



**TESTIMONY**

Presented by

**Caryn Resnick**  
**Deputy Commissioner, External Affairs**

on

**Oversight: Repairs and Upgrades at NYC Senior Centers**

before the

**New York City Council**  
**Committee on Aging**

on

**Tuesday, October 23, 2018**  
**1:00 P.M.**

at

**Council Chambers, City Hall**  
**New York, NY 10007**

Good afternoon, Chairperson Chin and members of the Aging Committee. I am Caryn Resnick, Deputy Commissioner of External Affairs for the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA). I am joined by Karen Taylor, Assistant Commissioner for the Bureau of Community Services. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify on the topic of repairs and upgrades at New York City senior centers.

Nearly 1.6 million people aged 60 and older live in New York City, and DFTA is committed to helping older New Yorkers age in place in their communities. Ensuring the dignity and quality of life of diverse older adults is an essential part of DFTA's mission. Providing senior center services is one of the key ways DFTA achieves this objective. Senior centers offer congregate meals and an environment where older adults can participate in a variety of recreational, health promotional and cultural activities, as well as receive counseling on social services and obtain assistance with benefits. In FY '18, DFTA funded senior centers served nearly 7.2 million congregate meals. Approximately 173,000 older New Yorkers participated in senior center programming in FY '18, which is an increase from the previous year, with almost 30,000 senior center attendees daily.

#### **DFTA'S SENIOR CENTER NETWORK**

As the largest Area Agency on Aging in the United States, DFTA sponsors the most extensive network of senior centers in the nation. DFTA funds a portfolio of 249 senior centers that are operated by contract providers. Site control of a senior center location determines funding eligibility and the level of DFTA's technical oversight for renovation, repair and capital projects – though for all sites, the agency works closely with providers to help facilitate the process.

The majority of senior centers – 103 – are located in sponsor leased sites, in which the contract provider leases with a private landlord. The responsibilities for the management of the property, including repairs and maintenance, are governed by the lease agreement.

Thirty-eight senior centers operate in sponsor owned sites, in which the contract provider is the landlord of the property. For sponsor owned locations, the senior center provider generally manages the property and is responsible for repairs.

There are 74 senior centers located in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments. NYCHA is responsible for repairs and maintenance to the facility envelope and building systems, including roof leaks, sewage back-ups and heating. The senior center provider is responsible for maintenance and repairs inside the program space. Senior center programs submit tickets to NYCHA for repair work and DFTA assists with facilitating those requests. At NYCHA developments, there are also on-site NYCHA personnel that respond to emergency issues on a case by case basis.

Twenty-one senior centers are located in City leased sites. For City leased sites, the New York City Department of Administrative Services (DCAS) negotiates a lease, which will typically include improvements to be made by the landlord. The private landlord is then responsible for maintaining the property, and the lease governs how repairs are addressed.

There are 13 senior centers located in City owned sites. At these sites, the City agency that has jurisdiction over the property is responsible for repairs and maintenance. Regarding DCAS buildings, there is personnel available on-site who respond to emergency maintenance issues. DFTA also coordinates some repairs with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation at several of their buildings that house a DFTA senior center.

City owned and NYCHA sites are eligible for City capital funding for major improvements. All non-historic and/or non-flood plain sites are eligible for Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for renovations and code compliance projects. All senior center sites are eligible for expense funding.

#### **DFTA FACILITY ASSESSMENT**

DFTA program officers and nutritionists each make at least two visits to every senior center annually, and part of their assessments includes facility safety standards. Often, the need for other types of repairs are also noted, such as painting. In addition, DFTA has surveyed senior center providers to self-identify facility issues. The agency works to ensure code compliance and HVAC issues at all senior centers are handled in a timely manner. There is ongoing communication with senior center contract providers in response to emergency issues, such as flooding, plumbing leaks

and malfunctions of heating or cooling systems, and DFTA assists in addressing these critical repairs.

DFTA works closely with senior center providers to ensure that responsive and thorough bids are obtained for critical repairs, if needed, and that funding is made available through their contracts. If projects are especially technical, DFTA works with senior center programs to determine the scope of work and identify lists of vendors. DFTA's Facilities staff attend project meetings to ensure the work is well-constructed and meets timelines for all CDBG projects, DFTA funded capital projects and more complex expense funded projects.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony on repairs and upgrades at senior centers. We are pleased to answer any questions you may have.



**Testimony of United Neighborhood Houses  
Before the New York City Council  
Committee on Aging  
Council Member Margaret Chin, Chair**

**Oversight: Repairs and Upgrades at NYC Senior Centers**

**Presented by Tara Klein, Policy Analyst  
October 23, 2018**

Thank you for convening today's hearing. My name is Tara Klein, and I am a Policy Analyst at United Neighborhood Houses (UNH). UNH is New York's association of settlement houses whose membership includes 40 New York City settlement houses and two upstate affiliate members who collectively reach more than 765,000 people across all ages at over 680 sites throughout the city. UNH members provide a wide variety of services to support older adults, including senior centers, Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs), home delivered meals, and others.

Senior centers serve as essential gathering spaces for older adults of varying ages and abilities, offering daily meals, a wide range of activities, and a natural antidote for social isolation. These programs are vital to the health and well-being of older New Yorkers. We are pleased that today's hearing provides an opportunity to discuss the infrastructure challenges facing the City's senior centers and ways in which the City Council and the Department for the Aging (DFTA) can best address them, to ensure our senior centers remain strong community anchors.

It is not a secret that many of the City's senior centers are in need of serious repairs. Reports of leaking roofs, dilapidated kitchen appliances, and broken air conditioners – many within official NYC cooling centers – are all too common. Internal heating, plumbing, and electrical systems often need major overhauls. Many centers are located in decades-old – or even centuries-old – buildings, which tends to make these challenges more frequent and extreme. Beyond basic repair needs, senior centers also struggle with updating their buildings to be modern and competitive. In an age where computers and tablets are becoming a necessity for older adults, many centers have outdated equipment and are slow to install basic needs like WiFi.

Unsurprisingly, poor building conditions have a direct negative impact on attendance at senior centers. Older adults prefer not to spend their time in a building that is in disrepair. If the City is serious about building a robust network of senior services, it must turn its attention to the infrastructure needs of its buildings.

