of life. This three-part cognitive/social/motivational model makes intuitive sense and relates closely to the other observations in this article. The fact that these three predictors explain, respectively, only 77.94% and 38.15% of the preschool effect on education at age 21 for the Perry Preschool project and the Chicago Child-Parent Centers [43] (p. 432) suggests that the Abecedarian intervention is more tightly aligned and its program more congruent to the cognitive/social/motivational hypothesis. This analysis does not comment on the positive effects of programs during the school years, rather, it shows that among children randomly assigned to receive or not receive the Abecedarian Approach in the early years, the cognitive/social/motivational predictive model is very accurate in forecasting years of education at age 21.

3.16. Abecedarian Training and Caregiver Behavior

The Abecedarian Approach, like many interventions, has a logic map that assumes that the educational program first is incorporated into an adult's behavior and reaches the target child as the adult and child interact. In many studies the child's behaviors are measured but not the adult's. However, one randomized Abecedarian study in the USA measured the behavior of child care providers who were trained in the Abecedarian Approach and implemented it in family child care homes. The training of caregivers had statistically significant impacts on caregiver behaviors. That is, compared with the control group, the Abecedarian trained caregivers had substantially higher frequencies of rich oral language interactions, interactions to support children's understanding of vocabulary or concepts, and responsiveness to the children [44]. None of the provider baseline characteristics significantly predicted the three provider outcomes. The fact that Abecedarian training makes a significant difference in how adults talk to and interact with the children in their care confirms that the logic pathway, training > adult behavior > child developmental progress, is functioning as desired. It is within the adult-child relationship that positive child development occurs and thrives.

In a Canadian qualitative study of caregivers and parents, the main themes that emerged were strengthened relationships between parents and program staff, as well as between parents themselves; increased awareness among parents about early development and of their role in supporting child development; and opportunities for parents' personal growth [8]. The findings suggest that high quality early child intervention programs, such as the Abecedarian Approach, can positively impact all the adults who interact with the children.

4. Conclusions

Multiple Abecedarian studies [2,45] have shown that early and broad intervention early in life for at-risk children yields early and long-lasting positive outcomes. Among these are the social and mental health benefits that prepare the child for school and life success.

If an academically at-risk child has daily had individualized games, reading sessions, and information-filled caregiving/language interactions from responsive adults during three to five years of educational child care and/or home life, then the experience of school (even though it is taught mostly in groups and is not individualized) is likely to be easy to comprehend and respond to. Successfully playing a game with a caregiving adult will map onto the new experience of doing a lesson with a teacher. From his or her early experience, the child expects to receive adult input, to pay attention, to respond, and to succeed. This is the social, attitudinal, and learning dispositions advantage the child brings to school. Moreover, the child enters school developmentally on track (from mastering all the knowledge and skills incorporated in the Interaction Games and other activities) and does not have to play catch-up. This is the cognitive advantage that enables the child to benefit from each succeeding experience as it presents itself.

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**New York City Council
Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation
Jointly with the Committee on Finance**

**NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL FISCAL YEAR 2026
PRELIMINARY BUDGET HEARING**

**Testimony of the New York Immigration Coalition on Preparing NYC for changes in
federal funding**

April 16, 2025

Good morning, Chair Restler and members of the Operations, State & Federal Legislation Committee. My name is Vladimir Tlali, and I serve as the Senior Policy Strategist at the New York Immigration Coalition, a statewide umbrella policy and advocacy organization with over 200 immigrant-serving members and partner organizations. Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the New York City Preliminary Budget for fiscal year 2026.

This is a challenging time for immigrant communities in New York City as we get ready to face the weaponization of federal funding by the current administration. The targeting of obligated funds for our communities, the illegal clawback of FEMA funds, and the denial of life-saving services are all actions that threaten not only the services for immigrants but also entire jurisdictions that uphold sanctuary protections like ours.

Instead of supporting our communities as they deserve, Mayor Adams has cut essential funds to provide life-saving services for immigrants in New York City. This is why we stand here today in solidarity with fellow activists, organizations, and New Yorkers to denounce Mayor Adams' participation in a shameful quid pro quo to collude with the Trump administration to deport immigrant New Yorkers while dedicating full attention and city resources to Trump's draconian immigration enforcement agenda in exchange for his federal corruption charges being dropped.

Mayor Adams has undermined his ability to lead this city with true autonomy and eroded our trust in his capacity to make critical decisions for the benefit of all New Yorkers going forward. Our city deserves a leader with conviction who stands up to temptation and threats, upholds the city's integrity and institutions, and prioritizes the interests of the communities they are sworn to serve over self-preservation and self-interest. Instead, Mayor Adams has opted to target our immigrant families, the very same people he has cynically used as scapegoats to justify his brutal cuts to key and essential public services and programs.



We are deeply alarmed by the devastating cuts and glaring omissions outlined in Mayor Adams' Executive Budget, which completely slashes funding for asylum seeker centers and immigration legal services that serve as vital support for both long-standing and newly arrived asylum seekers and refugees at a time of unprecedented need. The proposed budget also fails to allocate new funding for libraries, cultural institutions, parks, universal 3-K, Pre-K, child care programs, and secure, inclusive housing supports. Furthermore, the Administration neglects to include funding necessary to sustain essential education programs that could be rolled back or eliminated as early as July 2025. These cuts are not mere numbers on a spreadsheet. They represent a direct attack on the well-being and future of our city's immigrant communities.

Since 2022, New York City has been a critical sanctuary for over 229,000 asylum seekers and refugees, many of whom have endured unimaginable hardships in their pursuit of safety here. However, the Executive Budget would completely eliminate funding for asylum seeker centers and legal services, leaving hundreds without crucial support. In light of the attack on federal funding for immigrant services, we urge the City Council to restore and expand funding for immigration services, including financial support for community-based organizations that offer legal and social services.

The NYIC strongly urges the City Council to stand in solidarity with their communities and fully restore the funding and programs that support them so that they can uplift our city by:

- Investing \$59 million in funding for immigration legal services to ensure continuity of services and to help defend immigrants against ongoing aggressive, anti-immigrant policies.
- Increasing and baselining \$40 million in Immigrant Opportunity Initiative (IOI) funding to meet the needs of immigrant communities.
- Establishing a \$25 million Citywide Rapid Response fund to provide emergency immigration legal services, housing, and food assistance to families impacted by immigration enforcement actions.
- Increasing funding for the NY Immigrant Family Unity Program (NYIFUP) to sustain and support representing detained individuals.
- Fully restoring funding for 3-K and Pre-K programs, which are the only free early childhood education and care available to many immigrant families. These programs are linked to better academic outcomes, less engagement with the criminal justice system, and greater ultimate financial stability for children who go through these programs.
- Investing \$4M in the Immigrant Family Communications and Outreach Initiative. This essential funding helps NYCPS provide critical school-related information to immigrant families with varying literacy levels and access to digital media.



- Investing \$24M through DYCD in funding for Adult Literacy programs to address gaps in digital literacy, systems navigation skills, and access to critical, family-stabilizing information.
- Maintaining \$16.5M in funding for the Adult Literacy Pilot and the City Council Adult Literacy Initiative.
- Investing \$60M in funding for the Promise NYC child care program to provide subsidized child care for children without citizenship status who cannot be served under existing subsidies.
- Fully renewing funding for critical outreach programs for immigrants, including the Access Health Initiative and the Key to the City Initiative, which help connect thousands of immigrant New Yorkers to critical services.
- Baseline increased funding of \$10M in the FY26 City Budget to sustain the development and operations of the NYC Community Interpreter Bank and to support the growth of worker-owned language service cooperatives, ensuring that all New Yorkers have access to high-quality interpretation and translation services.
- Fighting back against the Mayor's 30- and 60-day shelter rule by allocating adequate funding in the budget to expand the CityFHEPS voucher program so that New Yorkers, regardless of status, can access vital housing support.

These necessary and vital investments in our communities must also be supplemented by meaningful policy solutions and investments, including:

- Introduction 214, the **NYC Trust Act**, would create a private right of action, allowing immigrant New Yorkers to take legal action if they are wronged by violations of our laws.
- Introduction 61, which would urge the Governor and NYS Legislature to enact the New York Public Banking Act [A.5782 (Pichardo)/S.1762A (Sanders)]
- Introductions 431, 47, 408, and 24 to ensure access to street vendor licenses and permits, reduce the criminal liability on food and merchandise vending, create a division to assist street vendors, and update the sitting rule
- Resolution 717 calls on the State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign the Access to Representation Act, which would extend the right to counsel to individuals facing immigration court proceedings.

While we acknowledge the city's financial pressures, we celebrate New York City as a vibrant and diverse place full of opportunities. This city that proudly claims itself as the world's capital has long ago recognized that its role as a beacon and safe haven for the global community underpins its status as a cultural and financial leader nationally and globally. In short, our city is crucial to the prosperity of our state and country, and immigrants are essential to New York City's success.



While we understand the need for fiscal prudence, we cannot continue to allow overly conservative budget forecasting and unjustified funding cuts to jeopardize New York’s most vibrant and vulnerable communities, especially given the attacks on our neighborhoods. To address New Yorkers’ overwhelming and unmet needs, whether they have been here 30 years or 30 days, we must act strategically, not reactively.

So far, the Adams administration has cut costs without considering or caring about the long-term effects on current New Yorkers and the future of our city. We urge the Council to protect the rights of all New Yorkers and do everything in their power to ensure that everyone in the city, regardless of their immigration status, can thrive in safe communities. Now is the time to ensure that our investments are protected, our people are taken care of, and that we maintain and sustain the services that enable all New Yorkers to flourish.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Submitted by:

Vladimir Tlali
Senior Policy Strategist
New York Immigration Coalition



Re: Oversight Hearing on Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding

April 16, 2025

Good morning. My name is Adrienne Abbate, and I am the executive director of Partnerships for Community Wellness (PCW), a public health nonprofit working to reduce health disparities on Staten Island. I would like to thank the members of the committees for the opportunity to submit testimony.

PCW's work is rooted in the understanding that complex public health issues are decades in the making and require the coordinated efforts and resources of multiple sectors. Our initiatives focus on youth behavioral health, chronic disease prevention, maternal health, and child wellness. For over twenty years, we have been working to ensure resources and critical public health programs are scaled to Staten Island communities most impacted by health disparities. Seventy percent of our budget is made up of government contracts, including direct federal contracts with the CDC and SAMHSA and federal pass-through awards from the state (SAPT Block Grants) and city.

