



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

Senate Bill Protects Renters Living With AIDS Or HIV

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS April 28, 2010

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The New York State Senate Democratic Majority passed overdue protections (S2664/Duane) for New York renters living in poverty with AIDS or HIV, by humanely limiting the percentage of household income which can be paid in shelter costs. The benefit applies to those who live in emergency shelter facilities or reside in housing which receives financial assistance.

Currently, the rental assistance program administered by New York City's HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) is the only which does not cap the tenant's rent share at 30-percent of income. Thus, HASA clients who receive shelter assistance and have other forms of income (such as SSI, SSDI, veteran's benefits or work) pay all but \$344 for basic housing – just \$11 per day – leaving them unable to purchase nutritious food, pay utilities, or access basic hygiene needs such as toothpaste.

Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D-35th District) said, "With the passage of this legislation we are able to help our most vulnerable, struggling individuals by affording them the ability to have access to livable, stable and affordable housing. Too often, the burden of the cost of healthcare is overlooked when considering what is appropriate housing assistance. This will no longer be the case as New Yorkers who are living with HIV/AIDS will finally have access to the assistance that has been denied for far too long."

Because of the state of the economy forcing formerly stabilized tenants into eviction, placements for low-income people with AIDS in emergency shelters are up 26-percent since May 2007...

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