



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## Senator Hoylman Helps Double NY State Aid for Homeless Kids

BRAD HOYLMAN March 31, 2015

| ISSUE: **YOUTH, SHELTERS**



*Campaign Launched in February Wins Additional \$2.1 Million for Youth Shelters*

*Senator Enlisted Support of Singer Miley Cyrus on Social Media*

*Hoylman: "New funding reverses years of cuts that have forced thousands of New York kids to sleep on the streets"*

NEW YORK – Last night the New York State Legislature voted to include \$4.5 million for homeless youth shelters in the 2015-16 budget, \$2.1 million more than previous years and the first appreciable increase in funding for such shelters since 2008.

The new funding is the culmination of efforts by Senator Brad Hoylman, who enlisted the support of [singer Miley Cyrus](#), along with members of the New York State Assembly, the Empire State Pride Agenda, the Coalition for Homeless Youth, the Covenant House and the Ali Forney Center.

In February, Senator Hoylman and the coalition of elected officials and advocates [launched a campaign](#) called #5000TooMany, to draw attention to data showing kids in New York were turned away from homeless youth shelters more than 5,000 times a year because of overcrowding. At Senator Hoylman's suggestion, singer Miley Cyrus, a longtime homeless and LGBT youth advocate, sent a letter to Governor Cuomo and legislative leaders in support of the campaign and posted it [on her Instagram account](#), receiving a quarter million hits and helping raise awareness of the issue during budget negotiations.

**State Senator Brad Hoylman (D-Manhattan) said:** "The new funding reverses years of cuts that have forced thousands of New York kids to sleep on the streets. As a result, we'll help expand the safety net for homeless kids, many of whom are ostracized by their families because they're LGBTQ or forced to flee unsafe situations at home. I'm grateful to advocates like Miley Cyrus, the Empire State Pride Agenda, the Coalition for Homeless Youth, and Assembly members Linda Rosenthal and Andrew Hevesi for help making this happen and I commend Governor Cuomo and legislative leaders in the Assembly and Senate for making this a priority in the budget."

**Empire State Pride Agenda Executive Director Nathan M. Schaefer said:** "We're grateful to Senator Hoylman, Senator Avella, Assembly Member Rosenthal and Assembly Member Hevesi for leading the efforts in the legislature to make our kids a priority in this year's budget. We also commend Governor Cuomo Speaker Heastie, and Senate Leaders Skelos and Klein for defending the funding increase during budget negotiations. This is the first appreciable increase in funding for runaway and homeless youth since 2008 and represents

years of advocacy. As a result, fewer kids will be forced to fend for themselves on New York's streets or to resort to survival sex just to find a warm place to sleep at night."

**Jim Bolas, Executive Director of the Coalition for Homeless Youth, said:** "This increase in funding for homeless and runaway youth will greatly enhance and create the desperately needed emergency beds and support services at our programs, from the most rural to the most urban of communities across New York State, that have been working desperately to best serve homeless youth at risk."

Since 2008, funding for homeless youth shelters had been cut from \$6.3 million to \$2.3 million – a 66 percent decrease, when accounting for inflation. At the same time, according to the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, the number of annual instances of kids turned away from specialized youth shelters skyrocketed by nearly tenfold -- from 573 to over 5,000. This winter alone, shelter providers across New York have refused entry to at least 400 children because of a lack of beds.

New funding allocated in the 2015 budget will provide homeless youth shelters with new resources to create beds and help alleviate overcrowding in shelters throughout the state.

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