**Funding Process and Availability**

Repairs and renovations are generally not included in DFTA senior center contracts. Consequently, programs must secure funding outside of the regular contract process. This can be time-consuming and confusing, especially because many such projects arise as emergencies. In

practice many programs are forced to cover costs through their own limited budgets or to put off repairs until the City can produce funding, which can affect a center's overall programming.

## **NYCHA**

These problems are even more acute for those senior centers that are located in NYCHA facilities, where it is NYCHA's responsibility to maintain the building. It was recently reported that NYCHA needs \$500 million for repairs to its senior and community centers.<sup>1</sup> In the context of NYCHA's broader repair needs – reportedly at \$32 billion – the upkeep of senior centers in NYCHA facilities run by community-based organizations has become a back-burner priority, leaving many centers in need of basic facilities and maintenance resources. Distressingly, conditions continue to deteriorate with no clear plan for remediation.

Neither NYCHA nor DFTA are able to consistently provide the funding or labor needed to maintain the aging infrastructure in public housing. Programs often must make a difficult choice between working with the beleaguered housing authority, finding the money somewhere in their own budgets, or, far too often, waiting. Providers have been known to wait more than a year for severe issues such as leaking pipes and cracked ceilings to be addressed. For example, the senior center located at Hernandez Houses, operated by University Settlement, experienced a leak that effectively caused a small waterfall to develop on a wall. While NYCHA representatives were responsive and came out to investigate the problem, and DFTA was supportive in ensuring the appropriate communication was occurring, NYCHA was very slow to provide skilled laborers to repair the problem. The program – and older adults – waited many months until plumbers arrived to break the wall and do asbestos abatement. However, the leak soon returned and the process had to begin again.

## **Accessibility**

Another challenge for many older buildings that house senior centers is compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessible Design standards, which were first issued in the 1990s – long after many NYC buildings were constructed. These standards are clearly very important for senior centers, where attendees are very likely to face mobility challenges, but compliance must be balanced against the reality of capital budgets. For example, the senior center operated by Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center, located in NYCHA's Amsterdam Houses, has bathrooms that are not wheelchair-accessible. The building was constructed before the passage of the ADA, and there has been no capital funding to make needed repairs to ensure accessibility. As a result, older adults who use wheelchairs and attend the senior center require assistance from aides to simply use the bathroom.

## **Red Tape**

Senior center staff have also expressed concerns over bureaucratic challenges for both small and large repairs. A common experience is a senior center requesting a repair, getting referred to the appropriate City agency to make the repairs, and while awaiting the work to commence, receiving a citation or fine from a different City agency. For example, the E Roberts Moore Senior Center, operated by BronxWorks and located in a NYCHA building, submitted a ticket to NYCHA to repair a crack in the wall. While waiting for NYCHA to respond and make the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://therealdeal.com/2018/09/28/add-it-to-the-list-nycha-needs-500m-for-senior-housing-community-center-repairs/>

repair, the DFTA program officer issued a citation for the crack, despite seeing the repair ticket. In these types of cases, citations or fines may be issued by FDNY, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, or the Department of Buildings, resulting in a phenomenon of the City fining itself. In a case of larger-scale renovations, the Sirovich Innovative Senior Center, operated by Educational Alliance, has been working with DFTA to secure much-needed major renovations to its interior space since 2014, consistently delayed by administrative challenge after administrative challenge. These all-too-common anecdotes could be resolved by stronger agency coordination and a streamlined repair process.

### **Recommendations**

To address these and related challenges, UNH recommends increasing the amount of money the City makes available for senior center repairs and streamlining the funding process. Specifically:

- Overall funding should be increased for senior center repairs and upgrades. This should happen in two key ways:
  - First, DFTA should establish a dedicated fund for major capital projects at senior centers to support large-scale repairs and renovations.
  - City rules for capital funding require that a project have a minimum value of \$35,000 and a period of usefulness of at least five years. While this is beneficial for major projects at senior centers, many repairs and upgrades cost less than \$35,000, and funds must be made available. To fund repairs for this large array of smaller-scale projects, the City Council should establish a separate, flexible discretionary fund for senior center repairs. Senior centers located in NYCHA buildings should be eligible for this funding.
- There should be a clear process for how to apply for funding for repairs or upgrades, whether through DFTA or NYCHA, with swift and appropriate responses. Once repairs have been requested, DFTA should facilitate stronger communication between senior centers and the various government agencies responsible for repairs, such as the Department of Buildings. This will help troubleshoot any contradicting or inaccurate information and avoid the phenomenon of the City fining itself.

Thank you for your time. For questions, I can be contacted at 917-484-9326 or [tklein@unhny.org](mailto:tklein@unhny.org).



**New York City Council  
Committee on Aging, Chair, Council Member Chin  
October 23, 2018  
Oversight Hearing: Repairs and Upgrades at NYC Senior Centers**

I would like to thank the New York City Council for recognizing the need for today's hearing and thank you particularly to Council Member Chin for her role as Aging Committee Chair and for her leadership on aging issues.

JASA is a not-for-profit agency serving the needs of older adults in the greater New York area. Its 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 independence. JASA has developed a comprehensive, integrated network of services that provides a continuum of community care. Programming 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 and include home care, case management services, senior centers, NORC supportive services, home delivered meals, caregiver support, continuing education, licensed mental health, housing, advocacy, legal services, adult protective services, and guardianship services.

JASA currently sponsors 22 DFTA-funded senior centers, operating in Manhattan (1), the Bronx (8), Brooklyn (9) and Queens (4). Each center is unique, varying in size, demographics, and programs. The senior centers provide a socially inviting environment, designed to appeal to the diversity of the communities in which they are based, with engaging activities, health and wellness programs, and culturally appropriate meals. One unifying and underlying issue impacting all senior centers, is their struggle to operate with very limited budgets.

As I've noted in previous hearings, including at the DFTA Annual Plan Summary hearing yesterday, JASA is very appreciative of the funding that the Administration is investing in senior centers through the model budget process. This funding is significant and will be very helpful in supporting not-for-profit agencies as they establish new programs and recruit and retain valuable staff. We see the additional funding as a recognition that senior centers are a key element of effective services for NY City's older adults and must be upgraded to meet the needs and preferences of a growing senior population.

