



**Department for
the Aging**

TESTIMONY

Presented by

**Dr. Lisa Scott-McKenzie
Commissioner**

on

Oversight: Interagency Coordination for Older Adults

before the

**New York City Council
Committee on Aging**

on

**Tuesday, June 16, 2026
At 10:00 a.m.**

Good morning, Chair Zhuang, and members of the New York City Council Committee on Aging. I am Dr. Lisa Scott-McKenzie, Commissioner of the New York City Department for the Aging (NYC Aging). It is a great pleasure to join you today to discuss NYC Aging's Interagency Coordination for Older Adults and how we are utilizing the NYC Cabinet for Older New Yorkers (Cabinet) to ensure that New York City's fastest growing demographic—adults aged 60 and older—is served through budget neutral initiatives across agencies. The Cabinet is a unique interagency model that New York City, and this Administration, is using to advance an age-inclusive city by bringing together city agencies to cultivate lasting, sustainable change. Through the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers, member agencies, led by agency heads and supported by liaisons, collaborate by identifying gaps or barriers in existing services by utilizing a structure of working groups which develop initiatives to address the everyday challenges experienced by older New Yorkers.

As you know, NYC Aging administers a wide range of programs that enhance the independence and quality of life for the City's older adult population. A key component to NYC Aging's mission is to ensure that all older New Yorkers have access to both city services and programs at our agency and with our partners in city government, and to work toward reducing barriers that hinder an older adult's ability to age in place with dignity while improving their quality of life. I am excited to discuss with you the origin of the Cabinet, how it functions, and the recent impacts we have seen through Cabinet initiatives.

The Cabinet for Older New Yorkers reinforces that City Agencies invest in the lives of older adults, combat ageism, and break down communication silos that prevent New York City from truly becoming age-inclusive. We largely do this work through budget neutral approaches made possible through innovative agency collaborations. In my time as Commissioner, I have been devoted to understanding the “meat and potatoes” issues which older New Yorkers experience and how NYC Aging, as well as partner agencies, address those concerns. The reality is that too many older New Yorkers have a housing concern, are experiencing food insecurity, need help during a weather emergency, or are adjusting to returning to the workforce. The Cabinet for Older New Yorkers raises these and other issues as citywide concerns, not necessarily as older adult or NYC Aging concerns.

Origin, Functions, & Impacts

When the concept of Age-Friendly Environments was first developed nearly 15 years ago, differing levels of government and community organizations first explored the issue that aging should not be siloed into disparate organizations or structures. Council, and other elected partners, have always been part of the discussion through the Age-Friendly Coalition, which operates alongside the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers. Because we saw the need for component parts of government to collaborate and innovate to address issues affecting older adults, we tried to address problems individually between agencies as needs were identified. While this was a necessary first step, the gaps which remained in that need to further collaborate on issues grew organically into the formation of the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers. We are building off the same successes that collaborative task forces have seen on domestic violence or children's welfare issues in addressing the needs of older adults. This age-inclusive approach ensures that we are supporting two pillars of our community that form the bridge of effective social services: youth and older adults.

In previous administrations, the City promoted a continued commitment to interagency collaborations promoting government efficiency and ensuring age-inclusive practices are implemented in agencies. This first of its kind, multiagency collaborative was created to support the services, projects, and policies that benefit older adults across New York City. The Cabinet for Older New Yorkers first met on September 21, 2022, and included at the time, 17 agencies across New York City focused on coordinating and leveraging shared resources to develop long-term, solutions-based initiatives and projects to benefit older adults. Ultimately, the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers is a function of the Administration and is not a “white paper” endeavor meant to study demographic or social-societal impacts on an older adult's life and then simply release a report. We are

instead using collective knowledge across member agencies, as directed by the Mayor, to address real problems that we know about and make a tangible impact on an older adult's life.

As codified by law introduced by the Council in Local Law 64 of 2024, member agencies are diverse and wide-ranging. They span the entire Administration and a range of government areas, and services provided to New York City. These agencies have an overlapping focus relevant to older adults. At present, the Cabinet comprises 30 member agencies as outlined in the local law including the Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), Health + Hospitals (H+H), the Police Department (NYPD), Department of Parks and Recreation (Parks), and Housing and Preservation and Development (HPD), just to name a few.

There are four Cabinet subcommittees: Health, Housing, Intergenerational, and Outreach & Engagement. Cabinet member agency staff serve as liaisons as designated by their Commissioner or Agency Head to meet independently and cultivate collaborations in service to older New Yorkers, and meet quarterly as a group in-person. In addition, on a quarterly basis, Cabinet member agencies present initiatives and outcomes to a larger group which includes Agency Heads and Commissioners as well as Deputy Mayors. The subcommittees develop initiatives that set the groundwork for systemic change and long-term impact, while responding to current gaps and needs.

Since our last hearing on interagency collaboration and the legislation on the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers, initiatives have yielded tangible impacts for older adults by making meaningful changes through agency collaboration on their lives. For instance, NYC Public Schools (NYCPS) held a 2nd Annual Anti-Ageism Education Initiative Culmination and Recognition event at The Paley Center for Media in May. Participating teachers and administrators were recognized and schools received awards for being Anti-Ageism Champions and Anti-Ageism Innovators. In addition, the NYCPS Service in Schools Kids Action Team held its annual Celebration of Service, which highlighted incorporating anti-ageism education with community service for K-3 students for a third consecutive year. Through the Anti-Ageism Education Initiative implemented by NYCPS under the Cabinet, which is informed by subject matter expertise at NYC Aging, teachers and administrators are equipped with the tools to discuss age discrimination with students. Students also learn to recognize ageism and build stronger connections with older adults.

Similarly, the Department of Youth and Community Development held a 3rd annual culmination event for My NY Story earlier this month, which is an intergenerational storytelling initiative that promotes community building while combating ageism. Youth and older adults at participating NYCHA communities with an older adult center and a Cornerstone site in the Bronx and Brooklyn worked with *Vibrnt Seeds*, an organization that focuses on food justice and urban agriculture. Additionally, the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers released an *Age-Inclusive NYC Arts & Culture: Best Practices for Creative Aging* guidebook, developed collaboratively by the Department of Cultural Affairs and NYC Aging. The guidebook highlights 13 cultural organizations representing every borough and creative art form that advance age-inclusive older adult programming.

Further, through the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers, more than 750 older workers returning to the labor force have been trained by the NYC Commission on Human Rights on employment-based age discrimination and the NYC Human Rights Law. In addition, more than 1800 NYC Health + Hospitals frontline professionals were trained on community-based aging services to support older adult patients and caregivers. Finally, our work with the Department of Transportation promotes age-inclusive pedestrian planning through walkability audits with older adult center members citywide, conducted in 30 neighborhoods with more than 900 participants.

