



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Adriano Espaillat

## Homeless Man Needing Organ Transplant Given Keys to New Apartment, One Day Before Christmas

ADRIANO ESPAILLAT December 27, 2011

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*Octavio Estevez has been struggling to find housing for over a year, after learning that transplant surgery would require stable housing*

*Mr. Estevez, his wife and two young children were brought to see their new apartment for the first time*

New York, NY – Christmas came a day early today for Octavio Estevez and his family, who were today presented with the keys to a new apartment after over a year in the shelter system. Mr. Estevez's case recently gained prominence with reports on his life-and-death

struggle with regulations for city housing and organ transplants.

The new apartment is within 369 Edgecombe Avenue, a building recently acquired by the Community League of the Heights(CLOTH) and TNS Development Group, who are in the process of turning it into affordable housing. Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez and State Senator Adriano Espaillat worked with elected officials across the city, including Speaker Christine Quinn and Public Advocate Bill De Blasio, to turn one of the apartments into a home for the Estevez family. As a result of this support, CLOTH was able to successfully get approval from the Department of Housing, Preservation and Development(HPD) to move the Estevez family in early, finishing up necessary construction in the apartment over the Christmas holiday.

Mr. Estevez's struggle began when, after being forced to quit his job because of health problems, he was unable to pay his rent, leaving him, his wife and two children homeless. Mr. Estevez, who has end-stage renal disease and is in dire need of a kidney transplant, was told he would need stable housing in order to receive the surgery. New York-Presbyterian Hospital has agreed to keep Mr. Estevez on the transplant waiting list, and moving into stable housing will guarantee he is able to go through the surgery when an organ is available.

"It's beautiful to be able to finally see Mr. Estevez and his family have a home to call their own" said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez**. "However, if a man who worked hard his whole life has to worry about becoming homeless if he gets sick, then we have a broken system. I hope that just as elected officials, city agencies and community groups worked together to find Mr. Estevez a home, we can continue to work to improve affordable housing options for all New Yorkers."

New York State Senator Adriano Espaillat said: "It shouldn't take a Christmas miracle for New Yorkers in dire need to get housing. We're thrilled to partner with the Community

League of The Heights, the Department of Housing Preservation and Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez to help arrange housing for Octavio Estevez and his family, making sure he'll be able to get the life-saving transplant he desperately needs."said **State Senator Adriano Espaillat (D – Manhattan/Bronx)**.

"It's an immense relief that Mr. Estevez will receive the stable housing he and his family need. They will continue to be in our thoughts and prayers this Christmas. I'm proud my office could work with Council Member Rodriguez, Senator Espaillat and fellow officials to help them in this time of need," said **Public Advocate Bill de Blasio**. "Providing a clear path to stable housing must be our objective for each of the thousands of the New Yorkers living in City shelters."

"We were approached by our partner on this project, CLOTH, about Mr. Estevez's situation late Thursday afternoon and we were able to get our workers started by 8:00 a.m. Friday, Christmas Eve morning. This is what the season is about, lending a hand and helping out others. We would like to thank Council Member Rodriguez, State Senator Espaillat and Assemblymember Linares for their efforts in bringing this wonderful project to fruition" said **Samuel Gaccione, Executive Vice President for Development, of TNS Development Group**.

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