However, although we were optimistic that the model budget would address additional and significant needs of senior centers, including: rent, utilities, related facilities expenses, salaries for kitchen staff and food related expenses, this was not the case. We are particularly challenged by the fact that many senior centers were established more than 40 years ago and are located in facilities that are not designed for nor support innovative operations. In NYC,



facilities expenses escalate at a rapid pace. We need funds to ensure that senior centers are appropriate, that, for example they are ADA accessible and have adequate space for congregate meals and programming. JASA, like other organizations, is constrained by the limitations of available space for senior centers and the ongoing cost of making centers appealing. Given that most providers are unable to move their programs or make major upgrades, we are ever more reliant on the Administration to provide assistance in ensuring that services are able to be delivered in current spaces.

I want to give examples of types of challenges we face as a result of the limited budgets for senior center facilities and our inability to apply for capital funding to make improvements.

### **Major Improvements**

- Air Conditioning units are not functional
  - These are expensive fixes and are not always fixable. We have one center that is housed in a synagogue and has close to a \$200,000 repair necessary.
- Leaks during big rains - need for roof repairs that can easily cost tens of thousands
- Floors are in need of replacement - can cost \$5000
- Bathrooms are broken and/or need replacements - this can run up to \$50,000
- Lighting fixtures are in need of upgrades - easily in the thousands

### **Ongoing Maintenance**

Maintenance expenses are critical to ensure the long term functioning of centers, but most providers do not have enough funding to budget for the upkeep.

- JASA just had an AC fixed at a senior center located in a NYCHA development. This repair cost DFTA \$16,000. JASA was alerted that maintenance is required at \$1,500 per quarter to keep the system functional. We don't have \$6000 annually for this expense.
- Floor waxing is a minimum of \$1000

Finally, I would like to voice concern regarding DFTA citations. When there is an issue that needs addressing at a senior center and there's been a ticket issued with a landlord or public housing, it is unfortunate to be cited during a center assessment for not having everything in order. Senior center staff are always working to make sure that we are in compliance. When there is a clear history of attempting to work with a private or public landlord to fix ongoing problems, barring any safety concerns, we ask that DFTA be more flexible.

In order to attract new participants to senior centers and retain members, centers need to be places that are physically attractive and a place people "want to be". Centers are often referred as a "home away from home". Centers should be bright and comfortable, clean and welcoming. To achieve this, requires ongoing investment, and at times relocation to more suitable space.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

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Making New York a better place to age

**New York City Council  
Committee on Aging  
Chair, Council Member Margaret Chin**

**October 23, 2018**

**Senior Center Infrastructure and Improvements**

LiveOn NY is a nonprofit membership organization representing 100 community-based organizations serving 300,000 older New Yorkers annually through senior centers, congregate and home-delivered meals, NORCs, affordable senior housing and other services. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The city must ensure its entire portfolio of senior centers are safe, accessible and well equipped to provide services and programs to the 30,000 seniors that visit a senior center each day. When the city signs a contract with a nonprofit to run a center, it must fully fund that contract to ensure that the provider can meet the requirements of the contract and to provide the highest quality services possible. Unfortunately, however, many programs experience a lack of process, clarity, transparency, urgency and funding for repairs, maintenance and upgrades to the facilities that lay the foundation for providing such integral services for the senior population. This leaves providers hamstrung with delays, infestations, broken equipment and uncertainty about their ability to operate. It also means that center Directors spend far too much of their time in crisis mode figuring out how to move around budget lines and becoming experts on issue areas far outside their job descriptions, such as HVACs and building codes, at the cost of having more time to innovate and serve clients. We can collectively do better.

As always, we come here today in the spirit of positive collaboration with our city colleagues at DFTA and City Council to make these centers what we all know they can be – the cornerstones of community resilience and a place to have a great meal, take a photography class, learn a new skill, or read the paper in a bright, safe and engaging place. Now is the time to discuss these important issues and get it right, as DFTA will issue the next RFP for senior centers in the near future.

**Before we provide challenges and recommendations, we note the overarching issue that the senior center portfolio is diverse in type of location.** Some centers own the building where they are located. Some centers lease their space from a landlord. Some centers are located in a NYCHA facility. And others are located in faith based buildings. Because locations vary, we acknowledge there are different processes that may need to be altered dependent upon the type of building within which the center is housed. That said, a systemic, transparent process for different types of location is attainable.

**Challenges and Recommendations**

- 1. There is no baselined funding in contracts to meet minimal health and safety standards for senior centers.** Many inspections and services are required annually or several times a year, including extermination, grease trap cleaning and removal, hood cleaning, fire suppression systems, maintenance of HVAC systems and refrigerators and freezers. Providers have also reported that annual deep power cleanings of kitchens are necessary to prevent against rodent infestations. Other expenses include sewage backup problems and security alarm service and maintenance. While there may be some very small amounts in budgets under “Other Occupancy” costs, these routine annual expenses are estimated at well over \$10,000 a year, and providers do not have anywhere close to this funding flexibility in their budgets, even though the expenses are required and routine. *We recommend DFTA work with providers to identify*

*and estimate these routine expenses and add funding into every senior center budget to fully fund these costs.*

2. **There is no process or funding for emergency repairs.** Requests, approvals and funding for emergency repairs at senior centers occur on a case by case basis, which is unfair, inconsistent, not transparent and downright inefficient for both centers and DFTA. Even if approval is given for a repair, funding is not automatically added and the provider is instructed to fund it from somewhere else in the budget, or if it is the end of the year to use accruals. This is also inconsistently handled by program officers, which is detrimental to all providers, especially to those new in the field and those with very small staffs who do not have capacity to send multiple emails and calls, some of which go unanswered, to try and get something fixed. It is also difficult when there is an emergency repair needed at the beginning of the year when using accruals is not an option. It is our understanding that some city agencies add a line in contractor budgets for repairs that don't reach the capital repair threshold. *We recommend DFTA work with providers and evaluate past emergency repair requests, and add a budget line for providers with a reasonable amount for providers to automatically draw upon funds for emergency repairs/contingency expenses to expedite the process.*
  