This is a reflection of the work that can only happen because the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers functions solely within the Administration, leveraging Mayoral interagency collaborations and existing resources for budget neutral, sustainable solutions. Utilizing the authority given to the Commissioner for the Department for

the Aging, legislated by the Council in Local Law 64, and supported by the Mayor, the Cabinet is able to address problems internally for the City and improve the lives of older adults. The Cabinet is not a think-tank or a study producing entity, nor is it a body devoted to constituent service needs; it is focused on tangible outcomes and cross-coordination between Mayoral Agencies.

Impact & National Reach

In 2023, directly because of the work happening with the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers, NYC Aging submitted a resolution to the US Conference of Mayors calling on cities to promote and adopt age-inclusive approaches to local policy, practices, and programs in a commitment to achieving an elevated standard of being an age-inclusive city. It is not enough that cities be “Age-Friendly” and while we are so proud that New York City was named as one of the first Age-Friendly Cities in the US, we are pushing further to ensure age inclusiveness across a broad spectrum of needs for older adults. Following the adoption of the resolution by the US Conference of Mayors, NYC Aging hosted the *BOOM! Conference on Aging* in December 2024. For the first time, NYC Aging hosted a national conference convening experts, including international panelists, to ensure older adults can age with dignity and respect, and make communities across the country age-inclusive. During this conference, we presented one of the first publications reflecting the work of the Cabinet, the Age-Inclusive American Cities Guidebook. This guidebook, developed and compiled by NYC Aging, provides proven age-inclusive strategies, best practices, and actionable steps from 19 US cities that formed the National Age-Inclusive Working Group. Some of the member cities include Albuquerque, Chicago, Des Moines, Houston, Kansas City, Miami, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Seattle, among others. All of which an older adult population of approximately 20 percent or more.

As part of Local Law 64, we have also submitted to the Council a full report of every meeting of the quarterly Cabinet for Older New Yorkers, as well as a list of attendees at those meetings. This detailed report explains the initiatives which were discussed and gives a preview of what the Cabinet is working toward in the future. We look forward to sharing with the Council a forthcoming updated report later this summer. Additionally, members of the Council—including you, Chair Zhuang, Speaker Menin, and all five Borough Presidents—serve as ex-officio members of the Age-Friendly NYC Commission, co-chaired by NYC Aging and the New York Academy of Medicine. This commission is the main route to access opportunities to be involved in a public-private partnership addressing interagency needs with the Administration. In addition to the New York Academy of Medicine, the commission includes non-profits, philanthropies, and public health organizations, and academia. In the past, the commission has reviewed issues affecting older adults, produced reports, and functions as an opportunity to identify issues in the community which older adults are experiencing and then find solutions to those issues. While the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers is comprised exclusively of City agencies and advance the work of city agencies within the aging framework, the Age-friendly NYC Commission concurrently serves as the primary body for you, your fellow elected officials, and other important (non-City agency) stakeholders to continue to directly support and influence our shared goals. The next meeting of the Age-friendly NYC Commission will be meeting in Q3 of 2026 and we will happily include you in that meeting.

Other Interagency Collaborations

Beyond the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers, NYC Aging continues to find opportunities to work with our partner agencies on a range of issues and initiatives. In the past two years, NYC Aging has partnered with the Civic Engagement Commission (CEC), which is a Cabinet member agency, to prioritize including Older Adult Centers and Naturally Occurring Retirement Community locations as part of the “People’s Money” initiative where citywide dollars are spent through a participatory budgeting process. CEC works with NYC Aging to identify priority locations, hold listening sessions and work groups, and then returns to those locations and many others to host voting sessions where older adults then decide which projects are funded in their

communities. This effort continues outside of the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers, but is no less an important interagency collaboration.

Introduction 230

I also recognize that as part of today's hearing, the Committee on Aging is hearing Introduction 230 by Councilmember Crystal Hudson. This bill would create a financial assistance program for in-home preventative adaptations for older adults and disabled New Yorkers. While the focus of the agency is New Yorkers over 60, we agree that in-home modifications are important to ensuring older adults can age-in-place and remain in their homes and communities they have built. We believe this so strongly that in 2025, NYC Aging received a 3-year US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant to administer an Older Adult Home Modifications Program through 2028. The program is meant to help older within their homes by reducing the risk of falling, increasing accessibility, and supporting underserved communities. The program is unique in that an occupational therapist will visit an older adult in their home and evaluate their environment to improve their quality of life through necessary safety education and recommendations for modification. We have been promoting this program widely and seen increased interest in the short time it has been functioning. We look forward to working with Council on this piece of legislation as we further discuss it's potential implementation.

Conclusion

Overall, let me close by reiterating how thrilled I am to be here today with you to talk about the great work of the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers. These are proactive, upstream solutions for downstream issues. While we continue to do extensive work to ensure older adults can access our programs as well as other city services, we also recognize that there is always more work to be done. The Cabinet for Older New Yorkers allows us to further break down silos and barriers in service to older adults today and in the future. Thank you, Chair Zhuang and the members of the Committee on Aging for your ongoing deep and mutual commitment to older New Yorkers. I look forward to answering any questions.

Hello everyone and thank you for being here today. I'm Kristen McManus, the Director of Government Affairs and Advocacy for AARP New York. I'm here today on behalf of 750,000 members across New York City and the more than 3.5 million New Yorkers age 50 and older across the state.

As New York City's population ages, it's more important than ever that older adults can easily access the services and support they need to remain healthy, independent, and connected to their communities. Too often, older New Yorkers must navigate a complicated maze of agencies, programs, eligibility requirements, and application processes just to access basic services.

Food insecurity is a growing concern among older adults. More than 27,000 New Yorkers over the age of 60 received home-delivered meals last year, and **approximately 20 percent of older adults experience food insecurity citywide**. At the same time, the number of older New Yorkers living in poverty has risen dramatically in recent years, making it even harder to afford basic necessities.

For many older New Yorkers, home-delivered meals are not optional, they are essential to maintaining health and independence. **But food access does not exist in a silo** – it is also deeply connected to housing, transportation, health care, benefits access, emergency preparedness, and social services. When agencies fail to coordinate, older adults are often left to navigate these systems on their own.

That is why AARP New York has long advocated for stronger interagency collaboration across city government. In our New York City Blueprint, we recommend empowering a Deputy Mayor to lead efforts on behalf of older New Yorkers, coordinate across agencies, and ensure that aging issues are considered throughout city government. We also support the creation of a comprehensive emergency management system that addresses the needs of older adults, including access to food, housing, transportation, and other essential services during emergencies.

It's also equally important that older adults can easily access the programs they qualify for. AARP recommends reviewing enrollment and participation processes across agencies to eliminate barriers to these programs – particularly for older adults who may have difficulty navigating complex online systems.

We were encouraged to see Governor Hochul propose a one-stop shop for older adults and benefits access in her State of the State agenda. We encourage the Department for the Aging to work closely with the New York State Office for the Aging to ensure that city programs and services are fully integrated into that effort so older New Yorkers can more easily connect with the support they need.

We also support efforts to strengthen workforce development opportunities for older adults through a centralized and coordinated approach that helps experienced workers stay engaged and connected to economic opportunity.