Shortly after the Executive Orders were issued in January, attacking core tenets of public health and the mission of our agency, we received a stop-work order for our CDC award to support LGBTQ and BIPOC youth and the termination of two of our State pass-through contracts. Luckily, court injunctions have allowed us to continue the work temporarily. These actions by the federal government directly undermine the health and well-being of Staten Islanders and threaten to dismantle the vital public health infrastructure that PCW and other community organizations have worked tirelessly to build.

Nonprofit organizations often provide public goods and services to address gaps when government falls short, and nonprofits on Staten Island have had to shoulder that burden more than any of the other NYC boroughs. Despite Staten Island often leading the city in overdose rates, maternal mortality rates, incidence of cardiovascular disease, cancer burden, and lowest childhood vaccinations, we have neither an H+H public hospital nor a Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Health Action Center despite decades of advocacy. This chronic underinvestment in Staten Island's public health infrastructure makes the current threat of federal funding cuts all the more devastating.

I urge the City Council to strategically allocate funds to offset these anticipated federal shortfalls. Furthermore, I urge the City Council to ensure that nonprofits serving marginalized groups or addressing issues not aligned with current federal policies are protected from any punitive measures. Our organizations must continue to receive the support they need to serve our communities effectively. The City Council has a critical role in protecting the health of New York City residents, and we stand ready to partner with you in this effort.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical matter.

Adrienne Abbate, MPA

Testimony to the New York City Council April 16, 2025

To: Adrienne Adams and Members of the City Council

Subject: Addressing the Underfunding of Services on Staten Island

Good morning, my name is Janet Magnuson. I am a lifelong resident of Staten Island, and the current CEO of Richmond Home Need Services, a licensed home care service agency servicing SI since 1971.

I am here today to address the pressing issue of the underfunding of services on Staten Island as a whole, with particular attention to the older adult population in our borough. The population of adults aged 65 and older in New York City has grown significantly over the past two decades. From 2000 to 2023, this age group increased by **53%**, with the trend expected to continue. On Staten Island, 12% of seniors live below the poverty line—matching the rate across NYC as a whole. There also exists a significant gap affecting seniors who do not qualify for Medicaid yet lack the financial means to afford basic necessities and depend on community services to sustain their health, independence, and overall quality of life. As a result, many are forced to go without adequate nutrition and essential medical care. Despite this, Staten Island continues to face significant underfunding which has created barriers that prevent us from meeting their essential needs. These challenges include:

1. **Limited Access to Healthcare**; Staten Island lacks a public hospital and is limited to just one city-funded clinic, which receives a mere 1.8% of public health funding, and the absence of public geriatric specialty services further compounds the problem. This funding gap restricts older adults' access to preventive care, mental health services, and chronic disease management, leading to worsening health conditions and more frequent hospitalizations.
2. **Inadequate Support for Daily Living** ; Essential services such as meal delivery, transportation, and home care are grossly underfunded. Without these vital supports, many older adults are left unable to live independently and safely in their homes. Staten Island's funding for these critical supports falls far behind other boroughs, leaving vulnerable seniors without the assistance they need.
3. **Increased Social Isolation**; With only 4 city-funded older adult center vendors out of 300 citywide—amounting to a mere 3.8% of programs—Staten Island seniors face a severe lack of opportunities for community engagement. Social isolation among older adults has dire effects on mental and physical health, including heightened risks of depression and other chronic conditions.

Under the current aging funding framework, our agency is limited to supporting slightly over 100 older adults with services such as personal care and housekeeping, restricted to a maximum of 20 hours per client each week. Once our monthly budget allocation is exhausted, new clients seeking assistance are placed on waiting lists, which is happening far too often, leaving many without the critical services they desperately need. For seniors with no family support, this often means facing unsafe and unstable conditions. The existing funding structure is wholly inadequate to address the growing needs of Staten Island's older population. Rates should also go hand and hand with Medicaid, and currently they do not, leaving NYCaging and community agencies to fight year after year for proper funding.

I strongly encourage the City Council to recognize these pressing challenges and increase funding for programs that not only directly serve older adults in Staten Island but also Staten Island as a whole. By making these investments, we can ensure that our communities receive the essential care and support they deserve.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Janet Magnuson

Written Testimony of Kieran Harrington, CEO

RiseBoro Community Partnership

Submitted to the New York City Council

Committee on Finance & Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Oversight Hearing: Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding

April 16, 2025

Chairpersons and Members of the Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of RiseBoro Community Partnership.

As CEO of RiseBoro, I lead an organization that has served New Yorkers for over five decades. From housing to health, food pantry & senior services to education and workforce programs, we serve tens of thousands of residents annually across the five boroughs, with a focus on underserved neighborhoods.

Our ability to deliver critical human services depends heavily on City contracts braided with federal funds. These funds support a wide range of programs that help stabilize and uplift entire communities. The uncertainty and anticipated reductions in federal funding are already creating serious disruptions—and unless a coordinated response is initiated, the damage will deepen.

The Federal Risk to Local Services

One example is our Education division, which is already experiencing reductions to several grants funded through New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports. While the State has committed to covering these grants through June 30, 2025, we have received no assurances of continued funding beyond Fiscal Year 2026. The absence of communication and strategic planning around this only deepens the uncertainty.

In our Emergency Food and Nutrition program, we are preparing for a \$1 million reduction as of August 31st. This cut will severely limit our ability to cover salaries, rent, utilities, and cleaning costs, which are essential for basic operations.

Even more concerning, our service capacity will drop from 500 families per week to just 200. The lines of people seeking food assistance will remain—but the food we can provide will be dramatically restricted. The result will be devastating for families already experiencing food insecurity.

Similarly, our program “Our Food”—especially its farmers markets that connect local produce with low-income residents—will be directly affected by these changes. These cuts not only reduce access to fresh food but erode the local economies and community-building efforts these markets support.

While we are always open to reviewing and refining our programming, we strongly caution against disinvestment that stems from political motivations rather than evidence-based evaluation. These services are essential tools for community-building and resilience.

Late Contracting: A Compounding Crisis

Federal instability is only the latest in a series of stressors on the nonprofit sector. Chronic delays in City contract registration and payments have forced RiseBoro to take out lines of credit to keep programs afloat while awaiting reimbursement—incurring tens of thousands in interest costs.

As of this submission, 55 RiseBoro contracts remain unregistered or unpaid, totaling more than \$3.4 million in outstanding receivables. These delays reduce our ability to respond nimbly to emergencies, to recruit and retain staff, and to meet increasing demand for our services.

What's at Stake

Cuts to agencies like HUD, HHS, DOL, DOE, and USDA, could eliminate or reduce programs that address:

- Affordable housing development and preservation; rental subsidy payments
- Nutrition access through SNAP and WIC;
- Older adult programming through the Older Americans Act;
- Health and behavioral services linked to Medicaid and SSBG;
- Mental Health & Educational programming through HHS & DOE

At RiseBoro, we see these services not as separate silos, but as a unified ecosystem that supports the whole person and the whole community. We cannot afford to lose any piece of that infrastructure.

Recommendations

1. Work with Mayor's Office to expedite Contract Payments:

The City must immediately address late payments to nonprofit providers and remove barriers that penalize organizations forced to finance delays with credit.

2. Coordinate Federal Drawdown Planning:

A strategic drawdown plan—developed in partnership with nonprofit contract holders—must be implemented to ensure continuity of services as federal funding contracts.

3. Form a Joint Counter-Strategy Taskforce:

The City and State should launch a cross-sector taskforce to monitor, forecast, and respond to federal funding disruptions with a focus on housing, health, food security, education, senior services, and workforce development.

4. Engage Philanthropy and Private Partners:

A coordinated philanthropic appeal should be developed to help stabilize essential community-based programs during federal volatility.

Conclusion

This moment demands clarity, coordination, and commitment. The human services sector has never been more essential, and yet it has never been more vulnerable.

On behalf of RiseBoro Community Partnership, I urge the Council to act with urgency to protect the programs that give so many New Yorkers their only chance at stability, dignity, and opportunity.

Sincerely,

Kieran Harrington
Chief Executive Officer
RiseBoro Community Partnership



National Headquarters
305 Seventh Avenue, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10001
T: 212-741-2247
sageusa.org
lgbtagingcenter.org

**Testimony for the NYC Council Committee on Government Operations and Finance Hearing on
Preparing for Federal Challenges**

April 16, 2025

**Good Afternoon Chair Restler and Members of the Committees on Government Operations and
Finance,**

My name is Bryan Ellicott-Cook, and I am the Director of Government Relations at SAGE. On behalf of SAGE and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ+) elders and older New Yorkers living with HIV whom we proudly serve, thank you for your unwavering commitment to ensuring LGBTQ+ and HIV-competent aging services remain a priority in New York City. Your support makes it possible for LGBTQ+ older adults to live with dignity, respect, and the community care they deserve.

With the strong partnership of the New York City Council and the LGBTQIA Caucus, SAGE has long been at the forefront of serving and advocating with and on behalf of LGBTQ+ elders. But today, we are sounding the alarm: our communities are under attack—both from a hostile federal government and from harmful proposals here at home.

Since January 2025, the federal administration has cultivated an increasingly aggressive stance toward LGBTQ+ Americans. These attacks are not abstract. They are targeted, calculated, and already impacting the lives of LGBTQ+ elders: This funding supports several of our core programs, our SAGE Centers for older adults, and specialized initiatives like services for LGBTQ+ veterans. Programs such as SAGEPositive, SAGEVets, and SAGETrans — all designed to meet the unique needs of LGBTQ+ older adults — are now being targeted under the guise of eliminating so-called “DEI initiatives” or “woke programs.” These efforts are further fueled by recent executive actions, including an executive order that seeks to roll back protections under the pretense of combating “gender ideology.” We are deeply concerned, as there is no clear sense of how these federal shifts may affect state and city funding streams, or how they may be used to justify cuts to programs that serve some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

In early 2025, a federal directive attempted to freeze grants under the Older Americans Act, threatening access to housing, meals, and critical social services for LGBTQ+ older adults—many of whom face multiple layers of discrimination and economic hardship. Although this freeze was reversed thanks to swift legal action by SAGE and our partners at Democracy Forward, it served as a stark warning of how quickly life-saving programs can be put at risk.

Further, one of SAGE’s federal grants—supporting our international programs—was terminated after being subjected to an ideological litmus test by the Trump administration. This funding had enabled SAGE to collaborate globally on advancing the rights, visibility, and well-being of LGBTQ+ older people, particularly in regions where such support is scarce or actively suppressed. The program was aligned with our core mission of equity and inclusion, but it was ultimately deemed incompatible with the administration’s political agenda, specifically its opposition to LGBTQ+ rights and broader DEI values. As a result, we were forced to end that

program. Already, we've seen the tangible consequences of this hostile climate—and we are fully bracing for the impact on our remaining direct federal grants. These are not hypotheticals. These are real losses that directly affect our ability to serve our communities and meet the growing needs of LGBTQ+ elders both here and abroad.