3. **There is no funding for upgrades for equipment and other repairs, including HVAC and kitchen equipment.** Generally speaking, because of the lack of process, certainty about whether requests for repairs or upgrades will even be responded to or entertained, centers typically purchase or upgrade equipment only when something breaks. This is disruptive to service delivery, inefficient and preventable. It is also extremely dangerous, especially in localities where the center doubles as a cooling facility, where a loss of service is untenable for clients. DFTA assesses senior centers annually and also has information on the purchased equipment in the centers. *At the very least, this assessment process should shed light on the projected replacement needs for certain equipment over time so that DFTA can allocate funding in its own budget to address potential and somewhat predictable replacement and repairs for HVAC and kitchen equipment. We should support seniors aging in place, but not the aging equipment that serves them! These forward projections coupled with funding centers for annual maintenance will create transparency and efficiency and can extend the life of the equipment.*
  
4. **There is no clear, transparent process for the 100 senior centers and programs located in NYCHA facilities to request repairs and upgrades.** It has been reported that community facilities in NYCHA require \$500 million critical repairs. Of note, in FY19, in our budget priorities, LiveOn NY requested a mere fraction of this - \$5 million – for upgrades for senior centers in NYCHA, a request which went unanswered. There is a great deal of confusion among senior centers as to how, where and to whom to request for any type of repairs or upgrade in NYCHA facilities. Also, due to the lack of an MOU between DFTA and NYCHA, there is no clarity among providers if they are even eligible to receive funding, and if so, from which agency. Again, this all seems to be on a case by case basis, which is not an equitable way for these programs to operate. In addition, in the event a provider does get approval to make a repair, it must be done from a NYCHA approved vendor list, however it is very difficult to get that list, let alone the fact that some of the vendors are outside of NYC, or do not want to provide the services for a variety of



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reasons. *LiveOn NY understands this is a complex complicated issue, but the status quo of unanswered requests and funding granted inconsistently on a case by case basis cannot continue to be the process. The city at the very least needs to clarify instructions as to how centers can request funding, where to direct those requests, and general expectations as to how and when those requests will be responded to.*

- 5. The city does not fully fund contracts, nor pay nonprofits on time.** The \$10 million allocated to senior centers late last year was greatly appreciated as an important first step. That said, the city needs to fully fund contracts that are representative of the costs to run a center, including meals/meal preparation, meal staff, rent, transportation, OTPS, technology, facility costs or other costs that are required to run a senior center, and allow for innovation to create new programs. Further, the recent Comptroller Report titled *Running Late: An Analysis of NYC Agency Contracts* clearly relays what our members have been telling us for years: chronic late payments consistently put strain on nonprofit human service providers throughout the City. **Of note, DFTA submitted 98.9% of its contracts retroactively, meaning all but 3 DFTA contracts arrived at the Comptroller's Office, the final step in the process, for registration after the contract start date.** Nonprofits are hamstrung by these problems, often mirroring their clients by living payroll to payroll, uncertain when payment for services will finally arrive. Innovation and strategy is nearly impossible when organizations are essentially loaning the City funds to cover the cost of serving the most vulnerable. Further, because professionals are spending countless hours navigating the contractual bureaucracy, they are unable to use their key skills, strengths and creativity to move this City forward. *The city must work with the human service sector to address these issues.*
- 6. Support agency-wide investments in the human services sector.** LiveOn NY is a member of the Human Services Advancement Strategy Group (HSASG). The Council and Administration have made important investments in the sector over the past two years, as well as expanded program investments, while also tackling systems issues through the Nonprofit Resiliency Committee. More work needs to be done including increasing indirect expenses, fringe benefits, insurance, and occupancy costs which are all areas that are critical to the fiscal, administrative, and operational integrity of the sector. *We are also calling for trend factor/cost escalation formulas in all new procurements for the duration of the contract.*

We look forward to working with City Council, the Department for the Aging, all city agencies and the Administration to make New York a better, and fairer, place to age.

*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.*

## **"Testimony to the City Council Committee on Aging Committee hearing on Oversight – Repairs and Upgrades at NYC Senior Centers"**

October 23, 2018

My name is Sandra Christian and I am the Vice President for Senior Services of RiseBoro Community Partnership.

I would first like to thank Council Members for holding these hearings on Repairs and Upgrades at Senior Centers.

Our organization operates 1 Innovative Senior Center, 5 Neighborhood Centers and 3 Senior Clubs in Bushwick, Williamsburg and Bedford Stuyvesant in Brooklyn.

Of these centers 5 are operated in NYCHA Developments, 1 is in a former NYCHA Development now operated by a private development company, 1 has a private lease with the landlord, and 2 are under direct lease with landlord and the City of New York.

The centers operated under private leases and direct lease with City have relatively few repair issues and the landlords are responsive to repairs and many upgrades needed at these locations.

The needs in these programs are largely related to upgrades in equipment not covered in the lease and largely are food service equipment needs which I will touch on later.

Our NYCHA centers are where we have experienced the greatest concerns related to repairs and upgrades.

In all 5 locations we have had serious conditions related to HVAC systems in the last year. The systems are out dated and in at least 2 we have the need for an entire replacement of these systems.

All 5 centers have had to come off the Cooling Center list this summer. In 2 Locations these conditions have been ongoing for over 2 years. As there is no MOU between NYCHA and DFTA, NYCHA has stopped taking responsibility for these units and they both have not only AC issues in the summer but heating issues in the winter. These units are outdated and because maintenance did not occur the entire units must be replaced.

We have had to go through a lengthy process to get approval at these 2 sites for repairs to these units. All repairs have to be approved by NYCHA and require NYCHA approved Vendors.

We have had to go through great lengths to identify vendors as even the Dept. for the Aging had difficulty getting this list. When we did receive a list most of the vendors refused to bid on the repairs because they have a history of not being paid by NYCHA for prior work. After 9 months when one Vendor submitted approved bids we then had a lengthy process to identify within NYCHA where these bids needed to be reviewed and several amendments were requested to finalize an approved bid. There was another lengthy process on getting someone to then sign off on DOB building permits that they had requested from our Vendor. Finally after a 2 year process we hope to finally have these 2 major upgrades in early November. The cost of these replacements are significant.

DFTA has advocated and gotten approval to pay for these repairs out of DFTA funding. We as a sponsor have paid for the down payment of the repairs however the amendments are not registered as yet and we cannot be reimbursed for these down payments. We are concerned that the repairs will need to be made soon and as an agency we will not be able to be submit a payment request for this large expense affecting overall agency cash flow.

