

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, August 17, 2016

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Homeless New Yorkers, Community Groups and Advocates to Call on Gov. Cuomo to Keep Supportive Housing Promise

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

New York, NY— As part of an ongoing effort in partnership the Campaign 4 NY/NY Housing, homeless New Yorkers and advocates converged outside Governor Cuomo's New York City office on Wednesday to call on the Governor to exercise his leadership and sign an MOU with the State legislative leaders to release \$1.9 billion in the New York State budget to fund 6,000 units of supportive housing state wide over the next 5 years. Today's rally was a part of a series of rallies sponsored by the Campaign that looks to bring visibility to the needs of the homeless in New York City.

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

Supportive housing breaks the cycle of homelessness by pairing the stability of a permanent home with on-site services to support people with mental illness, addiction, HIV/AIDS, chronic illness, disability or other special needs. Research proves that supportive housing:

- Solves homelessness
- Improves neighborhoods
- Saves tax dollars

“Supportive housing prevents people from cycling in and out of expensive hospitals and prison, and gives people their lives back. We know this, and the government knows this. Community Access pioneered the housing model of mixing low-income families with those with mental health concerns in one building, providing permanent leases and support services to all tenants. For more than four decades, our commitment to housing the hardest to reach populations has demonstrated that providing quality housing and support services is vital to helping people to reclaim their lives,” said **Steve Coe, CEO of Community Access.**

“We are disappointed that New York State Government leaders are not committed to signing the memorandum of understanding required to keep their promise to create 20,000 units of supportive

housing for homeless New Yorkers. Without a long-term commitment to fund supportive housing, this promise means nothing. Community Access is proud to join supportive housing residents, men and women struggling with homelessness, and other advocacy groups to insist that Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature sign the MOU now," said **Carla Rabinowitz, Advocacy Coordinator of Community Access.**

"Supportive housing is the fundamental solution to solving the homeless crisis in New York State. Supportive housing reduces the use of shelters, visits to detoxification centers, hospitalizations, emergency room use, and incarceration, and therefore saves taxpayers money. For this reason, 133 members of the Assembly and Assemblyman Hevesi have called on Governor Cuomo to develop 35,000 new units of supportive housing," said **Brent G. Weitzberg, Chief of Staff, New York State Assemblyman Andrew D. Hevesi.**

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