Proposals have also surfaced to eliminate the Administration for Community Living (ACL), which supports aging services across the country. If successful, this move would dismantle the infrastructure that fights elder isolation, provides affirming care, and protects the health and well-being of older LGBTQ+ and HIV-positive New Yorkers.

Transgender and non-binary elders face the most acute threats. With the rise of anti-trans legislation and political rhetoric across the country, we are witnessing a chilling effect on access to care and safety. These elders are at greater risk of housing insecurity, medical discrimination, and violence—yet the federal government has shown no interest in safeguarding their rights.

And here at home, the challenges are just as dire. As part of the Mayor's Executive Budget, a proposed \$102 million cut to the Department for the Aging (DFTA) would devastate New York City's elder care system—potentially shuttering up to 60 older adult centers. This would be catastrophic for LGBTQ+ elders who rely on SAGE Centers as safe, welcoming, and culturally competent spaces. These centers are not luxuries—they are lifelines.

Taken together, these federal and local attacks threaten to unravel decades of progress. They target the very systems that have been built to provide care, connection, and dignity to those who have too often been left behind. LGBTQ+ elders—especially those living with HIV, those who are trans or non-binary, and those without family support systems—cannot afford to be abandoned again.

We are in challenging times. And we at SAGE are among a very few organizations across the country focused solely on the unique needs of queer elders. That's our mission. But these threats—both fiscal and ideological—could directly impact our ability to provide crucial services. The way we're going to get through this is by coming together and stepping up in extraordinary ways.

"I personally run a weekly support group for long-term HIV survivors. Many of our participants remember when the government turned a blind eye to our community. We are once again in a moment where history threatens to repeat itself. And just like then, we are communities who take care of each other, who rely on the support of our allies and loved ones. And we will continue to build toward a future where all LGBTQ+ elders are valued, supported, and can thrive." Bill Gross – Senior Director of SAGEServes Supportive Services

That's why we urge the City Council to act now—boldly and unapologetically—to:

- Fully fund LGBTQ+ and HIV-competent aging services, including the full restoration of any DFTA funding reductions.
- Protect and expand access to affirming older adult centers, especially those that center the most marginalized within our community.
- Stand in public solidarity against federal rollbacks, and continue to advocate for city-level protections that shield vulnerable communities from national harm.

The stakes are high, and the clock is ticking. New York City's population aged 60 and over is growing five times faster than the population under 18. That means the number of LGBTQ+ elders is growing too—and with it, the need for tailored, affirming, and adequately funded services.

Let us be clear: the fight ahead is not theoretical. It is happening now. It is happening to our people. It is happening on our watch. And it requires bold leadership from this Council to ensure that New York City remains not just a sanctuary in name, but a city of true safety, care, and dignity for all who call it home, including those LGBTQ+ elders who are once again getting a blind eye from Washington.

Thank you for your continued partnership and your commitment to justice.



UNITED NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSES

45 Broadway, 22nd Floor, New York, NY 10006
212-967-0322 | www.unhny.org

**Testimony of United Neighborhood Houses
Before the New York City Council Committees on Finance and Governmental
Operations, State & Federal Legislation
Council Member Justin Brennan, Chair
Council Member Lincoln Restler, Chair**

Oversight - Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding

**Submitted by Rachel Klepper, Research Analyst
April 16, 2025**

Thank you, Chairs Brennan and Restler, and members of the New York City Council Committees on Finance and Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation for convening today's hearing. United Neighborhood Houses (UNH) is a policy and social change organization representing neighborhood settlement houses that reach over 800,000 New Yorkers from all walks of life.

A progressive leader for more than 100 years, UNH is stewarding a new era for New York's settlement house movement. We mobilize our members and their communities to advocate for good public policies and promote strong organizations and practices that keep neighborhoods resilient and thriving for all New Yorkers. UNH leads advocacy and partners with our members on a broad range of issues including civic and community engagement, neighborhood affordability, healthy aging, early childhood education, adult literacy, and youth development. We also provide customized professional development and peer learning to build the skills and leadership capabilities of settlement house staff at all levels.

UNH thanks the council for its leadership as we strive to protect New Yorkers from potentially devastating actions from the federal government. Settlement houses report that an average of 22% of their entire organizational budgets are funded from federal sources (either direct or state/local pass-through), with some as high as 50%.¹ The elimination of federal funding could decimate programs while depriving settlement house community members of needed resources.

As we speak today about how to prepare for changes to federal funding, funding cuts and reductions in infrastructure are already under way. As neighborhood institutions working with entire families and communities, settlement houses see that the crisis is already occurring, endangering both New Yorkers and the organizations they rely on. One federal funding stream currently under attack is Head Start, which provides early childhood care, education, and other

¹ Based on data from Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (SEFA) for UNH settlement house members.

supports for 19,000 New York City children and their families. This testimony will focus on the risks to crucial neighborhood-based services, such as Head Start. To weather this storm, New York City must support and stand up for the community-based organizations that families trust and rely on through challenges.

Federal Head Start Funding is Essential for Thousands of Children and Families

Since the founding of Head Start in 1965, settlement houses have worked with the federal government to provide free, high-quality early childhood education for low-income children. Today, settlement houses in the UNH network receive about \$31 million to operate 51 Head Start and Early Head Start centers in New York City, some as direct grantees and some as subcontractors through the NYC Department of Education (DOE). These centers, run by 14 different settlement houses, educate over 3,000 children in Head Start and Early Head Start. UNH members also provide early childhood education and family support through 3-K and Pre-K for All, DOE-contracted Family Child Care Networks, Promise NYC, and fee-for-service programs, to an estimated 12,000 children under the age of 5 citywide. When community-based organizations run Head Start, they do so with attention to the needs of entire families. At one settlement house, a three-year-old attends Head Start, while their parent attends a job training course and their grandparent spends time at the senior center. For many families, Head Start is part of their connection to an anchor institution that is there to help them address whatever needs arise.

While Head Start is just one piece of New York City's early childhood education system, it is a crucial program that thousands of families rely on. In FY24, providers across New York State held 153 Head Start grants totaling \$835 million and serving nearly 40,000 children. These programs are staffed by close to 4,000 teachers, family child care providers, and home visitors providing care and education, as well as family engagement and support services. High-quality birth-to-five education has been found to improve children's language and literacy, social-emotional skills, and school readiness.

The Closure of Head Start Regional Offices Threatens NYC Families

Recent headlines indicate that the very existence of Head Start is in jeopardy. Over the past few months, Head Start providers have faced a series of abrupt and destabilizing changes, beginning with a sudden funding pause, and, most recently, the closing of five regional offices, including the one that serves New York City. Providers rely on program specialists in the regional office to facilitate payments, approve paperwork, and review budget modifications and contract renewals. Closing the regional offices greatly reduces capacity. In NYC, providers continue to run programs, but many are deeply concerned about what further changes may come without warning.

In the aftermath of the announcement of the cuts, settlement houses reported very different experiences from one another, describing a chaotic situation in which some providers had heard from their program specialists, some were assigned a new program specialist, and some had received no communication at all. The Office of Head Start sent the notice from a generic email, saying the remaining offices would absorb operations, but specific plans have not been made public or communicated to providers.

This disruption is happening in the months leading up to the June 30 expiration of all Head Start funding that is subcontracted through the DOE's \$71 million contract, which includes 32% of the city's Head Start programs. There has been inconsistent communication about how renewal will proceed as planned for the next year. One settlement house, whose direct federal Head Start grant also expires June 30, just submitted their renewal application last week, but has no one to contact for follow-up and no assurance that the application is proceeding through the funding process. If that center closed, 82 families would lose access to high-quality child care.

The uncertainty surrounding programmatic support and the precarity of future funding puts undue stress on the staff, teachers, and parents who are committed to, and rely on, Head Start. Without Head Start, thousands of children would lose their programs, and parents would be unable to afford child care and early childhood education, meaning many might leave their jobs. It is vital that all city leaders reach out to members of Congress to oppose all cuts to Head Start.

Food, Health, and Housing Security are also Threatened by Federal Funding Cuts

Threats to Head Start compound the catastrophic and inhumane impacts of other funding cuts on low-income families. UNH and our member settlement houses are bracing for the devastating effects that enacted or potential federal funding cuts to a range of programs, including the Emergency Food and Shelter Program, Medicaid, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and others, are having and would have on settlement house programs and services.

FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program funding has not resumed since the January funding freeze, which significantly reduces community-based organizations' ability to provide food assistance and eviction prevention services. This loss comes at a time of growing need. In March, one settlement house food pantry received 90 new registrations, above the 520 community members they typically serve. Without FEMA funding, that organization has been forced to reduce their food pantry days and pause their tenant rental assistance program, which is sometimes required by the city in order to receive a larger rental assistance grant to prevent eviction. These cuts leave families at risk of eviction, homelessness, and hunger.

Proposed federal cuts to Medicaid would also impact the health and well-being of many Head Start families, older adults, and people with disabilities who rely on it for health care. Approximately \$56 billion flowed to New York City's healthcare system to cover care for nearly five million Medicaid and Essential Plan members for the 12 months ending June 2024, of which nearly 57 percent is federal funding.

Settlement house programs and participants would suffer greatly if SNAP funding is cut, which the federal government has threatened, and which was approved in last month's budget framework. Of 1.8 million SNAP recipients in New York City, one-third are children and another third are seniors. NYC Department of Social Services Commissioner Molly Wasow Park estimated that SNAP cuts would cost the City \$900 million. Hunger Free America, a food justice advocacy organization, asserts that if anything close to this magnitude of cuts is actually implemented, it would lead to the greatest hunger and food insecurity crisis since the Great Depression.

Settlement houses and other community-based organizations were already struggling to meet the growing need for food, health care, and housing assistance. A 2023 survey of more than 1,000 settlement house families within the UNH network found that nearly one in four respondents reported that they were “sometimes unable to afford food for their children,” with an additional 10 percent reporting they were “often” or “always” unable to do so. **These federal cuts and threats don’t just affect programs—they harm the children, seniors, and families who rely on them.** The City must take action to protect residents by ensuring our local food and rental assistance programs remain fully funded, accessible, and able to meet growing needs.