Please note that both these centers serve over 200 clients a day. Also in one locations kitchen, thousands of dollars of maintenance costs have had to come from within the programs budget to fix freezers and refrigerators that became over heated.

In 2 of the other 3 locations, we have been asked by DFTA to identify bids to fix the systems in the centers. We have been asked to identify temporary solutions this past summer to cool one of the locations that meant rental of a temporary cooling system that DFTA has told us should come out of our bottom line; a \$2,400 loss to the bottom line and reduction of available programming to seniors.

Another location has received bids for one possible solution costing \$13,000 while other vendors are stating that an HVAC system should be added that would cost up to \$30,000. The final location NYCHA did respond to and repair the system due to pressure from Borough President Eric Adams. This site also operates a DYCD program for children.

Please note that our senior service division does not have funds for facilities staff to handle all this coordination and attempt to review bids for this type of work. I believe this is consistent across the senior service network. As a larger sponsor we have been able to assist Program Directors in these tasks but the extensive time spent on these issues takes away from providing and developing quality services. This would be impossible for single sponsored centers.

DFTA has attempted to be helpful in this situation but the facilities staff has a small staff as well and there is no effective means of communicating with NYCHA.

In one of the locations getting the total replacement for the HVAC system, we had to close the center for 3 months due to a massive rodent infestation. The infestation was everywhere in the center mostly through the ceilings. It took extensive and ongoing pressure on NYCHA to adequately address the problem. Had my Program Director and Director of Senior Services not gone daily to pressure NYCHA management to address the issue I believe we would still not be in the location. When the initial work had been done to remove and replace ceiling tiles and plug entry points into the center, the NYCHA vendor totally destroyed the center and contaminated the equipment and work surfaces that staff had carefully covered. This all had to be replaced and heavy duty cleaners had to come in. We then we had to utilize our Model Budget funding to cover these expenses.

We intended to reopen when we found there was still infestation from several openings that remained in the center including from the roof of the center and the building compactor room. Please note that this is a senior building and the infestation also crept into the building lobby and seniors saw the rats on the roof from their windows.

The lack of action and bureaucratic complications at NYCHA sites also consistently causes problems in resolving other repairs and maintenance at NYCHA locations. In some locations depending on the local NYCHA Program Management we see some movement on maintenance issues depending on that management. We have had to depend on the relationships to get floors replaced, ceiling leaks repaired and bathroom repairs. While in others it is impossible to get follow-up on repair tickets. We are often sited in audits for repairs outside of a programs control. These issues pose threats to the health and welfare of our seniors and staff. We cannot handle these repairs even when we have resources because the work needs to be approved by NYCHA.

It should not take pressure from our elected officials to address these issues, in one center Councilmember Reynoso intervened and based on his intervention floor tiles were replaced and ceiling holes were repaired.

Finally in regards to all locations, programs struggle with aging equipment that needs to be repaired until the time that a total replacement is needed. Our expenses in maintenance and repairs goes up every year in repairing outdated equipment. On a case by case basis we have to request approval to repair or purchase emergency equipment which we are then told we have to utilize program accruals to pay for. We believe that there should be equipment inventories across all centers, centralized and a plan developed to fund and replace items like ovens, freezers and refrigerators when they meet a useful lifespan of this equipment.

If this can be done with transportation and home delivered meals vehicles purchased prior to certain year it should be done for senior center equipment as well.

We also need resources from the Department for the Aging to review new DOH and Fire Department regulations that affect our programs. Once again we have limited senior center staff and we hire directors and staff with experience in human services not facilities and code compliance knowledge. Our budgets do not allow for facilities staff or a licensed Nutritionist. Our custodial staff and kitchen staff are paid at or close to the minimum wage and we do not have the resources to maintain compliance on items like exhaust hoods or indirect waste. Our directors are often called on to become experts at everything.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns regarding building repairs and upgrades.



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**Testimony from Selfhelp Community Services  
New York City Council Aging Committee  
Oversight - Repairs and Upgrades at NYC Senior Centers  
October 23, 2018**

My name is Mayer Waxman and I am the Managing Director of Senior Centers at Selfhelp Community Services.

Thank you to the Aging Committee Chair Margaret Chin and the members of the committee for the opportunity to testify on repairs and upgrades at NYC senior centers.

Selfhelp was founded in 1936 to help those fleeing Nazi Germany maintain their independence and dignity as they struggled to forge new lives in America. Today, Selfhelp has grown into one of the largest and most respected not-for-profit human service agencies in the New York metropolitan area, with 26 sites throughout Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Nassau County. We provides a broad set of services to more than 20,000 elderly, frail, and vulnerable New Yorkers each year, while remaining the largest provider of comprehensive services to Holocaust survivors in North America. Selfhelp offers a complete network of community-based home care, social service, and senior housing programs with the overarching goal of helping clients to live with dignity and independence and avoid institutional care.

Our services are extensive and include: specialized programs for Holocaust Survivors; ten affordable senior housing complexes; four Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) programs; three intensive case management programs; five senior centers including one of New York City's first Innovative Senior Centers; home health care; client centered technology programs including the Virtual Senior Center; court-appointed guardianship; the Selfhelp Alzheimer's Resource Program (SHARP); and New York Connects, which provides seniors and people with disabilities with the information and support they need to remain living independently in their own homes.

Selfhelp operates five senior centers throughout Queens, including one of the City's first innovative senior centers. Together, our centers have over 10,000 members and we serve over 200,000 meals. We strongly believe in the role that senior centers play in providing high quality nutritious meals, engaging activities, and health and wellness programming.

We are grateful for the Council's long standing and ongoing support for senior centers and for always emphasizing the needs of older adults in policy decisions and budget allocations. In today's testimony,



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I will focus on our priorities regarding our experience with oversight, repairs, and upgrades at Selfhelp's five New York City senior centers.

### **Budgeting**

Selfhelp appreciates DFTA's partnership regarding the realities of budgeting constraints when facing unplanned expenses and repairs. Our staff budgets for planned expenses, such as rent, and staffing and food costs. However, when an unexpected cost arises, such as when equipment breaks or there is damage to the building, we often face a challenge in covering the costs in a timely manner.

