



Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies



The Voice of the Human Services Community



Council of Senior Centers & Services of NYC, Inc.

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC HOUSING COMMITTEE

Hearing on NYCHA's Payments to the City

June 18, 2008

Dear Chairperson Mendez, Council Members,

Our organizations have come together to share our profound concern for the future of human services programs which serve residents of New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments. Senior centers, Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs), community centers and after school and child care programs are at risk of closing due to NYCHA's unsustainable shortfall deficit of approximately \$195 million. These programs are vital to protecting children, youth and seniors and strengthening families who reside in the City's public housing. Attached, please find our previous policy statement on the proposed cuts as well as a letter to Mayor Bloomberg and Speaker Quinn.

The City, State and Federal government have reduced funding for NYCHA even as costs have skyrocketed and the need for affordable housing has grown. NYCHA has proposed cutting services, raising rent and continuing to use capital funding to balance the budget. We do not believe this is an appropriate solution. We feel strongly that it is incumbent upon the City to find resources to close the budget gap. It is our recommendation that the City reconsider some or all of NYCHA's payments for city services, including the NYPD and DEP, in order to alleviate the current burden on the public housing system. We also suggest waiving \$25 million in NYCHA PILOT payments (payment in lieu of property taxes) to the City since most nonprofits receive property tax exemptions. Lastly, we hope that the Administration and the City Council can work together to identify additional funds to maintain services and keep rent stable. Closing community centers and services in NYCHA facilities will create a lasting, negative impact on the City's most economically vulnerable communities.

We are grateful that the Public Housing Committee has taken the lead in examining NYCHA's payments to New York City and look forward to working together to maintain these critical services.

Sincerely,

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