We Need New York City Leaders to Continue to Speak Out For New Yorkers and Support Trusted Community Organizations

Federal funding cuts attack New Yorkers and reveal the administration’s rejection of policies and programs that support the most vulnerable. Community-based organizations are experiencing the daily impact of cuts to Head Start, food and housing assistance, and other federal programs, and have a deep understanding of the risks to New York City residents. Given the level of retribution we have seen from this administration, settlement houses are concerned that they will be retaliated against if they speak out, putting their communities at even greater risk. UNH needs you to speak out, share these stories, and urge federal lawmakers to oppose these funding cuts.

We urge city leaders to support their community-based organizations that provide housing, food, education and childcare. Settlement houses are places that people go during a crisis. *The People’s Pulse*, a report by the 5BORO Institute, recently found that “Despite concerns about the overall health of the city, a majority of New Yorkers have strong connections to their neighborhoods.” Furthermore, 75% of New Yorkers believe that the city government should support small, local organizations focused on addressing social, economic, and housing issues in communities across the city. To continue to protect our communities and our neighbors, we must protect the institutions New Yorkers count on. Reliable, flexible funding for settlement houses and other CBOs will go far to ensure that communities have access to comprehensive, holistic supports and wraparound services that they need in order to thrive.

We look forward to continuing to partner with you to keep New York’s neighborhoods strong.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF JESSICA BAKER VODOOR
PRESIDENT & CEO
SNUG HARBOR CULTURAL CENTER & BOTANICAL GARDEN

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Funding,
Jointly with Committee on Finance
Oversight Hearing: Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding
April 16, 2025

Good morning, Chair Restler, Chair Brannan, and members of the Committees. My name is Jessica Baker Vodoor, and I am President & CEO of Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden in Staten Island. I am providing this testimony to outline the essential federal and state support received by Snug Harbor, and to urge City Council to maintain the additional \$75 million baseline for culture that has been recommended in response to the Mayor's FY26 budget.

Founded in 1977, Snug Harbor is an expansive culture park on Staten Island where arts, nature, education, and history unite to bring dynamic programming, events, and festivals to our diverse community. We welcome 500,000 annual visitors to explore our gardens and grounds, discover a new passion, and engage with culture. Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden is the private non-profit tasked with managing and operating the site on behalf of the City of New York. We are the only free botanical garden in New York City, open 365 days a year from dawn to dusk. City Council funding underwrites our efforts to create a more culturally connected, thriving community in an underserved area of New York City.

As a member of the Cultural Institutions Group, Snug Harbor receives an annual allocation through the Department of Cultural Affairs to support operations, which represents approximately 40% of our income. City Council generously provides support through multiple initiatives, totalling approximately 10% of our income.

Snug Harbor is heavily reliant on State funding, including federal re-grant funds, as well as direct federal support for capital investment and programs that serve hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers annually. We receive programmatic and capital support through the New York State Council on the Arts, which in turn receives a substantial portion of its budget from the National Endowment for the Arts. NYSCA programmatic support is crucial for our ability to support our artists in residence and provide robust programming in the visual and performing arts to our underserved community. Capital support through the agency is providing the final piece of funding needed to reopen our beloved historic Music Hall. Humanities New York has underwritten multiple programs, with funding supplied by the National Endowment for the

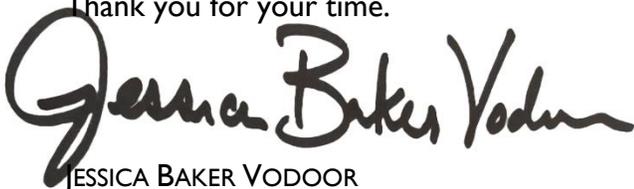
Humanities – now cancelled. We have been awarded funding from the National Endowment of the Arts for public activities related to our visual artist in residence. Although the funding has been awarded, the contract has not been processed by the agency and we do not anticipate actually receiving this funding. All of our cultural programming is imperiled by cuts to federal funding.

We receive support through the Zoos, Botanical Gardens & Aquaria program from the state Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation – again both programmatic and capital. This funding underwrites our Horticulture and groundskeeping operations, with capital investment in two of our gardens. The Snug Harbor Heritage Farm receives federal regrants through New York State Agriculture & Markets, and direct capital support from the US Department of Agriculture. The USDA Forest Service provides regrants funds through numerous state agencies and private foundations.

Snug Harbor has been aggressively pursuing non-City sources of funding to reduce our reliance on the City's budget. We have made significant gains in State and Federal support, as outlined above, and continue to creatively pursue private funding, both contributed and earned. The potential loss of federal funding (whether direct or through regrant programs) on Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden causes instability and threatens our capacity to deliver dynamic programming and effectively steward our historic site.

We are grateful to City Council for including the additional \$75 million baseline for culture request in the FY26 budget. With deep uncertainty surrounding state and federal funding for health, education, and immigration services, New York City is facing some difficult decisions. We hope that City Council will continue to recognize the critical role that our “institutional pillars” – culture, libraries, parks – play in attracting tourist dollars, underpinning civic life, and producing positive health outcomes for all New Yorkers.

Thank you for your time.



JESSICA BAKER VODOOR

President & CEO

Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden

718.425.3501 / jvodoor@snug-harbor.org

*Staten Island Museum testimony by Janice Monger, President & CEO,
to the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation
jointly with the Finance Committee*

STATEN ISLAND
MUSEUM

April 16, 2025

1000 Richmond Terrace, Bldg A
Staten Island, New York 10301
StatenIslandMuseum.org

TEL 718 727 1135
FAX 718 273 5683

Greetings Committee Members,

I am here today to express serious concern over the current state of federal arts and culture funding impacting NYC cultural organizations and in solidarity with my sister Staten Island nonprofit organizations. As the CEO of the Staten Island Museum, I want to share our story to demonstrate the impact of these devastating cuts and changes to federal arts agencies, including the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA). Arts organizations like the Staten Island Museum depend on federal funds to fulfill our missions, serve New Yorkers, and preserve and care for US cultural heritage.

On a good day, federal funding is difficult to secure and highly competitive. The federal process requires advance planning, rigorous applications, and several months' wait period before award notification. When successful, federal funding enables the museum to undertake collections processing and digitizing projects, provide school programs and bring scholarly input into our exhibitions.

In late 2024, the Staten Island Museum was awarded a three-year grant totaling more than \$300,000 through Save America's Treasures program. **As of Wed. April 9, 10:29pm we received an email from Keith Sonderling the acting director at IMLS that the grant has been terminated. There is still approximately \$250,000 remaining on the grant.** Staten Island Museum's operating budget is about \$2.5 Million so this represents significant grant funding to carry out our mission. These are congressionally appropriated funds. We have since learned this was part of a round of hundreds of such notices.

Federal funding freezes and agency staff being placed on leave have created uncertainty around another allocated grant of \$250,000 through IMLS that is to facilitate stewardship of Native American artifacts. Additionally, SIM has pending requests to NEH and NEA totaling about \$500,000. Some of the notifications were expected this month.

Federal cultural funding is essential to the success of the Staten Island Museum and so many cultural institutions. I know there are a host of major issues on the table but I want you to know that these cuts and impacts are happening in the cultural sector as well. NYC council members should be aware of the tremendous strain federal cuts put on the city's cultural organizations.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for New York City's investment in the cultural institutions that make New York City great. We are counting on you!

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Monger, President & CEO, Staten Island Museum
P: 718.483.7113 JMonger@StatenIslandMuseum.org



Testimony of Kathy Soll, Founder and CEO of Teens for Food Justice

Committee on Finance jointly with the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Oversight Hearing on Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding

April 16, 2025

Good morning, Chair Brannan, Chair Ung, and members of the Committees:

My name is Katherine Soll, and I am the Founder and CEO of *Teens for Food Justice*, a nonprofit organization that builds and operates hydroponic farms inside Title I public schools across New York City, transforming them into year-round, youth-run sources of fresh produce, nutrition education, and food justice advocacy. Through this model, we train hundreds of middle and high school students to become urban farmers, public health leaders, and advocates for food equity in their own communities. Each of our farms grows up to 10,000 pounds of produce annually, distributed through school cafeterias and local food access programs. In total, through the tens of thousands of pounds of food we grow and the STEM, health/nutrition and youth development programming we provide, TFFJ currently benefits more than 8,000 students (and their families and neighbors) citywide, and counting.

After more than a decade leading this work, I will be retiring from my role as CEO at the end of this school year. It is deeply important to me, as I prepare to hand over this mission to the next generation of leadership, that I speak out today—not only for the future of Teens for Food Justice, but for the sustainability of the nonprofit sector in New York City at large.

Our work, and the health and well-being of the young people and communities we serve, is made possible through a patchwork of public and private funding—much of it braided with federal dollars through city agencies like New York City Public Schools and The New York City Department of Youth and Community Development. That funding allows us to operate food distribution programs for food-insecure families, provide STEM-based nutrition and health curriculum, and support youth-led public health advocacy.

As federal funding becomes increasingly unstable, and the threat of mass cuts looms, the City's response cannot be business as usual. We are already operating in a system where contracts are routinely delayed—sometimes for months after the work has begun. Due to the chaos of the last several months, we have had to front-fund even more critical components of our school-based programming and scramble for private support to fill the gaps. This is not sustainable—not for us, not for the many organizations doing this work without the benefit of diversified revenue streams, and, certainly, not for the NYC residents we serve.



The uncertainty surrounding federal support puts our ability to plan, scale, and retain staff at serious risk. The young people who count on us can't afford these delays or disruptions. When funding falters, it's their school meals, their education, their safety nets that disappear first.

I respectfully urge the City to:

- Immediately expedite all delayed payments to nonprofit human services providers;
- Strategically and swiftly draw down existing federal funding with input from nonprofit partners;
- And coordinate with the State to create a clear, proactive strategy to shield vital human services from anticipated federal cuts.

Our organizations are not just service providers—we are partners in building a stronger, healthier, more equitable New York. We need the City to treat us as such, with the urgency, transparency, and investment this moment demands.

Thank you for your leadership and for the opportunity to share this message.

Testimony of Dr. Melony Samuels

Founder and CEO, The Campaign Against Hunger

Before the New York City Council Committee on Government Operations, State and Federal Legislation Jointly with the Committee on Finance

April 16, 2025

Good morning Chair Restler, Chair Brannan, and esteemed members of the Committee on Government Operations and the Committee on Finance.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of The Campaign Against Hunger (TCAH), a leading anti-hunger and social services nonprofit that has proudly served New York City for over 26 years.

My name is Dr. Melony Samuels, and I appear before you with a deep sense of urgency. Our nonprofit, like many others, stands at a breaking point. While our mission has always been to fight hunger and poverty through emergency food assistance, workforce development, and urban agriculture, today we must also fight to defend the very infrastructure that allows us to serve.