Our contract with DFTA allows us to budget for standard expenses, as well as income expected to be brought in through voluntary contributions from members to cover additional expenses. In order to raise necessary funds to cover unplanned and unexpected expenses, each center conducts fundraising campaigns. Proceeds from fundraising are used for expenses above what DFTA and the budgeted voluntary contributions cover, including repairs, additional staff, and programming.

When a senior center faces an unexpected, unbudgeted need, such as a broken refrigerator or a leak in the roof, it is often the center's responsibility to pay for the repairs out of accruals or fundraising. However, some of the budget line items are restricted in use and some accruals are not fungible. For example, a senior center cannot utilize accruals from Personnel or Food to cover building repairs. Even if the Personnel budget has an excess because a social worker was not on staff for the full year, the additional funds in that line item cannot be used for capital repairs or upgrades. This rigidity makes it a challenge to fund the most pressing needs when they arise.

As such, we support the creation of a fund to be allocated by DFTA to assist senior centers with small capital repairs and upgrades, including new ovens and repairs to ventilation and air conditioning systems. This fund would allow senior centers the flexibility they need to make unplanned small repairs and upgrades throughout as needed and with appropriate oversight by DFTA.

### **Security**

In New York City, security is an important issue. Given this timely conversation on upgrades, an important issue to consider is security at senior centers. Our senior centers are open to all older community members and we strive to create a safe and welcoming environment for all. Currently, there is not a funding source for cameras or security guards which would allow our Directors to have oversight to who is coming and going at each center. Moving forward, it will be important to account for security needs at each center.

### **Senior Center within NYCHA Buildings**

There are unique needs within our senior center that is located in the community center of NYCHA's Latimer Gardens complex in Flushing, which serves more than 1,700 people each year. In order to provide valuable services to the residents and to the community, NYCHA has partnered with DFTA, as well as with the Department of Youth and Community Development and their not-for-profit contractors. The partnership provides immense benefits to the community, although it does not



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provide support for necessary repairs and upgrades. When repairs are needed, such as leaks or AC or other malfunctions, the senior and youth programs need to report the repair need and obtain a ticket number through NYCHA's standard tenant repair structure. The response to such repair requests is often slow. This slow response is troubling for the individuals and families who live in NYCHA housing, and is exacerbated when there are hundreds of individuals relying on community centers.

For example, our Latimer Gardens Senior Center serves as a New York City cooling center. However, the air conditioning broke in August 2018 and therefore the senior center was not able to serve as a cooling center for at least 3 days when a heat advisory was in effect. Despite support from our local partners in NYCHA and DFTA, as well as our local elected officials, the issue has still not been resolved.

We suggest that there be some channel created between DFTA, NYCHA, DYCD, and other partner City agencies to more quickly address the communal repair needs within NYCHA buildings.

### **Model Senior Center Budget**

We commend the Department for the Aging (DFTA), Office of Management and Budget, and the City Council for the ongoing commitment to senior centers since the beginning of the model senior center budget process. This significant funding for the City's senior centers has been, and will continue to be, a critical step towards stabilizing one of the core programs that supports older New Yorkers, including many immigrant seniors.

We are appreciative that in our experience, there has been enough flexibility within the model budget process to allow additional funding to be used for numerous upgrades to Selfhelp's senior centers. First, the investment enabled us to raise salaries for program staff, which was much needed and much appreciated. The investment in the model budget for staff helps address ongoing concerns related to salary parity that has been a concern for Selfhelp and many other providers and advocates since DFTA raised case management salaries. Second, the additional funding allows us to expand programming options. Third, the opportunity to upgrade the centers through one-time purchases, such as repairing the stoop at one center and purchasing computers, and large kitchen equipment for others. We found that some spending, especially related to building repairs, was difficult to achieve in the short timeframe between receiving the funds and the end of the fiscal year in which they had to be spent. Our relationship with DFTA is stronger because of our work together in implementing the model budget process, and we would like to thank them for a collaborative relationship.

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. On behalf of the 20,000 clients we serve, I am grateful for the Council's support on so many important programs.



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**RAIN Inc**

**Testimony to New York City Council Committee on Aging**

**RE: Oversight - Repairs and Upgrades at NYC Senior Centers**

I want to express my sincere appreciation to the Committee on Aging for looking into this very important topic. Our goal at R.A.I.N. is to offer a variety of services to meet the needs of older adults living in the Bronx and upper Manhattan. We currently offer a range of social services and wellness/recreational activities throughout our sites funded wholly, or in part by DFTA. The twelve RAIN Senior centers offer a multitude of social and recreational programming, exercise classes catered to an older population and nutritious meals approved by a nutritionist at the Department for the Aging as well as case assistance and transportation. RAIN also operates several other programs including case assistance by R.A.I.N. One-stop for seniors who need entitlement assistance and are mobile and who don't have access to case assistance through a senior center. Case Management is offered to those seniors who are homebound may need entitlement assistance, home delivered meals to home bound seniors, transportation services for medical appointments, a mobile food kitchen providing meals to the homeless, housing for seniors, the Alzheimer's caregiver support and the Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement program providing education to seniors to help the manage chronic health conditions. We at RAIN are committed to addressing social determinants of health and to reduce health care disparities in the Bronx.

Several of our senior centers are plagued by aging infrastructure which impacts the ability of the center to provide contracted services as well as posing a potential health risk to seniors. These services include, but are not limited to meals that help with food insecurity, exercise classes, evidence based classes to promote healthy aging, social activities to help alleviate loneliness and depression. Health issues include leaks which can promote mold and mildew and cracks and uneven walkways which may cause a senior to fall and HVAC systems which need to be operable so the senior centers can operate as cooling centers during heat waves.

Some of the comments from Director's at RAIN Senior Centers are as follows:

" Our concerns at our community center that we share NYCHA- Boston Secor is that the center has been promised for the past (2) years project renovations under (DASNY) which are essential for the program since were under a NYCHA building. For example, we are unable to proceed with major renovations for replacing the a/c system which is



old any repairs we do are just band aids. The end of the summer was unbearable, not to mention the boiler which doesn't have a timer to control, giving excessive heating in the winter. Honestly, we don't know what to expect for this winter. Also, the mold inside the community gym is a health hazard and a paint job all over the center long overdue."