But coordination is not enough. Systems must also be **adequately funded**. That is why we are asking the Mayor and the City Council to invest \$30 million in the Home Delivered Meals Program. Currently, older

New Yorkers receive meals only five days a week, forcing many to ration food on weekends. No older New Yorker should have to choose between eating today and saving food for tomorrow.

This investment would allow older adults to receive meals seven days a week and help ensure they can age with dignity in the communities they helped build. And while we know our elected officials have a lot on their plate, **too many older New Yorkers do not have enough.**

AARP New York looks forward to working with City Hall, the Department for the Aging, and our partners across government to build a more coordinated, age-friendly city that ensures every older New Yorker can access the services and supports they need.

Thank you.

Oral Testimony: NYC Council Committee on Aging

Hearing: Oversight—Interagency Coordination for Older Adults

Date: June 16, 2026 | 10:00 AM | 250 Broadway, 8th Floor

From: Karl Johnson, Founder, Elevator Advocate | karl@elevatoradvocate.nyc

To: NYC Council Committee on Aging

Chair: Susan Zhuang (District 43)

Members: Crystal Hudson, Eric Dinowitz, Gale Brewer, Darlene Mealy, Shirley Aldebol, Lynn Schulman

Date: June 16, 2026

Subject: Closing the DOB-to-DFTA Data Gap: Chronic Elevator Offenders and Older Adult Services

Good morning, Chair Zhuang and members of the Committee.

My name is Karl Johnson. I built Elevator Advocate, a free, online NYC elevator complaint tracker, classifying buildings with one or more complaints in the last year *and* three or more complaints over the last three years as “chronic offenders.” I live in Longwood, the Bronx. I'm here about a gap leaving our older adults in a state of **lethal isolation**.

On May 19th, my elderly neighbor on the 8th floor was trapped in our elevator, the only elevator in our building, for 20 minutes. She called the super—no answer. She was cut off. In my census tract, nearly 1 in 4 residents has a disability, and many are seniors. For them, a failed elevator is not an inconvenience—it is an emergency. The elevator is out right now for the fifth time this season; last summer, it was out for three weeks at a stretch.

In 2002, this Council introduced [Resolution 587](#) after Dimal Suero lost his life at **10 Richmond Plaza**. Today that building has **39 elevator complaints** in the last three years. The system has failed this building for a generation.

DFTA already delivers emergency meals during elevator outages. But from what I understand, that protocol is entirely reactive. **July is the worst month for elevator complaints citywide**, spiking 35% above monthly average due to equipment sensitivity to excessive heat.

We need no new agency or budget line. [Local Law 64 of 2024](#)—co-sponsored by Council Member Zhuang—codified the **Cabinet for Older New Yorkers** to break down these silos. But as far as I know, there is still no data-bridge between DOB's elevator complaints and DFTA's senior services. Right now, **146 chronic offender buildings** sit within a quarter mile of a DFTA-funded NORC site, 33 of which are confirmed to be serviced by only one elevator—and those coordinators have no way to know it.

When a building triggers that threshold, the data must flow through the Cabinet to trigger wellness checks and enforcement. [Int 0657-2026, the Safer Homes Act](#) would authorize seizure of the worst offenders. None of these tools work without it.

Our seniors deserve a city that coordinates its data as well as it coordinates its care.

Thank you.

Karl Johnson

Founder, Elevator Advocate

karl@elevatoradvocate.nyc | elevatoradvocate.nyc

[@elevatoradvocate.nyc](https://www.instagram.com/elevatoradvocate.nyc)



*Testimony before the New York City Council
- Committee on Aging -*

June 16, 2026

Marcus Jackson
Director of Advocacy & Government Relations
Encore Community Services

Good morning, Committee Chair Zhuang and members of the Committee. My name is Marcus Jackson, and I serve as the Director of Advocacy and Government Relations at Encore Community Services. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of Intro. 280, which would require home-delivered meals to be provided every day of the calendar year, including weekends and holidays.

For nearly 50 years, Encore has served older New Yorkers through home-delivered meals, congregate meals, case management, and supportive services that help people age with dignity and independence. Encore is one of New York City's largest aging services agencies, and we deliver more than 800,000 home-delivered meals each year to older adults who are homebound, many of whom are isolated and managing serious health challenges.

Throughout my work, one issue remains clear: older adults do not stop being hungry on weekends. For many of the people we serve, the meal we bring them is the most reliable source of nutrition they receive all day. Many are living on fixed incomes and must choose between paying for food, medication, rent, or utilities. They are not missing meals because they forgot to shop. They cannot leave their homes, and many cannot cook safely.

Home-delivered meals provide more than nutrition. For many homebound older adults, the person delivering a meal may be the only person they see that day. That knock on the door is a meal, a conversation, and an informal wellness check. It helps combat social isolation and loneliness, and it gives our staff and volunteers a chance to notice when someone is not answering the door, appears unwell, or needs additional support.

That is why Intro. 280 is the right policy. The current model does not match the reality of hunger. City-funded home-delivered meals stop on weekends, but hunger and isolation do not. Older adults need to eat seven days a week, not five.

The Committee should know this: weekend meals already exist for some clients, and providers are often reimbursed below the actual cost of delivering them. Encore delivers these meals anyway, because these are our neighbors and because we know what happens when a homebound older adult goes days without reliable food or a knock on the door. But that is not a sustainable model, and it should not fall to community-based organizations to quietly cover a gap in public policy.

Providers already are asked to do more with less. Funding has not kept pace with rising costs for food, fuel, labor, insurance, kitchen equipment, and daily operations. A mandate without full funding would shift the burden instead of solving the problem. If the City is going to require meals every day of the year, reimbursement rates must reflect the true cost of the work.

A fully funded Intro. 280 would allow organizations like Encore to plan responsibly, hire and retain cooks, drivers, meal packers, and delivery staff, maintain aging kitchen infrastructure, expand service capacity, and ensure meals are nutritious and culturally responsive. It would also help support fair wages for the frontline workers who make this safety net possible.

Encore respectfully urges the Council to pass Intro. 280 and allocate the funding necessary to support seven-day home-delivered meals, including the \$30 million investment needed to make this expansion real. We also urge the Council to continue strengthening congregate meal funding and the broader aging services infrastructure that older New Yorkers rely on every day.

Encore has been showing up for older New Yorkers for half a century. Pass this bill, fund it fully, and let us make sure no older New Yorker goes two days without a meal or a knock on the door. Thank you.

LiveOn NY

Making New York a better place to age

**New York City Council
Committee on Aging
Chair Zhuang
June 16th 2026
Interagency Coordination**

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 NYCAging portfolio and many other home and community based services in our city.

Background

Our policies must align with the new reality that our city is currently almost 20% 65 and older and will be aging quickly in the coming years. We must develop programming across all policy areas that ensures that all New Yorkers can continue to participate in our city as we age, and that people who may need additional support and services to thrive in older age are able to receive them.