Nonprofits like TCAH are essential to the functioning of this city. We are not peripheral; we are a lifeline. In the past year alone, we distributed over 17 million culturally responsive meals to more than 1.5 million New Yorkers, including seniors, working families, veterans, and newly arrived asylum seekers. We trained over 180 youth for meaningful employment and cultivated 25,000 pounds of fresh produce on underutilized land. And yet, despite our scale, impact, and accountability, we now find ourselves entangled in a federal funding crisis that threatens to unravel it all.

Recently, the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA awarded TCAH over \$1.3 million through the Shelter and Services Program (SSP) to support migrant families. This grant—intended to sustain emergency food distribution through 2026—has now been frozen without due process or cause. TCAH was the *only* New York City nonprofit selected for this funding. No violations were cited. No wrongdoing alleged. And yet, we are being punished through vague, politically charged policies that indiscriminately target organizations under the guise of border enforcement rhetoric.

This funding freeze is more than a bureaucratic inconvenience—it's a direct threat to food access for thousands. We have already invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in staffing, food procurement, and operations. Now, we are being told to wait indefinitely, while the families we serve cannot wait another day for a meal.

The nonprofit sector is not a political football. We are trusted, community-rooted partners that government agencies routinely rely upon to fill systemic gaps. And yet, our stability is often treated as expendable.

We urge this committee to recognize that the nonprofit sector in New York City needs statutory protections and a consistent policy framework—one that insulates us from

politically motivated funding disruptions and ensures timely and transparent disbursement of city, state, and federal funds. This is especially critical now, as nonprofits are being asked to meet surging demand for food, housing, and benefits access, all while weathering inflation, contract funding delays, and staffing shortages.

This moment calls for bold municipal advocacy. We ask the City Council to:

1. **Advocate at the federal level** for a fair and expeditious review process for funding disbursements to nonprofits, especially those caught in broader enforcement disputes that do not apply to them;
2. **Introduce or support legislation** that protects nonprofit contractors from harmful and arbitrary funding freezes;
3. **Ensure transparency and accountability mechanisms** in how federal funds administered through City agencies are allocated to and withheld from nonprofit partners;
4. **Champion emergency stabilization funding** for nonprofits facing interruptions in federal funding streams that jeopardize essential services.

While we remain focused on our mission to feed, empower, and uplift our communities, we cannot do it with one hand tied behind our back. We cannot keep operating in a landscape where one administrative decision—divorced from facts—can destabilize an entire citywide food relief operation.

New York City has long prided itself on being a city of equity, resilience, and compassion. But those ideals must be matched with action that shields frontline organizations from financial whiplash. If we lose the nonprofits that prop up this city's safety net, we risk a crisis that no budget allocation will be able to reverse.

TCAH is ready to continue doing our part. But today, we ask you to do yours—by standing up for the policies that protect us and the people we serve.

Thank you for your leadership, and for the opportunity to speak.

THE CENTER

Joint Hearing of the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Oversight Hearing - Preparing NYC for changes in federal funding

April 16, 2025

**Testimony of
The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center
New York, NY**

**THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL &
TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY CENTER
208 W 13 ST NEW YORK, NY 10011**

T. 212.620.7310

F. 212.924.2657

gaycenter.org

THE CENTER

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding our city's preparations for changes in federal funding following recent federal administration decisions. Undoubtedly, many of the decisions made by the Trump administration – especially those intended to destabilize the social safety net that supports LGBTQ+ Americans – will have long-term, adverse consequences on organizations such as ours. We believe that our municipal government has a role to play in safeguarding as many services as possible to ensure New Yorkers are able to continue living whole lives.

The divisive and violent national rhetoric regarding LGBTQ+ people, and specifically transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) people, is presenting additional pressures on our organization, and on our community members and clients. These dynamics are negatively impacting spaces like school and home, creating an even greater need for spaces like The Center that can provide refuge, support, and connections to services.

Impact of Cuts to Federal Funding on The Center

The Center is at risk of losing ~\$2M in federal funding based on the Trump administration's recent actions and other directives underway from federal agencies.

The direct funds that are most at risk are primarily funded via the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and are used to support our outpatient substance treatment clinic, youth substance use prevention services, and mental health counseling and services. Direct and indirect federal dollars also support our crime victims' work, which primarily provides critical support to impacted trans and gender nonconforming (TGNC) community members, as well as our marketplace insurance enrollment services.

When taken together, The Center relies on \$1.175M in direct federal funding and \$.925M in passthrough federal funding for a total of \$2.1M, which also represents ~12% of our budget. If our federal grants are terminated or withheld, The Center will concurrently be forced to eliminate significant services, vital programming and staffing that our community is depending on at this challenging and unprecedented time.

In addition, The Center recently acquired its Article 31 license to provide long-term mental health care to community members ages 13 and up. We are concerned that we may be excluded from billing Medicaid and Medicare based on the current federal government's attacks on the LGBTQ+ community.

We are at jeopardy to lose significant funding/contracts from the following federal and state agencies: (1) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, (2) Office of Victims of Crime, Department of Justice, (3) NYS Office of Victims' Services, (4) NYS Department of Health, (5) US Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services, and (6) NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports.

**THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL &
TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY CENTER**
208 W 13 ST NEW YORK, NY 10011

T. 212.620.7310
F. 212.924.2657
gaycenter.org

THE CENTER

The Center's History and work

New York City's LGBT community formed The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center (The Center) in 1983, in response to the AIDS epidemic, ensuring a place for LGBTQ people to access information, care and support they were not receiving elsewhere. Now, we are the largest LGBT multi-service organization on the East Coast, The Center sees more than 6,000 weekly visitors and hosts over 400 community group meetings each month. The Center has a solid track record of working for and with the community to increase access to a diverse range of high-quality services and resources, including our substance use recovery programming for adults and youth; HIV/AIDS programming; youth programs; and our families and opportunities work.

The Center's services

The Center fosters a welcoming environment where everyone is celebrated for who they are. We offer the LGBTQ communities of NYC advocacy, health and wellness programs; arts, entertainment, and cultural events; recovery, parenthood, and family support services. In addition, The Center has made racial equity a keystone element of our approach to community building.

- **Counseling and support groups:** The Center provides short-term individual counseling and referral services, as well as hosts a range of support groups for our transgender and gender nonconforming communities. Both individual counseling and groups offer support around a variety of topics, including gender identity and expression, emotional challenges, substance use and recovery, and aim to build peer support networks.
- **Employment support:** Despite legal protections in New York State, the effects of discrimination continue to place trans and gender nonconforming communities at extremely high rates of poverty, unemployment, underemployment and homelessness. The Center provides services to directly combat this inequality, including individual career coaching support, case management, events focused on career exploration, legal workshops and networking opportunities.
- **Health insurance enrollment and linkage to care:** The Center is a designated navigator agency for the NY State of Health, the health insurance marketplace for New York through the Affordable Care Act. We provide information and education on the options available, and help individuals, families, small businesses and their employees enroll in New York State Medicaid, The NY Essential Plan, Child Health Plus and Qualified Health plans. We also help connect individuals to TGNCNB affirming medical and behavioral healthcare as needed.
- **HIV prevention, testing, and linkage to care:** We offer counseling for individuals, groups, couples and families, plus a variety of events, speakers and informal social

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208 W 13 ST NEW YORK, NY 10011

T. 212.620.7310
F. 212.924.2657
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THE CENTER

gatherings for positive people and their loved ones. This includes HIV & AIDS education, anonymous testing, counseling and support, partner notification, and linkage to medical treatment including PEP, PrEP, and antiretroviral medications.

- **Legal services:** The Center partners with community-based legal providers to provide TGNCNB community members with drop-in assistance around gender-affirming access to healthcare, insurance, employment issues, housing, name and gender marker changes, public benefits and more.

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T. 212.620.7310
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Consolidation of the Head Start Regional Offices Impact Statement

Hello, I am Tanya Krien, Vice President of Early Childhood Education at The Child Center of NY. As an agency, we serve over 58,000 children, youth and families per year through a diverse slate of programs. In the Early Childhood division, we serve newborns through five years old's through ParentChild+, Early Head Start, and Head Start programming across four locations throughout Queens. We successfully prepare children so they can start school academically ready to learn at the level of their peers and begin life socially and emotionally ready to grow and thrive.

On behalf of The Child Center of NY, and the children and families we serve, we are deeply concerned about the recent consolidation of the 10 regional Head Start offices, and specifically, the closure of the ACF Region II Office. This will have a drastic and negative effect on our ability to provide quality services to 370 children and their families that we serve through our Early Head Start and Head Start programs.

The regional offices of Head Start play a critical role in ensuring that Head Start and Early Head Start programs across the U.S. are effectively supported, monitored, and able to meet the needs of local communities. Perhaps most importantly, they manage our funding, and ensure timely disbursement and monitor how the funds are used. We fear that our funding will be impacted, and without the funding, our programs will not be able to operate.

The closure of these offices also means that we will not have access to policy, compliance and fiscal specialists, training and technical assistance, and other vital services that ensure that we can efficiently and reliably administer the program.

The regional offices are so important – they understand the unique needs of the individual communities, and they are able to help us tailor support to help us meet those needs. Without their support, decisions made at the national level will ignore our communities needs and cultural context.

Simply put, regional offices are *essential* to Head Start's success. They make sure programs aren't just running—but thriving, compliant, and responsive to the communities they serve. Removing them would create gaps in support, oversight, and efficiency that could directly harm the quality of early childhood education for the most vulnerable children.



The Doe Fund

345 E 102nd St #305
New York, NY 10029
212.628.5207
www.doe.org



**Committee on Finance Jointly with Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal
Legislation
Hearing Testimony Guidance
April 16, 2025**

Dear Committee Members,

On behalf of The Doe Fund, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony following your hearing on *Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding*. We are deeply grateful for your continued leadership in ensuring the sustainability of human services across New York City.

The Doe Fund is a nonprofit human services provider dedicated to breaking the cycles of homelessness, incarceration, and poverty through housing, workforce development, and wraparound support services. We serve New Yorkers—many of whom face compounded barriers such as mental illness, substance use disorders, HIV/AIDS, and chronic housing instability. Our work is made possible in large part through partnerships with city agencies, particularly the Department of Social Services (HRA), the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), the Department of Homeless Services (DHS), and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD).