"We experiencing constant repairs and at some point we may face the need for major renovations. Every winter and summer for the past 2 years I experienced issues sporadically with the boiler and with our AC system. It is overall functioning but in all honesty these units can collapse in any moment- especially considering the decades that they have been in use- it's just a matter of time."

"Replacement of the main entrance door. It is rotting on the bottom and it is becoming an entrance to street rodents. By that same entrance, the plaster from the ceiling is falling and also the plaster by the men's bathroom wall. "

"Our biggest concerns are the leaking from the roof and ceilings when we have heavy rain, peeling paints in the ceiling, water damage to the ceiling and reappearing molds in the back bathrooms."

"Repairs needed at our center are a wheelchair ramp or proper flooring placed in the kitchen. Large kitchen equipment such as a dishwasher or stove that are in need of replacement but are extremely expensive and we don't have that amount of money in our budgets to spend for that item."

The Boston Road Senior Center also experiences difficulties with the HVAC system, a leaking roof, aging toilet fixtures and peeling paint due to leaks. The heating/cooling conduits for the HVAC system is losing insulation and the van at the center is a regular 14 seat van and is not wheel chair accessible.

Our centers experience similar difficulties in dealing with NYCHA. Tickets for repairs are opened and closed without addressing the situation or telling the Director that the ticket was closed. It is not uncommon to put in multiple tickets for the same issue. We may spend weeks or even months going back and forth with NYCHA before finally being told by NYCHA that the infrastructure problems we are having are not their problem. Also, when we call NYCHA for repairs, they have trouble identifying us as a senior center. We usually have to give them an old ticket number before they can find us in the system.

All of these issues impact our daily census and ability to fulfill our contractual obligations. Heating and cooling problems depress attendance and get members out of the habit of attending the center and taking advantage of services and problems with



the kitchens may impact our ability to provide meals. Peeling paint from leaky roofs can be a constant problem and as soon as repairs are made, they reappear due to the leaks. Also, when we have to spend program funds for repairs we have to take the money from accruals that would be better spent on program activities and better quality food.

Our centers are trying to be proactive on some of these issues by setting up maintenance schedules for the HVAC systems, checking and replacing burnt out electrical ballast for lighting and putting approved enzymes in the toilet plumbing to prevent blockages.

We feel that some solutions to these problems are to:

- Have a clear understanding with NYCHA as to who is responsible for what,
- Having a point person at NYCHA to escalate issues to when the building management is unresponsive,
- Working out a preventive maintenance for boiler/ air conditioning and roof/leaks repairs with NYCHA
- Re-establish the position at DFTA which acted as an intermediary with NYCHA to address problems,
- Upgrade all vans to accessible vehicles and,
- Create a depreciation schedule for vital equipment to help determine when the equipment has to be replaced after an inspection by a qualified engineer.

We feel these steps will help keep the centers operating efficiently and to safeguard the health and safety of the members. The situations mentioned are also very costly to address on an ad hoc basis and will help reduce overall costs for the City.

There is an old oil filter add where the mechanic tells his customer due an oil change- "You can pay me now or pay me later".

Thank you for taking the time to hear us out on this timely and important issue.

James V Carey, Director  
R.A.I.N. Boston Road Neighborhood Senior Center  
2424 Boston Road  
Bronx, NY 10467-9012



**We refuse to be invisible**

**Testimony to the New York City Council Aging Committee  
Oversight Hearing on Repairs and Upgrades at NYC Senior Centers**

**Delivered in person on October 23, 2018  
by Jose Collazo, Site Manager of SAGE Center Bronx**

Councilmembers, on behalf of SAGE, thank you for holding this hearing on repairs and upgrades at our city's senior centers. My name is Jose Collazo, and I am the Site Manager for SAGE Center Bronx.

SAGE is the country's first and largest organization dedicated to improving the lives of LGBT older adults. Founded here in NYC in 1978, we have provided comprehensive social services and programs to LGBT older people for nearly four decades, including the nation's first full-time Senior Center, the Edie Windsor SAGE Center, located in Chelsea and launched with generous support from the Council. Building on the positive strides that SAGE Center made in reducing isolation faced by LGBT older adults, in June of 2014, the New York City Council awarded SAGE funding to open SAGE Center stand-alone sites in Brooklyn, the Bronx and Staten Island and to expand our SAGE Harlem program into a full-service SAGE Center site – and for that we are enormously grateful.

LGBT older people are a significant part of this rapidly growing elder population. However, they remain largely invisible and at increased risk. They are often severely isolated and disconnected from services. In fact, LGBT elders are twice as likely to live alone; half as likely to be partnered; and more than four times less likely to have kids. Many LGBT elders were shunned by their families and, as a result, are half as likely to have close relatives to call for help. Roughly one quarter of LGBT elders have no one to call in case of an emergency. A recent study stated that the impact that isolation has on one's physical health is equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day – more needs to be done to ensure our city's most isolated elders can find meaningful connection.

Because of their thin support networks, LGBT older people often need to turn to mainstream service providers, for care as they age. Yet, they're often distrustful of these mainstream providers – and for good reason. LGBT older people are more likely to face discrimination around their sexual orientation and gender identity when accessing health care, social services or other programs. Experienced discrimination and extreme isolation are a lethal combination for LGBT elders.

SAGE is our City's LGBT elders' safety net. SAGE's services are designed to combat LGBT elders' isolation and improve their overall health outcomes. SAGE provides LGBT elders in our city with comprehensive, competent and holistic services through our five SAGE Centers, care management, and related health, housing and other services. And these services have a high retention rate: 70% of participants return to a SAGE Center after visiting for programming or meal.

When planning services and programs for our City's aging demographic, it's crucially important that vulnerable and special populations, like LGBT elders, can access senior centers, services and programs that are culturally competent, offer high quality programming, and provide deeper social supports, like mental health services.

Recognizing the acute need among our City's LGBT older people for LGBT-welcoming elder housing, SAGE and our partners, HELP USA and BFC Partners, are developing New York City's first LGBT-welcoming senior housing in Brooklyn and the Bronx. The marquee of each development will be a full-service, state-of-the-art, ground-floor SAGE Center, built on our successful model designed to increase access to senior center supports for building residents and the larger communities in which each building is located. Both of these buildings are 100% affordable and each have a set aside for formerly homeless elders.

Given this population, SAGE will need to provide more intensive services to ensure that these residents can maintain their housing and remain stably housed. In addition, SAGE expects to serve many more older people through our co-located SAGE Centers. That will require more investment from DFTA and New York City.

In addition, in our experience, operating a network of five senior centers across the city, also means that SAGE assumes much of the responsibility for upkeep and maintenance of these sites, further stretches SAGE's budget. So many of the City's senior centers are in disrepair. And, with a rapidly growing increase in our City's older population, the City will need to improve the current conditions in these centers, invest in infrastructure and support more culturally competent aging services to reflect the diverse identities and needs of our city's older population.

We hope that the New York City Council will increase its support of services for LGBT elders, and prioritize their need for culturally competent services and dedicated senior centers. We look forward to an increased investment from the Council in all senior centers, and especially those that support elders that are more vulnerable and isolated. Your support continues to be greatly valued and appreciated. Thank you.



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## **NYC City Council Testimony – October 23, 2018**

PSS, founded in 1962 as Presbyterian Senior Services, is an innovative, multi-service nonprofit agency whose mission is to strengthen the capacity of older New Yorkers, their families, and communities to thrive. With an annual budget of \$6 million, over 70 dedicated staff and over 250 committed volunteers and interns, PSS operates numerous centers and residences for older adults and various support and educational programs throughout New York City. PSS strives to build the capacity of its clients – as well as the capacity of the community to support its members.

PSS thanks the Council for their time and attention to these matters. We greatly enjoy the support and relationships PSS has with City Council, DFTA, NYCHA and the Parks Department.

### **Needs/issues:**

Many PSS centers have similar facility issues which range from cockroaches and other pests to large issues like HVAC systems. In general, many centers struggle with leaks which have in some cases led to flooding, lack of heat in the winter or air conditioning in the summers. Almost all centers are also cooling centers which causes extra challenges and begins to affect the community beyond just center clients. In particular, the centers that are in free standing NYCHA housing (Parkside and Andrew Jackson) typically need new roofs, and the Harlem Center at Pelham Fritz (which is located in a Parks and Recreation Department building) has a ceiling that is crumbling and falling apart - creating an unsafe and unsanitary environment.

Another major issue affecting PSS is the power outages at the Andrew Jackson center. This senior housing development is not connected to a Con Edison grid which leaves us with power outages every summer. This past summer was particularly difficult with the power being shut off a record number of times. These outages have burnt out our equipment and air conditioners and caused thousands of dollars in food to become spoiled. This is not only a huge burden to the programs but is not safe for clients who live in this development who may depend on respirators or other devices which need power to operate. No power also means no elevators which can cause older or disabled residents to be stranded inside or outside their homes.

Almost all centers could also use updates on floor tiles and lights. The buildings often are not well maintained and leave sponsors like PSS to cover costs of fixing things that is not within our purview. Many centers need to update bathrooms to meet appropriate requirements. It is not uncommon to have sinks that barely work or toilets that take a lot of strength to flush. Something as simple as new paint would make a big difference to a center and should be included in the upkeep of a facility however is left to the program budgets to cover.

The Council could be helpful in two main ways, helping PSS and other sponsors to urge the facility owners to rectify these issues and by continuing to allocate discretionary funds to these centers to help cover the costs of the fixtures and updates needed. I thank you for your time and attention to this matter which directly affects the services provided to Older Adults throughout NYC.

For more information, contact:

Anya Herasme, Senior Director of Older Adult Services  
917-734-4661 or [aherasme@pssusa.org](mailto:aherasme@pssusa.org)  
**Visit [www.pssusa.org](http://www.pssusa.org) for more information**





**Testimony of  
Chris Widelo, AARP New York**

**New York City Council  
Committee on Aging**

**Oversight - Repairs and Upgrades at  
NYC Senior Centers**

**Tuesday, October 23, 2018**

**City Hall  
New York, NY**

**Contact: Chris Widelo (212) 407-3737 | [cwidelo@aarp.org](mailto:cwidelo@aarp.org)**

My name is Chris Widelo and I am AARP's Associate State Director for New York City. On behalf of AARP's 800,000 New York City members, I would like to offer testimony on the need to modernize the process for funding repairs and upgrades at senior centers across the city.

New York City's population is aging. Nearly one-third of residents in the five boroughs are over the age of 50, and that group is expected to grow by nearly 20 percent between 2015 and 2030. The growth for the 65-plus age group is projected to be even more dramatic, with a whopping 46% increase in the same time frame.

Our city is not just aging; we are also becoming more diverse. African Americans, Blacks, Hispanics, Latinos, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders account for 62 percent of New York City residents 50-plus. And, half of all New York City residents over 65 were born in a foreign country.

NYC's Senior Centers are an important resource in our community to help our city's older residents age well. In order to operate efficiently, these centers need to have a clear process and funding stream to ensure they are running on all cylinders. It is our understanding that emergency repairs, routine upgrades, and regular maintenance, that are not considered capital improvements, lack both the process and the funding.

In the area of regular maintenance, AARP recommends that DFTA works with providers to assess the typical maintenance of each senior center in a given year and add additional funds into each center's budget to cover these reoccurring expenses. Emergency repairs also need to be addressed in a similar fashion. In consideration of past emergency repairs, DFTA should add a budget line with an adequate amount of money for providers to draw from to make emergency repairs or fund contingency plans when emergencies occur.

Lastly, regular upgrades to items like kitchen equipment and HVAC systems is important to making sure centers don't suffer breakdowns that interrupt service or result in an unsafe environment when the senior center also doubles as a cooling center. DFTA should have information on when these items were purchased and how long they can expect to be functional. Combined with the assessment DFTA conducts annually at each center, a schedule for upgrades should be projected; before breakdowns occur. Furthermore DFTA should allocate money from its budget to fund these upgrades before they don't become an emergency repair.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this these important issues.

**THE COUNCIL  
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Name: Sandra Christian

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I represent: RiseBoro Community Partnership

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I represent: Live On NY

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Address: 2 LAFAYETTE ST.

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Date: 10/23/2018

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Date: 10/23/2018

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