Older adults are bearing the brunt of the current polycrisis our city is facing, climate change affects us more as we age with a majority of people who die of heat related illness being over 65, older New Yorkers are becoming homeless faster than any other demographic, and food prices are throwing more of our neighbors into food insecurity and hunger. Solving these issues requires full coordination of all city agencies.

The Aging Cabinet is the mechanism to do this coordination, and we believe that it can with more direction, participation, and transparency.

Recommendations

- **Give the aging cabinet specific policy area directives:** Housing, Wellness, and Community Support are the three top areas that older adults in our city need additional support in to be able to participate wholly in civic life.
- **Increase Transparency:** Publishing agendas and opening certain meetings to comment for older adults, service providers, and advocates will help ensure the plans made will match the needs of older New Yorkers
- **Increase the policy scope:** The cabinet should be able to make large scale policy recommendations to HPD regarding housing need in terms of unit numbers and service type and

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funding, NYCHA in terms of community center quality and programming, and HRA in terms of service access and efficacy.

- **Expand the Cabinet:** External policy experts and service providers should have a voice on the cabinet as their experience based input is necessary to developing strong policy that will meet the on the ground needs of older New Yorkers across the city.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

For questions, please email Kevin Kiproviski at 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, SCRJE 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.



Testimony presented to the

New York City Council Committee on Aging

June 16th, 2026 10:00 am

Service Program for Older People, Inc.

www.spop.org

Good morning. I am Jessica Fertig-Brodsky, Senior Vice President for PROS (Personalized Recovery Oriented Services) at Service Program for Older People (SPOP). Thank you, Chair Zhuang for holding this oversight hearing and for this opportunity to address the Committee on Aging.

SPOP plays a unique role in supporting the health, emotional well-being, and independence of older adults – and we’ve done so for more than 45 years. We are the only agency in the city that is exclusively dedicated to community-based mental health care for older adults. We provide outpatient treatment to over 1,000 people each year through individual and group therapy, assessments, medication management, and psychiatric rehabilitation.

The older adults served by SPOP are among the most vulnerable New Yorkers. Many live with serious mental health conditions such as major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, and trauma-related conditions. A significant number live alone, have limited family or social support, and face chronic medical conditions, mobility limitations, poverty, food insecurity, and housing instability. For many of the people we serve, social isolation is not simply a matter of loneliness—it is a significant risk factor that can worsen both mental and physical health, increase emergency room visits and hospitalizations, and undermine their ability to age safely and independently in their communities.

Within our PROS program, we work with older adults whose mental health conditions have created substantial barriers to community integration and daily functioning. Many participants have experienced repeated psychiatric hospitalizations, years of disconnection from employment and community life, and profound social isolation. We recognize that each participant has goals,

talents, and aspirations – and is defined by their strengths, not their limitations. Through rehabilitation, peer support, skill-building, and meaningful opportunities for social connection, we help participants maintain their recovery, strengthen their independence, and reclaim a sense of purpose and belonging.

Our participants are mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, grandparents, friends, artists, comedians, mentors, advocates, and lifelong learners. At SPOP, we create opportunities for older adults to reconnect with these identities and roles, while building new relationships and strengthening their ties to community. Every day, we witness the transformative impact that connection, inclusion, and purpose can have on a person's recovery and quality of life. We see older adults not defined by their age, but empowered by their resilience, experience, and continued contributions.

I thank the Committee on Aging for its commitment to expanding access to mental health services for older adults; I urge you to continue to explore innovative and effective ways to support the mental, physical and emotional well-being of all older New Yorkers. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

NYC is aging; our mental health system is not

The following is an opinion article by Crystal Hudson, who represents parts of Brooklyn in the City Council, and Catherine Thurston, a licensed clinical social worker and SPOP's CEO. It was first published in the [NY Daily News, April 1, 2026](#)

In just four years, New York City will have more residents over 60 years old than under 18. This demographic shift is not a future problem — it is unfolding before our eyes, reshaping neighborhoods, hospitals, and public spaces. Yet one group of New Yorkers still remains largely overlooked: older adults living with serious mental illness.

Nearly one in four older adults in New York experiences a mental health challenge, and about 6% live with a serious mental illness which affects their ability to function independently. It is a gross understatement to say that daily life is challenging for this population. Our mental health system is not designed for them, which leaves many hiding in plain sight with few options for treatment and support.

The lack of coordinated support has led to a costly and cruel mismatch. Programming for people with serious mental illness is typically designed around younger adults, rarely factoring in aging bodies and the medical or practical realities of later life.

Exacerbating the issue, aging services often are not equipped to provide robust psychiatric care. This leaves older adults at risk of falling through the cracks until they surface in the most visible and expensive systems we have; emergency rooms, hospitals, shelters, and, too often, the justice system.

But New York does not lack services; it lacks the right model. What's missing is a full-day, clinically robust, age-affirming program for older adults with mental health conditions, embedded within a continuum of care.

This challenge underscores the need for the city to support development and evaluation of a specialized, age-appropriate behavioral health pilot for older adults, potentially delivered through qualified community-based providers with relevant clinical and aging-services experience. Such a model could blend the strongest elements of existing systems under one roof while remaining tailored to older adults.

The timing could not be more urgent.

Mayor Mamdani has made clear that addressing serious mental illness — particularly among those living in public spaces — is a top priority within a broader community safety strategy. Simultaneously, there is growing recognition that behavioral health care is as essential as medical care itself.

Investing in specialized, age-appropriate behavioral health programming is both compassionate and practical. It reduces pressure on hospitals, shelters, and corrections. It improves quality of life. And over time, it saves public dollars by preventing crises rather than reacting to them.

This is not a theoretical need. Much of the service infrastructure already exists, and a pilot could be structured through a blended funding approach: billable clinical services — psychiatry, medication management, individual and group therapy — supported through Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial insurance, alongside city support for core **Older Adult Center** costs such as meals, transportation, and other non-billable services. What is needed now is city leadership to evaluate and pilot the right model.

New York has an opportunity to better align aging and behavioral health policy with the realities older adults face every day. The city should examine and consider piloting an integrated mental health model for older adults, while also strengthening staff training and coordination across aging and behavioral health services.

Leadership means designing systems that reflect who we are now, not who we were decades ago. Older adults with serious mental illness deserve more than crisis care and invisibility. They deserve a place in our communities — and in our policy priorities.

Testimony of
The Legal Aid Society

on

Oversight: Interagency Coordination for Older Adults; Int 0230-2026 and Res
0373-2026
presented before

The New York City Council's Committees on Aging

Jeannine Cahill-Jackson
Director of Elder Law
Civil Practice
The Legal Aid Society

June 16, 2026

The Legal Aid Society appreciates the opportunity to comment on Int 0230-2026 and thank you to the Committee on Aging and the subcommittee on Senior Centers for convening this hearing.

Who We Are

The Legal Aid Society (LAS), the nation's oldest and largest not-for-profit legal services organization, was founded in 1876 to provide free legal representation to marginalized New York City families and individuals. The Legal Aid Society's legal program operates three major practices – Civil, Criminal, and Juvenile Rights – and through a network of borough, neighborhood, and courthouse offices provides comprehensive legal services in all five boroughs of New York City for clients who cannot afford to pay for private counsel. With a caseload of nearly 200,00 cases and legal matters for clients, The Legal Aid Society takes on more cases for more clients than any other legal services organization in the United States.

Our Civil Practice works to improve the lives of low-income New Yorkers by helping vulnerable families and individuals to obtain and maintain the necessities of life- housing, health care, food, and self-sufficiency. We serve as a “one-stop” legal resource for clients with a broad variety of legal problems, ranging, among others, from government benefits and access to health care, to immigration and domestic violence. Our depth and breadth of experience is unmatched in the legal profession and gives LAS a unique capacity to go beyond any one individual case to create more equitable outcomes for individuals, and broader, more powerful systemic change at a societal level. Our work has always taken an explicit racial and social equity lens, and the current housing crisis has further focused our efforts to advocate for the needs of New York's marginalized communities.

The Legal Aid Society has a long history of providing eviction defense services to seniors in the Bronx and Brooklyn. In 2023, the Legal Aid Society created a city-wide Elder Law Unit (ELU), combining the Brooklyn Office for the Aging and the Bronx Assigned Counsel Project. Currently, the ELU is comprised of a multi-disciplinary team specializing in eviction defense for seniors in the Bronx and Brooklyn. By specializing in eviction defense for seniors, the ELU recognizes that the preservation of housing for a senior often involves many intersecting medical, financial and social issues. The ELU seeks to assess and address the needs of our senior clients to not only prevent their eviction but to alleviate the underlying causes that lead them to be at risk of eviction.

Support for Proposed Legislation: Int 0230-2026

The Legal Aid Society supports Int. 0230-2026, which would create a financial assistance program for in home preventative adaptations for older adults in need of modifications to their homes and apartments to support them to age safely in place. This program is greatly needed by low income older New Yorkers and could truly be life changing.

Through my work at The Legal Aid Society, I see firsthand the challenges that can ensue when apartments lack accommodations for the older adults to live there safely, particularly as their mobility becomes increasingly impaired. Many of these older adults find themselves in housing court, and thereby become our clients, for several reasons. One reason I see frequently is that they fall behind in their rent due to hospitalization and a nursing home stay due to injury in the apartment such as a fall. Further, they may face challenges being discharged if the apartment does not include modifications for them to reside there safely. Other older adults withhold rent in hopes this will gain them leverage to have their reasonable accommodation request approved by

the landlord. Others are no longer able to climb the stairs to their walk-up apartment and must be carried by their home health aides.

While this is a good bill, we have several suggestions that we believe would make the proposed financial assistance program even stronger. First, as most low-income adults are renters, this program should be administered such that if modifications are to be made to the apartment, express approval from the landlord is obtained. This is significant because in rent stabilized and other rent regulated apartments; it is a lease violation for a tenant to modify the apartment without the permission of the landlord. Thus, receiving this modification assistance, without approval, could result in the older adult facing eviction. While not all modifications would be extensive enough to require approval such as installing a grab bar in the shower, as the bill provides a maximum of \$10,000 per applicant for modification, it appears that this funding could also help provide more extensive modifications, which would require landlord approval.

Second, regarding the application and approval process, we strongly recommend that there be a right to request a fair hearing for applicants who are denied. Third, if landlord approval is needed, this creates an opportunity for disability discrimination if the landlord was to deny the reasonable accommodation request. This could potentially be addressed through collaboration with the New York City Commission on Human Rights.

Fourth, the application should be clear as to what the older adult needs to provide to prove disability, as it could be a challenge to obtain documentation. Specifically, to note, while a Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) award letter is typical proof of disability for various programs, older adults 67 and older would no longer receive SSDI as it converts to Social Security Retirement at that age, so they may not have easily have documentation proving their disability.

Lastly, older New Yorkers would greatly benefit from assistance in determining what modifications they may need or be eligible during the development of their application. For example, they may truly need the doorway to their bathroom to be widened so they can enter in their wheelchair, however they may be wholly unaware this is an option. This assistance component could aid both in the development of the accommodation request as well as in obtaining landlord approval and cooperation.

Conclusion

Thank you for reviewing our testimony and for the opportunity to comment.

For more information, please contact Jeannine Cahill-Jackson at jcahilljackson@legal-aid.org, or at 646-856-0189

**YWCA IS ON
A MISSION**

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
brooklyn

Martha Kamber Testimony for Committee on Aging Hearing

June 16th, 2026

Submitted by: Martha Kamber, CEO and President of The YWCA of Brooklyn, Inc.

Contact information:

718-875-1190 ext. 200

mkamber@ywcabklyn.org

Hearing topic: Resolution 373 -calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.1499/S.1179, which would provide long term care benefits for eligible residents.

Position: in support of

June 16, 2026

Good Morning Chair Council Member Zhuang and members of the Committee on Aging,

My name is Martha Kamber and I have been the CEO of the YWCA, located in downtown Brooklyn, for the past 20 years. I would like to thank the Chair, Council Member Zhuang, and the Committee members for this opportunity to testify today.

The YWCA in Brooklyn is a longstanding grassroots community-based nonprofit committed to supporting the City's most vulnerable citizens. We serve constituents from all five boroughs through our affordable housing, which has over 300 formerly homeless, low-income residents, ninety percent of whom struggle with mental illness. Of the 300, one hundred and sixty are seniors aging in place, which is why I'm here today.

For most of our older residents, the YWCA is the first safe and nurturing home they have ever had and they understandably don't want to lose their community as they age. But we were not funded through supportive housing, so we had no dedicated services and we recognized that many of our seniors needed additional support to continue living independently.

Last year, for the very first time, we received an allocation from the Council specifically for our seniors (thank you CM Hudson.) We hired Case Managers and Independent Living Advocates to work more intensely with our most vulnerable older residents, supporting them with daily activities such as shopping, appointments, medical transport, benefits, food security, management of chronic illnesses - and yes, securing adaptive equipment. But much of our work has had to focus on persistently advocating for our residents with City services - whose very purpose it is to support its most vulnerable citizens.

We don't have the time here today to discuss how challenging and frustrating this aspect of our work in particular has been, but suffice to say we have a whole new appreciation for how disdainfully and dismissively older people are treated when they are simply trying to access the services they are entitled to. Even for our staff, some of these systems are near impossible to navigate.

Of the 1.4 million older adults in NYC, it is estimated that 30% live alone. Services could be coordinated or linked to make them more accessible - and the process less dehumanizing. So, why not make it easier for those who want to age in place? With only a little additional support, our older residents not only remained stably housed, not only survived, but definitely thrived, aging independently, joyfully, with dignity, in a community of their peers.

I do hope this Committee can address some of these disparities. Thank you.

Good morning, Chair Susan Zhuang and distinguished members of the Committee on Aging. Thank you for convening this important hearing.

My name is Ansen Tang, President and CEO, and I am speaking on behalf of the United Chinese Association of Brooklyn, which represents thousands of Chinese-speaking older adults in Bensonhurst and across South Brooklyn.

For many of our seniors, navigating city services is not just difficult, it is nearly impossible. Language barriers, limited digital skills, and cultural differences turn basic support into an exhausting maze.

Too often, an older adult must call DFTA for meals, NYCHA for repairs, DOF for senior tax exemptions, and NYC Aging for case management, only to discover that these agencies neither coordinate with one another nor communicate with seniors in Cantonese or Mandarin.

We need true interagency collaboration built around three concrete actions:

First: Establish a citywide data-sharing agreement, with strong privacy protections, so that when a senior visits a senior center or applies for benefits, the relevant agencies are notified automatically.

Second: Every agency that serves older adults should fund bilingual community navigators, not just hotlines, but in-person support available in our neighborhoods.

Third: For the legislation before you whether focused on care coordination, benefits access, or aging in place we urge you to make measurable language access requirements and community-based reporting metrics core provisions.

Our seniors raised families, built small businesses, and contributed to this city. They deserve a government that works together for them not one that sends them from office to office until they give up.

Chair Zhuang, thank you for your leadership. The United Chinese Association of Brooklyn stands ready to help design and pilot stronger interagency coordination in our community.



**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**

**Committee on Aging
Oversight - Interagency Coordination for Older Adults
Council Member Susan Zhuang, Chair**

**Submitted by Anita Kwok, Policy Analyst
June 16, 2026**

Thank you for convening today's hearing on interagency coordination for older New Yorkers. United Neighborhood Houses of New York (UNH) is a policy and social change organization with a mission to promote and strengthen settlement houses' neighborhood-based, multi-service approach to improving the lives of low- and moderate-income New Yorkers. Settlement houses provide multi-generational services designed to support individuals, families, and communities. Settlement house programs build bonds within and between communities and create opportunities for advocacy and social change. UNH was founded in 1919 by settlement house leaders who recognized the strength in their collective voices to drive important social reforms. With this goal, UNH was tasked to coordinate the efforts of settlement houses; document their shared learning and experiences; and increase the influence and impact of settlement houses for the greater good of New York communities. UNH has successfully advocated for fair and affordable housing, child labor laws, inclusive policies and services for immigrants, adult literacy education, public recreation space, quality child-care and after-school programs, job training, programs serving older adults, access to the arts and to healthy food, and more.

UNH members provide a wide variety of services to over 130,000 older New Yorkers each year by operating programs such as older adult centers (OACs), Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs), home delivered meal (HDM) programs, Geriatric Mental Health, case management programs, and others, often funded and contracted by NYC Aging and the City Council. UNH and its settlement house members employ the philosophy that older adults are valued members of our neighborhoods, whose wisdom and experience are important to the fabric of our communities.

Capital Improvements for Sites at NYCHA

Aging programs located in NYCHA spaces have their own unique set of challenges that require a stronger interagency approach. Despite a law passed by the City Council in 2019 requiring that NYC Aging have a NYCHA liaison on staff, providers report numerous hurdles in getting any projects approved. To this day, providers question if a NYCHA liaison exists for them. NYC Aging programs at NYCHA must submit tickets, but tickets are often closed without resolution.

Sometimes, projects have been paused for years due to lack of funding, leaving centers operating without critical systems. This poor bureaucratic process results in prolonged repair timelines and uncertainty for providers trying to serve older adults safely. Site control issues have also been a barrier toward funding, and we urge the City to fund needed NYCHA community center repairs regardless of who holds the lease. Some of our settlement house members have been asked to take on capital utility investments or sign leases without corresponding City funding to cover rent and infrastructure costs. Providers cannot be expected to assume significant capital responsibilities when they do not control the NYCHA site and are not funded to cover those costs.

We also recognize that tenant apartments in NYCHA developments can be in dire stages of disrepair, and repairs and renovations to community centers should not come at the expense of renovating tenants' homes. This is why creative solutions are needed from other government agencies so that NYCHA can focus on tenant apartment repairs.

In many cases, nonprofits pursue capital funding from City Council discretionary and state and federal member item funding, because these funds can be easier to access. However, these funds are never stable or consistent, and not every organization is able to access them. Organizations cannot continue to contract with the City to run services if the City cannot commit to paying for the resources needed to execute the contract. Only a fully-funded capital services funding stream can meet the various needs and keep the aging services network operating successfully.

Interagency coordination between NYCHA and NYC Aging must be strengthened through avenues such as ensuring NYC Aging's NYCHA liaison is actively accessible to providers, ensuring repair tickets are resolved in a timely manner, and ensuring older adult programs in NYCHA spaces are not left in limbo due to site control issues or bureaucratic barriers.

Cooling Centers

The vast majority of settlement house spaces also serve as official cooling centers during the summer and are a key part of our City's response during a heatwave. These sites can serve anywhere from a few people to hundreds of people a day. As climate change worsens, increasing the likelihood of more frequent, longer, and intense heat waves in the summertime, the City must have a plan to keep people cool, especially those New Yorkers who are at risk of medical complications due to heat, including older adults and individuals with underlying medical conditions.

UNH and our members appreciate that the City understands the needs of people vulnerable to health complications during a heatwave and makes these critical cooling centers available each year. Council Member, now Assemblymember, Keith Powers' Intro 998, which is now passed as law, ensures the availability and accessibility of cooling centers for vulnerable populations, including older adults, during heat-related emergencies and poor air quality days. Additionally, the bill mandates public education, outreach, and reporting on cooling center effectiveness.

However, City governing bodies must acknowledge the reality that settlement houses and other community-based organizations are expected to operate as cooling centers without receiving dedicated funding from the City, and interagency communication breakdowns are frequent. As one of our members bluntly puts it, "Cooling centers are critical, but we do not like being a cooling center."

Challenge: Poor Interagency Communication

UNH member sites that serve as designated cooling centers frequently work with multiple city agencies but often find interagency communication to be frustrating and unclear, with their questions going unanswered. There are too many city agencies with oversight of the initiative, making program management difficult for contractors. NYC Aging, the Department of Youth and Community Development, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, NYC Emergency Management, and NYCHA are all involved and are communicating different expectations to nonprofit program staff. For example, older adult centers located in NYCHA developments are designated as city cooling centers, yet city agencies frequently pass responsibility back and forth. NYC Aging tells community-based organizations that HVAC repairs fall under the landlord's responsibility—meaning NYCHA—while NYCHA insists it is NYC Aging's responsibility. NYC Emergency Management also plays a role in communicating information on cooling spaces to the public, but does not communicate directly with providers who manage the space. There is no one person or agency who has final say, making it difficult for anyone to get clear information in an emergency situation. This lack of clear accountability and interagency communication leaves providers and older adults stuck in the middle, struggling to ensure cooling centers remain functional and accessible during extreme heat.

Recommendation: Designate a Cooling Czar

Given these challenges, UNH recommends the City designate a "Cooling Czar," a person at DOHMH or NYCEM who will coordinate all cooling center operations while ensuring these operations remain compliant with contemporary health guidelines. This czar should control messaging and the flow of information to City agencies and community-based organizations, particularly when there is a heat emergency. That person must be empowered to have final say when there is conflicting information in the leadup to or during an emergency, and they should be charged with centralizing information and ensuring that all the agencies involved - NYC Aging, DOHMH, DYCD, NYCHA, and more - are coordinating. NYCEM should also have a dedicated team on hand to handle specific challenges or errors that may arise during an emergency, both at the city agency level and directly with individual programs.

During the spring, the Czar should ensure that cooling centers are prepared for when weather emergencies strikes while issuing clear, consistent directives to agencies and their contracted programs about what to do when there is a heat emergency, including information on the hours programs are expected to be open, what expenses are reimbursable, how to secure other types of support, and contact information for the staff members who will serve as dedicated problem solvers during the emergency. This type of coordination is crucial for community-based organizations like settlement houses who operate programs that span several City agencies, as directives sometimes differ from agency to agency.

While due to the timing of this hearing this testimony is focused on heat emergencies, the need for centralized coordination for other weather related emergencies extends beyond the summer. As climate change worsens, the frequency and severity of a range of weather and environmental emergencies (e.g., poor air quality, extreme heat, extreme cold) intensifies. A dedicated liaison at NYCEM or DOHMH for year-round weather-related emergencies would be an immensely helpful resource for multi-service providers navigating multi-agency responses.

Intergenerational Programming

UNH urges the City Council and NYC Aging to think bigger about how the City can be of service to older adults through intergenerational programming, which can include utilizing existing programs such as Beacons, Cornerstones, Family Enrichment Centers, and COMPASS. We believe that an intergenerational approach invests later life with meaning and purpose, strengthens connections across generations, and builds multi-aged social networks needed to successfully grow old in the communities older people know and love.

There currently is no coordination or planning happening about how older adults can engage with community assets and resources beyond the NYC Aging network. Older adults do not navigate our City's services through a single agency. Older adults could be showing up at programs such as Beacons, Cornerstones, and Family Enrichment Centers, which are designed to serve people of all ages, or are engaging with other community-based programs outside the NYC Aging network entirely. In that sense, older adults interact with services in the scope of other City agencies such as the Department of Youth and Community Development, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and NYC Health and Hospitals. Like all New Yorkers who participate in our City's economy and civic life, older adults also interact with agencies like the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection. As the City Council and NYC Aging collaborate to build on a community-based network of programming, we encourage thinking beyond NYC Aging and collaborating with additional city agencies.

Intergenerational programming has demonstrated a highly effective intervention that senior services organizations can use to achieve a number of positive outcomes, including:

- **Reducing social isolation and loneliness** among those involved - both older and younger people - through the relationships that develop from working in teams.
- **Improving the physical and mental health and well-being of older people** as reported by them to the Institute's evaluators and as demonstrated in applicable national studies.
- **Combating ageism** by enabling older and younger people to see, value and appreciate each other in new and positive ways.
- **Building stronger communities** through intergenerational community projects such as: developing and running a new food pantry; launching an age-friendly improvement district; developing and implementing new afterschool, senior center, or adult literacy programming; or addressing poor mail delivery in public housing.

We hope NYC Aging can find ways to encourage similar efforts across its network that build upon the strengths and assets of older people through intergenerational approaches that combat ageism, promote teamwork, address community issues and enable the multi-aged social networks we all need in order to thrive throughout the lifespan. Examples whereby NYC Aging could encourage this type of work might include:

- Allowing for reimbursement for this program approach under current older adult center contracts.
- Incorporating this model into future older adult center RFPs.
- Creating a dedicated funding stream to support community-based intergenerational programs.
- Working with the Department of Youth and Community Development to develop, jointly fund and promote intergenerational initiatives. This work can also happen in partnership with the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers.

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at Anita Kwok akwok@unhny.org.

To: Committee on Aging

Subject: Privatization Creates Instability for Seniors.

Date: June 16, 2026

Save Section 9 is a tenant led coalition that works to educate and activate public housing tenants. We tackle policies rooted in colonialism that have led to discriminatory disinvestment in America's only truly affordable housing stock.

I am testifying today on behalf of our members and neighbors throughout public housing. We are encouraged by the attention being paid to Interagency Coordination for Older Adults.

We support:

- Int 0230-2026 A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to a financial assistance program for in-home preventative adaptations
- Res 0373-2026 Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.1499/S.1179, which would provide long term care benefits for eligible residents

We also want this committee and the council to recognize that interagency will not address the failures within NYCHA.

NYCHA's increased dependence on privatization via PACT, and NYCHA's refusal to develop a new organizational plan adversely affects our elders. You should note that Zohran's proposed budget for public housing invests \$1B towards the capital repairs necessary to privatize NYCHA developments across the city.

This should alarm you. It is the largest transfer of public monies and assets in recent history. And it will destroy the only truly affordable housing we have in NYC.

The Committee on Aging should recognize that Section 9 public housing is one of New York City's most important aging-in-place programs. Public housing developments are not simply buildings; they are communities where older adults access senior centers, meal programs, social services, resident associations, health and wellness activities, and support networks that allow them to remain independent as they age. Section 9 provides dedicated funding streams and community-based infrastructure that help seniors avoid unnecessary institutionalization, isolation, displacement, and homelessness.

This responsibility is especially urgent given the growing housing crisis facing older adults. Adults aged 50 and older are the fastest-growing demographic experiencing homelessness in the United States and now account for nearly one-fifth of the nation's unhoused population. In New York City, the number of homeless individuals in shelters aged 55 and older increased by approximately 250% between [2004 and 2017](#), while the number of homeless individuals aged 65 and older increased by more than 300% during the same period. Forecasts suggest that, absent meaningful intervention, the homeless population over age 65 could [triple again by 2030](#). These trends are driven largely by the shortage of deeply affordable housing, stagnant fixed incomes, and unexpected health and personal crises.

Yet Zohran prioritizes privatization over preservation, sending a message that repairs are available only if developments surrender their public status. Older tenants are often the least able to navigate management transitions, lease changes, recertification requirements, contractor disputes, or legal challenges associated with privatization. They deserve stability, not uncertainty. Older adults who have spent decades building their communities should not be forced to choose between safe housing and public accountability. We urge the Committee on Aging to defend Section 9 as an essential aging-in-place resource and support investments that modernize public housing while preserving the public ownership, tenant protections, affordability, and community services that allow seniors to age with dignity and remain housed.

It is also important to note that NYCHA targets [senior sites with PACT](#).

These seniors are not informed on the dangers that PACT presents. PACT [impact studies](#) have proven that PACT [doubles evictions](#), increases rent, and [undermines tenant rights](#).

Therefore, we urge you to shift all funding away from PACT, and towards Section 9 comprehensive modernization. We also ask that you support CM Banks in instituting a moratorium on PACT, pending an impact study. We are working towards the same goal at the federal level. We would love to work with the committee on the Aging and other stakeholders to shape metrics that would tell us how RAD/ PACT has impacted seniors. Finally, if NYCHA sites in your districts are targeted for privatization Save Section 9 would love to host meetings or bingo hours focused on educating the community on the risk of privatization.

Background

Save Section 9 and Community Service Society [independently reviewed](#) NYCHA's physical needs assessment and concluded that a majority of the increase between the 2017 and 2023 PNA stems from "market conditions and inflation". **NYCHA's actual**

need is approximately \$41.4B from 2023- 2043. This makes NYCHA’s annual need \$2.07B. This total need can be addressed by strategic investments by the city, state and congress.

On average New York City allocates 5% of NYCHA’s operating budget, approximately \$250M. However, the mayor’s preliminary budget allocates \$662M to privatization via Project Based Section 8. We oppose his investment in privatization (via Project Based Section 8/ PACT) and support of demolition. **We urge the City Council to shift the mayor’s preliminary allocation of \$2.6B towards Section 9 public housing comprehensive modernization.**

The following graphs show the top ten (10) developments with the highest needs.

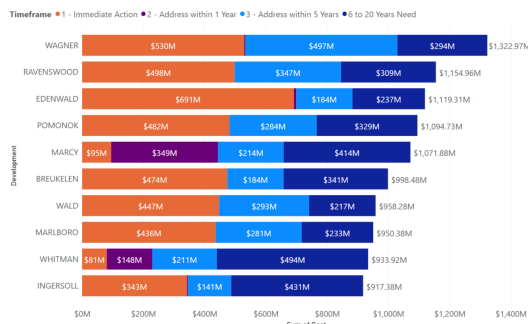


Figure 16 Developments with the Highest Needs by Timeframe

\$662M could address the entire fiscal needs of Wagner Houses, the development in the worst shape according to NYCHA’s latest physical needs assessment. That’s 22 buildings, 2,162 homes for the next 100 years. Wagner has a need of \$530M and 128 vacancies, and 16 non dwelling units. It is followed by [Ravenswood Houses](#) with 31 buildings, 2,166 units and a need of \$498M, 65 vacancies, and 4 non dwelling units.

Sustainable Revenue Sources

We urge the adoption of legislative proposals that increase the city and state’s revenue. The revenue created by these would fund a budget line item and ensure rehabilitation and expansion of Section 9 is fiscally sustainable.

- In New York City 10% of the Fair Share Act would result in \$400M annually for Section 9.
- At the state level 5% of the Repeal of Stock Trade Tax (STT) Rebate Act would secure \$3B for Section 9.
- Nationally 5% of the Make Billionaires Pay Their Fair Share Act would create \$22B for Section 9.

Solutions

1. **Institute a moratorium on privatization via Project Based Section 8 (RAD/ PACT and the Public Housing Preservation Trust).** NYCHA could use this time to assess their performance, recalibrate and refocus on their core responsibility, managing Section 9 in NYC. The moratorium should be reliant on an impact

study being conducted by the Government Accountability Office as requested by Congresswoman Maxine Waters in 2023.

2. **Establish a pathway back to Section 9.** RAD/ PACT is fundamentally anti-democratic because it strips tenants, cities, states and Congress of policy flexibility. The lack of a return mechanism erodes public assets, and leads to permanent public-sector shrinkage without future voter consent.
3. **Democratize the privatization process.** Project-Based Section 8 transforms public housing governance without creating equivalent democratic protections for tenants. Tenants experience privatization as something done to them rather than governed with them.
4. **Develop new guidelines for an organizational plan** in tandem with the Federal Monitor. The last plan was fiercely denounced by tenants and adopted in spite of our objections. We recommend this plan be inspired by the operational plans of 1965-1970.
5. **Encourage and support NYCHA's growth.** Ensure that hiring focuses on securing union personnel for roles that improve tenants' quality of life. Each development should have a plumber, a carpenter, and enough building porters to assign two porters to each building. We would make plasterers and painters the second wave of hiring. These roles should provide apprenticeships to tenants and lean on Section 3.

In Solidarity,

Citywide Council of Presidents
Neighbors Helping Neighbors
Residents to Preserve Public Housing
Save Section 9

District43@council.nyc.gov

testimony@council.nyc.gov

District42@council.nyc.gov

District6@council.nyc.gov

dinowitz@council.nyc.gov

District13@council.nyc.gov

District29@council.nyc.gov

District35@council.nyc.gov

District41@council.nyc.gov

Good morning, Chair Hudson and members of the Committee.

My name is Karl Johnson. I am a resident of Longwood in the Bronx, and I am here today to speak about a critical gap in interagency coordination that is leaving our older adults in a state of **lethal isolation**.

In the South Bronx, vertical mobility is not a luxury; it is a life-safety requirement. Yet, in Bronx Community Board 2 alone, we have tracked over **220 elevator complaints** in recent months. We have identified buildings like **919 Prospect Avenue** and **1015 Fox Street** as "Chronic Offenders"—buildings where elevators fail repeatedly, year after year.

The interagency failure is this: The **Department for the Aging** provides essential services—meals-on-wheels, home care, wellness checks—but these services stop at the lobby if the **DOB** and **HPD** fail to enforce elevator reliability. During a summer heat wave, a broken elevator transforms a senior's fourth-floor apartment into a prison. They are cut off from the very interagency support this hearing is meant to coordinate.

We know the city can act. In March, we saw a landmark **\$2.1 million judgment** against landlord Seth Miller for chronic neglect at 919 Prospect Avenue in The Bronx. But it shouldn't take years of litigation and tenant suffering to reach that point.

My platform, **Elevator Advocate**, uses NYC Open Data to bridge this gap today. We provide a real-time "Pulse" of building health so that we can see an outage the moment it happens.

We are asking this committee to mandate a "**Chronic Offender**" **data-share** between the DOB and the Department for the Aging. When a building with a high concentration of seniors triggers our chronic threshold, it must trigger an immediate interagency intervention.

Our seniors deserve a city that coordinates its data as well as it coordinates its care.

Thank you.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 373 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Martha Kamber

Address: [REDACTED] Brooklyn 11220

I represent: YWCA Brooklyn

Address: 30 Third Ave

**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: Anita Kwok

Address: [REDACTED]

I represent: United Neighborhood Houses

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0656-2076 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Karl Johnson

Address: 1150 Intervale Ave #14B Bronx

I represent: Elevator Advocate 10459

Address: same as above

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. All Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 6/16/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jeannu Cahill - Jackson

Address: _____

I represent: The Legal Aid Society

Address: 260 E 161st St 8th Fl Bx M 10451

**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: 6/16/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jennine Ventura

Address: 2 Lafayette St.

I represent: NYC Agency

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: 6/16/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dr. Lisa Scott - McKenzie

Address: 2 Lafayette St

I represent: NYC Agency

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: 07/16/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kevin Kiprowski

Address: _____

I represent: Live on ny

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: Jessica Fertig-Brodsky

Address: 302 W 91st

I represent: SPOP

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