We are increasingly concerned about the impacts that federal funding reductions will have on these agencies and, by extension, on our programs and the populations we serve. A significant portion of city contracts—particularly those with HRA, DOHMH, DHS, and HPD—are braided with federal funding streams. Cuts at the federal level could leave critical gaps in service delivery that the City may struggle to fill. This is especially concerning in light of the persistent delays nonprofits experience in contract registration and payments. Many nonprofits have had to take on lines of credit to sustain operations during delayed disbursements, incurring interest payments that divert funds from client services.

Without a coordinated response, these compounded pressures could jeopardize housing stability, public health programming, and employment opportunities for nonprofit clients. We stand ready to partner with the City and our peer organizations to navigate these challenges, protect vital services, and advocate for the resources New Yorkers need and deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Irene Branche'.

Irene Branche
SVP of External Affairs
irene.branche@doe.org



To: NYC Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation
From: The Door - A Center for Alternatives, Inc.
Date: April 16, 2025
Re: Impact of Federal Funding Changes on The Door

Founded in 1972, The Door is an unparalleled model for youth development, offering a comprehensive range of services for up to 9,000 young adults from across New York City each year. At The Door, youth ages 12-24 can access primary and reproductive health care, mental health services, legal assistance, college preparation, career development, housing supports, arts, sports and recreational activities, and nutritious meals – all for free and in a diverse and caring environment. Through our integrated approach, we provide New York City youth with space to overcome their barriers, maximize their potential, and thrive as they transition into adulthood. We are a safe, inclusive, and welcoming haven for young people of all identities and lived experiences.

The past few months have ushered in a barrage of executive orders and policy changes on multiple fronts, targeting the most vulnerable among us, including immigrants, LGBTQIA+ individuals (especially transgender and non-binary people), and the unhoused. Federal funding for social services faces continued and relentless cuts. Access to reproductive and gender-affirming care is at risk. These orders have had a significant impact on various programs at The Door.

- **Deferred payments for The Door’s Food and Nutrition program**

On January 27th, The Door was notified of an indefinite deferral in payment issuance for the [Emergency Food and Shelter Program \(EFSP\)](#), an initiative administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide critical food assistance to individuals and families experiencing, or at risk of, hunger and homelessness. The Door’s EFSP contract provides approximately \$13,000 in support of food services annually. The interruption of this funding directly impacts our Food and Nutrition program, which offers daily breakfast, lunch, and dinner, as well as access to our food pantry, to 1,500+ youth each year. While the order to pause payments was rescinded, organizations like The Door across the city and country [still await disbursement of funds](#) in support of these services.

We fear that similar actions will prompt the loss of the over \$200,000 in funding we receive from the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which are funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

- **Loss of funding in support of The Door’s Legal Services Center**

On March 21st, The Door was notified of an immediate, near-total termination of services under the [Unaccompanied Children Program \(UCP\)](#), a vital initiative that provides legal support and representation to minors who entered the United States alone. Currently, more than 25,000 children receive legal services through this program nationwide, and there are approximately [1,800 open cases](#) across nine legal service providers in New York. The Door’s UCP contract accounts for \$4.6 million and 60% of our Legal Services Center’s funding, supporting the salaries of approximately 40 staff members who work directly with hundreds of unaccompanied minors. The sudden loss of this funding will significantly affect the capacity of our team, which last year handled 3,116 matters and closed 2,507 cases, benefiting 2,685 young people.



A federal judge has since issued a Temporary Restraining Order blocking the administration from cutting this funding. However, while the case makes its way through the courts, funding will not be disbursed in support of these services, and the future of our Legal Services Center and that of thousands of unaccompanied minors hang in the balance.

- **Reduced funding in support of The Door’s Adolescent Health Center**

The Door’s Adolescent Health Center (AHC) – where young people have access to a suite of comprehensive health services, including primary and reproductive health care, dental and vision care, dermatology, psychiatry, gender-affirming care, and health education, completely free of charge and regardless of insurance or immigration status – will also be impacted. [Title X](#) funding, the only dedicated federal funding for sexual and reproductive health services, has been [frozen across the country “pending a compliance review”](#). The Door was recently notified that our Title X Service Grant Award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services via Public Health Solutions, which provides approximately \$400,000 in funding, will be reduced in the coming grant year. We anticipate that our Comprehensive Family Planning grant of approximately \$700,000 from the NYS Department of Health will also be reduced. During the last Trump administration, the AHC’s budget lost approximately \$2 million in Title X funds, a gap that New York State graciously helped to bridge with emergency funding through the Comprehensive Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care Services Program.

Any loss of funding for these vital services will have a significant impact on a young person’s ability to not only access reproductive health care, but also general preventative wellness screenings which are essential for keeping youth healthy.

- **The Door remains open—and everyone is welcome here. No matter what.**

Currently, The Door’s programs remain operational, and young people can access our full range of services. However, given the shifting national policies and the resulting loss of critical funding, we face significant challenges that threaten the capacity and sustainability of our programs, and risk undoing years of progress in addressing the social and economic disparities that affect our youth.

Our private fundraising efforts are tireless and bold, but without immediate intervention and renewed investment, The Door will be forced to reduce our workforce by at least 20% at the end of our fiscal year in June. This reduction would have a direct impact on the thousands of New York City youth who depend on us most.

We recognize that our local leaders cannot shoulder the burden of these sweeping federal cuts. Still, we are hopeful that together we can help to close the gaps through direct support, strategic partnerships, and advocating for the communities and organizations most affected. Now more than ever, New York has both the responsibility and opportunity to step up in support of the core values of justice and compassion that this country—and The Door—were built upon.



**New York City Council Oversight Hearings on Preparing NYC for Changes in
Federal Funding**

**New York City Council Committees on Finance and Governmental Operations,
State & Federal Legislation**

Honorable Justin Brannan and Honorable Lincoln Restler, Chairs

Submitted by:

Abbie Rubin-Pope, UJA-Federation of New York

April 16th, 2025

Thank you, Chairpersons Brannan and Restler, and members of the Committees on Finance and Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation, for holding this oversight hearing and for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Abbie Rubin-Pope, and I am the Government Relations Coordinator at UJA-Federation of New York.

Established more than 100 years ago, UJA-Federation of New York is one of the nation's largest local philanthropies. Central to UJA's mission is to care for those in need—identifying and meeting the needs of New Yorkers of all backgrounds and Jews everywhere. UJA supports an expansive network of nearly 100 nonprofit organizations serving the most vulnerable and allocates over \$185 million annually to address poverty and food insecurity, nurture mental health and well-being, strengthen Jewish life, and respond to crises across New York City, Westchester, and Long Island.

The recent Executive Orders and policy directives from the federal administration have already begun to disrupt programs funded in full or in part by federal dollars. Many of UJA's network agencies rely on City and State contracts that include a federal funding component. In total, UJA's nonprofit partners report receiving at least \$424 million annually in federal funding, much of it tied to contracts or reimbursements that are now at risk of delay, reduction, or termination.

The most immediate concern is the pause in refugee resettlement services, but additional programs—particularly those tied to DEI, LGBTQ+ support, and public health—face imminent threats. These changes, combined with confirmed clawbacks of FEMA funds, rescinded COVID-19 relief dollars, and broader federal retrenchment, pose a serious risk to New York City's nonprofit human services sector.

The impact of these changes is not theoretical:

- \$188 million in FEMA funds for migrant shelter services were recently rescinded by the federal Department of Homeland Security (DHS), with the justification that services supported individuals “not consistent with DHS’s current priorities.”
- New York City will lose an additional \$100 million in COVID-19 relief funds expected from the federal government. This disproportionately affects organizations still recovering from pandemic-related financial losses.
- Federal support for New York City’s Administration for Children’s Services (ACS), Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD), and Public Schools (NYCPS) is projected to drop significantly between FY25 and FY26—ACS alone faces a 23% reduction in federal dollars, while DOHMH faces a staggering 56% drop.

For UJA’s network of nonprofits, this translates to:

- \$137.6 million at risk for older adult services—including senior centers, meals, case management, and Medicaid-funded long-term care.
- \$31 million in jeopardy for early childhood education programs, many of which already face payment delays and staff shortages.
- \$54 million in housing-related services threatened by shifting Department of Housing and Urban Development priorities.

Mental health and legal services as well as youth programming are expected to be impacted as well. To be clear, any reduction in federal funding could result in layoffs at nonprofits, program closures, and/or less services available for vulnerable residents across New York City. At one of UJA’s nonprofits, a program that offers resettlement and integration services for refugees employs fifty individuals. This program offers case management, social adjustment, English classes and tutoring as well as workforce development services for people displaced from their home countries due to conflict or persecution. These services will no longer be provided and all fifty employees of the program will be laid-off if federal funding for refugee resettlement services is eliminated, as promised by the Department of Homeland Security.

UJA-Federation of New York urges the Council and Administration to take the following steps to insulate New Yorkers and nonprofits from the impacts of federal funding cuts:

1. Backfill critical program areas at risk due to rescinded or frozen federal funding—including refugee services, housing programs, and early childhood education.
2. Maintain the 3% Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for human services workers through FY27 to ensure that staffing disruptions don’t compound funding shortfalls.
3. Establish a contingency fund for nonprofit contracts dependent on federal funding to ensure payment continuity when federal disbursements are delayed or revoked.
4. Work in partnership with New York State to advocate for federal pass-through funding in Medicaid, TANF, and the Child Care Block Grant.
5. Ensure timely payment of contracts by eliminating the backlog of delayed registrations and restoring funding to the Mayor’s Office of Contract Services (MOCS), whose staffing cuts have slowed processing. Late payments force nonprofits to take out costly

loans or delay services—jeopardizing the very programs the City relies on to serve vulnerable New Yorkers.

In this moment of uncertainty, UJA also urges the City to prepare and be thoughtful about allocating resources going forward alleviating the fiscal burden that already exists in the landscape and safeguarding the infrastructure that serves New York’s most vulnerable residents.

Conclusion

UJA-Federation of New York stands ready to work with the City Council and the Administration to ensure New York City remains a place where all residents have access to the essential services they need to live with dignity. We respectfully urge your consideration and support of these recommendations. Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, please contact me at rubin-popea@ujafedny.org.



**Testimony of University Settlement
Before the Committee on Finance and
the Committee on Governmental Operations, State and
Federal Legislation Hearing**

184 ELDRIDGE STREET
NEW YORK NY 10002
212-453-4555
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April 16, 2025

My name is Melissa Aase, and I am the Chief Executive Officer at University Settlement Society of NY. I appreciate the members of the Committee for the opportunity to address the Committee regarding the significant potential challenges we face as a provider of critical programs supported through City contracts—many of which are braided with federal funds. We are deeply concerned about the cumulative impact of federal funding cuts and ongoing delays in the City contracting process.

University Settlement is one of New York City's most dynamic social justice institutions, with an impressive legacy as the first settlement house in the nation. For 139 years, University Settlement has been an anchor in the communities where we work, offering pioneering programs in early childhood care and education, youth development, eviction prevention, literacy, theater and visual arts, older adult services, and mental health. Each year, we engage over 40,000 New Yorkers, many of them immigrants or from low-income families, through our network of 30+ sites in Manhattan and Brooklyn. Our mission is to empower residents by building on their strengths and knowledge through comprehensive, quality services that meet the current needs of the community, innovation that anticipates future needs, and advocacy on behalf of the community and its residents.

Many of our contracts with agencies like the NYC Public Schools, the NYC Aging, and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) rely heavily on federal dollars, including Medicaid. In FY24 alone, University Settlement administered over \$24 million in federal funding, including \$12 million in direct and pass-through funding, along with an additional \$12 million in Medicaid. These braided contracts are not isolated, but interdependent resources that allow us to provide comprehensive services that address the full scope of community needs. For example, at the City level, these contracts support our work with 250 older adults every day at our older adult centers and 200 daily meals through our Meals on Wheels program, as well as Head Start services for early childhood; at the state level, these contracts support our work with nearly 450 ESOL adult language learners,



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food for our early childhood classrooms, and services for 500 tenants experiencing housing instability. As another example, at the Federal level, they make it possible for us to deliver college access services to more than 1,000 young people annually. While this layered funding model has supported innovation and scale, it also exposes us to compounding risk when federal dollars are reduced.

We are already experiencing the impact of federal funding reductions—particularly in education, housing, childcare, cash assistance, and other essential social services, including those that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. These are not abstract concerns; the consequences are evident in our current contracts, and we anticipate deeper challenges ahead. For example, we spent over \$100,000 to support vulnerable families facing hunger and homelessness, including emergency rental assistance for tenants at risk of eviction. However, we were recently notified that the contract that should reimburse us for this is on pause due to a federal payment freeze under the Emergency Food and Shelter Program through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). We remain committed to serving communities in crisis with the expectation of reimbursement, but without federal support, we will be forced to reduce services. Continued federal disinvestment will result in direct service cuts, disproportionately harming immigrant and low-income New Yorkers who are already navigating systemic barriers.

The broader concern is that reductions in federal aid to New York City and State will create large budget gaps that our local governments will be expected to fill, placing even greater pressure on nonprofit partners who are already stretched thin. Without adequate buffers, these gaps will be passed down to nonprofits like ours and put us at risk of service reductions, program closures, and workforce instability at a time when communities need us most.

This crisis is worsened by another persistent challenge: delayed contracting and late payments by both the City and the State. These delays are no longer just an administrative burden—they are a financial hazard. We are routinely asked to deliver multi-year services without registered contracts or timely payments, creating a severe cash flow crisis, forcing us into a vicious cycle to take on interest-bearing loans or front costs just to maintain operations. This instability threatens our ability to retain staff, meet obligations, and provide consistent care. For the communities we serve, it translates directly into delays, disruptions, and lost trust.

To address these compounding challenges, we respectfully urge the City to take several actions. First, accelerate non-profit contract registration and payments, particularly for contracts braided with federal funds, and establish more robust mechanisms for advance or bridge funding to avoid service disruptions. The current \$30 million bridge loan pool, while helpful, falls far short of meeting sector-wide needs. For example, as of now, a sample of just



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NEW YORK NY 10002
212-453-4555
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16 human services organizations are collectively owed \$90 million by the City. This staggering gap highlights how existing support is insufficient even for a fraction of providers, leaving the broader human services sector at serious risk. Without immediate action to expand bridge financing, organizations like ours will continue to shoulder unsustainable financial burdens. Second, identify funding streams most at risk of federal cuts and work collaboratively with nonprofit partners to develop contingency plans with clear timelines and expectations. Third, implement a strategic and expedited drawdown of federal funds in partnership with human services organizations, with consistent updates on funding status, projected shortfalls, and contract implications to support informed planning. Fourth, work with the State to design a comprehensive counterstrategy that proactively identifies at-risk programs and communities, models potential budget gaps, and advocates for emergency local or state investments where they are most needed. Cuts to essential programs like Head Start, the Emergency Food and Shelter Program, Public Safety programs and educational inclusion programs are already widening disparities in housing, education, and healthcare access. We urge the city to safeguard and expand culturally competent services by creating flexible local funding pools and ensuring City dollars are directed toward sustaining programs that serve communities disproportionately impacted by federal disinvestment.

Federal funding is a lifeline for countless programs that help close gaps in equity, affordability, and opportunity across New York City. This is not just a fiscal challenge—it is a systemic one. Nonprofits like University Settlement are not auxiliary supports; we are core to the city’s social infrastructure, delivering critical services every day. However, we cannot preserve these essential programs without meaningful coordination and shared responsibility. We are calling for greater transparency, collaboration, and long-term planning to protect and remain accessible to the most vulnerable New Yorkers. We remain committed to working in partnership with the City Council and public agencies to safeguard stability, equity, and a resilient future for all communities. For further inquiries, please contact us at ceo@universitysettlement.org.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa E. Aase".

Melissa E. Aase
Chief Executive Officer



Testimony

New York City Council

**Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation Jointly with the
Committee on Finance**

Oversight Hearing on Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding

April 16, 2025

Good afternoon, Chair Restler, Chair Brannan, and members of the Committees. My name is Cristina Abbattista, and I am the Policy Analyst at Urban Pathways. Thank you for your leadership on issues that deeply impact the human service sector and for the opportunity to testify at today's Oversight Hearing on Preparing NYC for Changes in Federal Funding.

Urban Pathways is a nonprofit homeless services and supportive housing provider serving single adults. Last year, we served over 2,500 unique individuals through a full continuum of services including street outreach, drop-in services, safe havens and stabilization beds, extended-stay residences, and permanent supportive housing in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx. We also offer a wide range of additional programming to meet the needs of the people we serve, including our Total Wellness, Employment, and Advocacy programs. We hold City contracts with DHS, DOHMH, and HRA.

The lack of stability in Federal funding impacts our organization's planning of operations, therefore creating a climate of uncertainty in our ability to continue to provide essential services to thousands of New Yorkers in need. Urban Pathways receives funding from the NYC Continuum of Care (CoC) to operate our Rapid Rehousing Program, helping unsheltered individuals move immediately into housing, as well as to support program operations at two of our licensed supportive housing sites. **We received a CoC renewal contract with new language that requires the recipient will not use grant funds to promote gender ideology, DEI, elective abortions, and shielding "illegal aliens" from deportation.** The contract was rescinded the day after it was sent to us, and we received an updated one a week later with minor language edits. Additionally, the contract stated that "HUD will not enforce provisions of the Grant Agreement to the extent that they require the project to use a Housing First program model." There is a lack of clarity regarding what violations to these new terms look like, and the

unsettling tone of the Federal government's shift in language and priorities is counter to all the evidence about what works. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) reports that **85-90% of participants in Housing First programs retained housing after five years**. The Housing First approach acts as the foundation for each person we serve as they aspire to improve their quality of life, leading to higher retention rates in permanent housing, reduced hospitalizations, and lower overall costs for communities. Providing individuals with stable housing as the initial step, without preconditions, followed by support services empowers individuals to rebuild their lives with dignity and autonomy.

The compounding late contracting issues from the City puts organizations like ours at risk. It makes it difficult to pay staff, vendors, and run programs for the people we serve. **Currently, Urban Pathways is owed almost \$1.5 million by the Department of Homeless Services (DHS), which contracts our drop-in center, Safe Havens, and stabilization beds, and approximately \$2 million by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), which contracts our permanent supportive housing.** There is no other industry that is expected to continue performing work when they are owed millions of dollars in back pay.

Federal funding flows through NYC's municipal budget, with the NYC Comptroller reporting 23% of the Department of Social Services budget is funded by the Federal government. Urban Pathways depends on funding from both DHS and HRA. DSS's reliance on Federal funding, given anticipated mass cuts, will create significant budget gaps that can have compounding effects influencing the most vulnerable New Yorkers which the City will have to fill.

With these rapid and dramatic changes in the Federal landscape, Urban Pathways calls upon the City to urgently:

- Expedite all late contract payments in City contracts with human services providers to prepare for impending mass Federal cuts.
- Plan a strategic withdrawal of Federal funding that it receives, collaborating with human services nonprofit contract holders.
- Integrate a comprehensive strategy to anticipated mass cuts on Federal human services funding.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. We look forward to working with the City Council on preparing NYC for changes in federal funding

For questions or more information, please contact:

Cristina Abbattista, Policy Analyst

cabbattista@urbanpathways.org, [REDACTED]

Submitted Testimony of Shane Cherry Regarding the Loss of Federal Funding and Support Related to Zoom call from Wed 4/16 at 10am "City Council Hearing on Federal Funding"

To the Committee:

First, thank you for this opportunity to testify. As a community leader and Vice President of NYC Gaymers, I appreciate the chance to be heard on behalf of NYC's LGBTQIA+ nerd community. I work with and in service of folks representing every letter in the queer community who share common interests of video games, board games, and card games, etc. I'll do my best to respect your time and keep my remarks brief.

While the loss of federal funding is dismaying to us for a few reasons, it also needs to be stated that the city itself has contributed to the problem lately. Eric Adams is more unpopular than ever, and one reason why is his gutting of medical support for the LGBTQIA+ community. Here in NYC, the greater queer umbrella includes a diverse group of people with a diverse set of medical needs: gender-affirming care and medication, STI testing and treatment, HIV treatment, HIV and STI prevention through pre- and post-exposure drugs, mental health / trauma support, etc. Even putting condoms in bars is a form of harm reduction. In the past few years, we've seen funding for LGBTQIA+ and minority-focused medical services decline. In addition to mitigating the new stressors affecting our access to prevention and care, we need to also address a local lack of support by fully funding queer-focused medical institutions like Callen-Lorde and Apicha. We should go even farther and change all NYC elections to use ranked choice voting - not just primaries and special elections - to ensure members of marginalized communities are properly represented in government and hold more sway as a voting block.

Returning to the lack of federal funding, here are the most urgent things to protect. Keep in mind that everything listed is urgent, but it's just the tip of the iceberg. Prevention, for instance, is less urgent than treatment, even though both are extremely important:

- **HIV Treatment:** It shouldn't need to be stated, but HIV+ members of our community have expressed concern that a lack of access to medication would be a literal death sentence. It's paramount that medication is available for those who need it. Price-gouging is a legitimate concern.
- **Gender-Affirming Care:** Gender-affirming care encapsulates a lot of treatments - everything from access to therapy to breast augmentation - and it helps cisgender folks as much as transgender folks. However, some care is more urgent than others: Trans people receiving hormone therapy can't just stop. Mental health services will be important, too, but warrants its own entry. But it's imperative that we don't let anyone's treatment lapse.
- **Mental Health Services:** All members of the LGBTQIA+ community are now in danger. This shift in safety is newer for some than others, but access to a therapist with some overlapping life experience as your own greatly reduces the burden on any individual.
- **Support Safe LGBTQIA+ Community Spaces:** In addition to access to mental healthcare, the other half of a strong support system is community. NYC should be

investing directly in uplifting marginalized communities of all kinds. This can be financial support of nonprofits and events, visibility campaigns for the same, or funding legal challenges to hateful federal laws. Again, changing to a ranked-choice voting system would help ensure the government accurately reflects its constituents and their views. We need to reform our elections significantly. And, obviously, being on the board of NYC Gaymers, a nonprofit, I'd like the city to consider funding more programs that contribute to the LGBTQIA+ gaming, recreation, and community-building. There are so many other worthy organizations that foster a sense of community, protect and provide safety for the most vulnerable, educate the uneducated about the LGBTQIA+ community and the issues we face, and provide opportunities for marginalized individuals. Consider supporting some of the many fantastic LGBTQIA+ nonprofits operating in NYC.

- **STI Prevention:** The most important modern method of STI prevention to preserve funding for is likely testing. But there's a lot: PrEP is a preventative treatment that provides a near-immunity to HIV. PEP is similar but administered post-exposure. Doxy-PEP significantly reduces the chances of other common conditions. And condoms, of course, are a classic and effective choice. While no one method of prevention is itself singularly urgent, in general, prevention is still the most effective way to reduce STI rates. Sex education for those who don't know prevention techniques is also a form of STI prevention.
- **Legal Support:** Things are getting scary, and we need the city ready to help defend us. Though my advocacy is focused in the LGBTQIA+ community, and trans individuals are being personally attacked, I must also mention the extreme threat to democracy and civil liberties in the form of ICE raids on noncitizens, and recently, citizens as well. We need an army of city-backed lawyers willing to file habeas writs, protect immigrants from deportation, and fight for the bodily autonomy of trans folks and cisgender folks alike. The Republican Administration is intentionally targeting low income victims first, so this would provide aid that may otherwise never arrive. We will need the city to literally back the defenses of its people, whether it's against deportation or discrimination.

At the end of the day, we are all going to suffer under the Republican Administration. Hard choices are coming and I recognize that there may not be enough resources for everyone. Hard choices will be made, likely not always the right one, and people will get hurt. I urge you to make reasoned, intentional decisions moving forward. Please always ask yourself before each vote, "How will this measure affect the most vulnerable? Who gets left behind?" There may not be a path through every storm that clears away all harm, but we owe it to ourselves that we do our best to ensure anyone we do lose - literally, whose lives end or become political prisoners - are due to our failure to save everyone, not our willingness to sacrifice a few.

Additionally, one thing I'd like to stand fully against: The already bloated budget for NYPD should not be increased. It is far more effective to prevent crime by investing in underserved communities, not over-policing them. Let's fund education, safety, and community directly, especially in communities where we can expect reduced or eliminated federal support.

Thank you for your time. Again, I understand the difficult situation we are in. It is not an exaggeration to liken it to Nazi Germany. But if we work together, we can reduce the harm done as much as possible. Obviously not everything can be solved by the two committees involved in the Zoom call related to this testimony; I've mentioned ranked voting for elections more than once, and I do recognize that the Finance Committee has very little purview over that domain. But only by resisting the efforts of the Republican Administration together will we stand a chance at minimizing the harm they do. Please do everything you can.

Together,
Shane Cherry
Vice President, NYC Gaymers
he | him | his

As you know, New York City created its outdoor dining program — including its seasonal roadway program — through years of a painstaking process.

That process included a 2021 Zoning Text Amendment — with Community Board, City Planning Commission and City Council hearings that lasted nearly a year.

That process also included legislation — City Council Intro 31C that was passed on August 3, 2023 and became Local Law 121 — which made roadway dining seasonal by law.

That process also included a rule-making process governed by the Charter of the City of New York that included a public comment period and Community Board hearings throughout New York City.

It would appear that you are working in partnership with the New York City Hospitality Alliance Executive Director Andrew Rigie who said — while Intro 31C was under consideration — “Now, after two years of discussions and negotiations with the mayor’s administration and the City Council, led by our attorney . . . Rob Bookman, a new outdoor dining program is coming.” It is clear from this contemporaneous quote that Mr. Rigie enjoyed unusual behind-the-scenes influence in creating the city legislation that you are now trying to skirt. In short, your partner is now trying to “reform” a law that he and his powerful lobby had an outsized hand in creating in the first place.

I submit that it is not up to the New York State Assembly to reverse New York City's decision to make roadway dining seasonal. For us, these last months of no roadway dining have been a relief and a blessing. Those winter months have given our communities a chance to have our roads cleaned and repaired, stopped the proliferation of rats in our streets and reduced the noise that invaded our homes nightly.

To every extent possible, residents and community boards and community organizations participated in the democratic and administrative and legislative processes available to them in creating legislation that is now a law and rules that conform to requirements of the New York City Charter. Your attempt to make an end run around those processes is disappointing, unwelcome and will be opposed by those community organizations who rightfully relied on the legal and legislative procedures of our city.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jacqueline Sherman

Address: 110 William St

I represent: Independent Budget Office

Address: 110 William

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sarah Parker

Address: 110 William

I represent: Independent Budget Office

Address: 110 William St

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Federal Funding Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jessie Fischer

Address: _____

I represent: Korean American Family Service Center

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

2

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Melony Samuels

Address: [redacted] Brooklyn

I represent: The Campaign Against Hunger

Address: 2010 Fulton St Brooklyn

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

3

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rev Terry Inia

Address: [redacted] SI NY 02

I represent: Project Hospitality

Address: 47 Scribner Ave SI NY 01

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

4

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Philip Dunce

Address: [redacted] Ridgewood NY 11385

I represent: Northern Manhattan Improvement Corp

Address: 45 Wadsworth Ave NY, NY 10033

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Joseph Rosenberg

Address: 191 Joralemn St

I represent: Catholic Community Relations Council

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

6

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dr Sophie Charles / CoFCCA

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JUSTIN WOOD

Address: _____, STATEN ISLAND

I represent: New York Lawyers Public Interest

Address: NYLPI 151 W 30th St. NY 10001

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

8

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Aaron Sanders

Address: _____

I represent: Grand St. Settlement

Address: 175 Delancey St

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gina [redacted]

Address: [redacted] NY 10018

I represent: New Dystar Holding Corp

Address: 120 37th St 7th Fl NY NY 10018

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Philip Duncan

Address: _____

I represent: Northern Manhattan Improvement

Address: Corporation

11
**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dr. Melony Samuels

Address: _____

I represent: The Campaign Against Hunger

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4-16-2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mohammad Razvi

Address: 1281 Coog Island Ave

I represent: Council of Peoples Org

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sabrina Hargrave

Address: _____

I represent: Brooklyn Org

Address: 80 Hanson Pl, 5th Fl

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rosalind Black

Address: _____

I represent: Legal Services NYC

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

15

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jonee Billy

Address: _____

I represent: Power Play NYC

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rachel Klepper

Address: [Redacted] Brooklyn

I represent: United Neighborhood Houses

Address: 45 Broadway NYC

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Brian Ellicott-Cook

Address: _____

I represent: SAGE

Address: _____

*Test. A)
w/
nonprofit
Statn Island*

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

18

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Janice Monger

Address: 1000 Richmond Terr Bldg A

I represent: NPSI / Staten Island Museum

Address: _____

*connecting with
Non
PROFIT
Staten Island*

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Janet Magnuson

Address: 4450 Amboy RD Lind Park 10312

I represent: NPSI / Richmond Home Needs Svcs Inc

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

20

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/21

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Roceland Black

Address: 40 North St, Ste 601, NYC NY

I represent: Legal Services NYC & NYC

Address: Testify together plan

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Testify
w/
nonprofit
organization

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Celestine Cox

Address: [Redacted]

I represent: Nonprofit ST

Address: P.O. BOX 141792 SINY 10314

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

22

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Adrienne Abbate

Address: 444 St Marks

I represent: SI Partnership for Community Wellnes

Address: Testify w/NPST

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alice Mo

Address: _____

I represent: Homecrest Community Services

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

24

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Victoria Leahy

Address: _____

I represent: Homeless Services United

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: [Redacted] Miranda

Address: _____

I represent: La Colmena

Address: Testby WI NPST

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

26

Testimony
w/

Nonprofit, State of

Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tatiana Arguello

Address: 76 Heudon Ave

I represent: nonprofit st.

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

27

Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Andrea Ram

Address: 240 W 35th Street

I represent: Citizens Budget Commission

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

28

Appearance Card

[Empty box]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Hannah Lupien

Address: _____

I represent: Met Council

Address: 1 State Street Plaza

THE COUNCIL 29
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ANDREW SANTA ANA

Address: _____

I represent: ASIAN AMERICAN FEDERATION

WORK WITH COUNCIL OF PEOPLES ORGANIZATIONS

Address: KAPE, AMERICAN & KAFSC

THE COUNCIL 30
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Naama Dohic

Address: 150 Court St, FL3, Brooklyn, NY 11201

I represent: Arab-American Family Support Center

Address: 150 Court St, FL3, Brooklyn, NY 11201

THE COUNCIL 31
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ALANA TORVELLO

Address: [REDACTED] BLDG, NY 10454

I represent: HSC

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kevin Kiprovski

Address: _____

I represent: Live On NY

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jade Vasquez

Address: _____

I represent: Win (Women in Need)

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

34

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kayt Tiskas

Address: _____

I represent: Collective Public Affairs

Address: [Redacted] New York NY 10038

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 04/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: EMMA BESSIDE

Address: 17 VIRGINIA PL

I represent: CITY MEALS ON WHEELS

Address: 355 Lexington Ave 4th fl

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

37

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Hailey Nolascio

Address: 520 8th Avenue

I represent: Center for Justice Innovation

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Yvesenia Mata

Address: _____

I represent: La Colmena

Address: w/ Nonprofit Staten Island

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christopher Leon Johnson

Address: _____

I represent: Self

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms