



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

Legislators, Advocates Renew Call for \$100B in Federal Rent Relief, \$915B for States & Localities

[Brian Kavanagh](#)

July 17, 2020

ISSUE:

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COMMITTEE:

- [Housing, Construction and Community Development](#)



On July 17, 2020, Senator Kavanagh joined the NY Housing Conference and hundreds of colleagues and advocates, urging the leaders of the U.S. Congress to fund \$100 billion in rental assistance for households impacted by COVID-19 and \$915 billion to maintain critical services and balance the budgets of state and local governments. Their letter renewed the call Senator Kavanagh had led in mid-April 2020 for a similar commitment of rental assistance funding. The text of the letter is below; the original may be viewed via the link above.

July 17, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader McCarthy and
Minority Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we call on Congress to fund \$100 billion in rental assistance for households impacted by COVID-19 and \$915 billion to keep state and local governments funded, in order to continue critical public programs.

With widespread job loss and more than 30,000 dead in our state, the virus has taken a devastating toll on New York State's communities and its economy, with low-income communities and Black and Latino households bearing a disproportionate share of the health and economic harms. Prior to this health crisis, one out of every three renter households were already paying more than 30% of their income on housing in New York. While enhanced unemployment assistance and eviction moratoriums have aided many renters, these households are facing risk of eviction when benefits end before the economy has even partially recovered.

This pandemic has underscored the importance of housing to the safety and well-being of Americans. Families and individuals have been asked to socially distance to prevent the spread of the virus, and they can only do that with safe and stable housing. This is why rental assistance should be viewed as a critical component of the public health response to fighting this deadly virus. Without it, families will be forced to double up in overcrowded conditions or face homelessness. These outcomes will impede efforts to control COVID-19.

But because of this crisis, many Americans are at risk of losing their housing. As businesses have shuttered to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus, millions of Americans have lost their jobs or seen their hours cut. NYU Furman Center estimates that nearly 1.2 million renter households in NY State have suffered COVID-19 related job loss and that half of these households are low-income. Assuming 25% job recovery, they project that in August (once enhanced benefits expire), the rental assistance need among low-income households in New York State will be approximately \$391 million per month. Without government assistance, many will be unable to afford their rent.

However, revenues have declined dramatically for city and state governments, and they will be unable to provide the needed housing assistance. At risk are also a wide array of programs such as education, social services and affordable housing.

As leaders of the House and Senate, it is in your power to take action. Together, the following organizations and elected officials call on you to act with urgency to include critical funding for rental assistance and aid to state and local governments in the next federal funding package.

Sincerely,

Rachel Fee
Executive Director
New York Housing Conference

In partnership, the following 51 New York elected officials, 5 former housing agency leaders and 98 organizations jointly sign this letter:

Elected Officials

Jumaane Williams, New York City Public Advocate
Eric Adams, Brooklyn Borough President
Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Ruben Diaz Jr., Bronx Borough President
New York State Senator Monica Martinez, SD 3
New York State Senator James Gaughran, SD 5
New York State Senator Kevin Thomas, SD 6
New York State Senator Anna Kaplan, SD 7
New York State Senator John Liu, SD 11
New York State Senator Michael Gianaris, SD 12
New York State Senator Leroy Comrie, SD 14
New York State Senator Julia Salazar, SD 18
New York State Senator Kevin Parker, SD 21
New York State Senator Andrew Gounardes, SD 22
New York State Senator Diane Savino, SD 23
New York State Senator Velmanette Montgomery, SD 25
New York State Senator Brian Kavanagh, SD 26
New York State Senator Brad Hoylman, SD 27
New York State Senator Liz Krueger, SD 28

New York State Senator Brian Benjamin, SD 30
New York State Senator Luis Sepúlveda, SD 32
New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera, SD 33
New York State Senator Alessandra Biaggi, SD 34
New York State Senator Shelly Mayer, SD 37
New York State Senator David Carlucci, SD 38
New York State Senator James Skoufis, SD 39
New York State Senator Rachel May, SD 53
New York State Senator Timothy Kennedy, SD 63
New York State Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, District 28
New York State Assembly Member Brian Barnwell, District 30
New York State Assembly Member Aravella Simotas, District 36
New York State Assembly Member Steven Cymbrowitz, District 45
New York State Assembly Member Mathylde Frontus, District 46
New York State Assembly Member Walter Mosley, District 57
New York State Assembly Member Richard Gottfried, District 75
New York State Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright, District 76
New York State Assembly Member Karines Reyes, District 87
New York State Assembly Member Donna Lupardo, District 123
New York State Assembly Member Pamela Hunter, District 128
New York State Assembly Member Harry Bronson, District 138
New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, District 3
New York City Council Member Carlina Rivera, District 2
New York City Council Member Keith Powers, District 4
New York City Council Member Diana Ayala, District 8
New York City Council Member Barry Grodenchik, District 23
New York City Council Member Antonio Reynoso, District 34
New York City Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr., District 36
New York City Council Member Carlos Menchaca, District 38
New York City Council Member Brad Lander, District 39
New York City Council Member Kalman Yager, District 44
New York City Council Member Debi Rose, District 49

Former Housing Agency Leaders

Shaun Donovan, Former HUD Secretary & OMB Director

Marc Jahr, Former New York City Housing Development Corporation President

Gary Rodney, Former New York City Housing Development Corporation President

Mathew Wambua, Former New York City Dept of Housing Preservation & Development Commissioner

Rafael Cestero, Former New York City Dept of Housing Preservation & Development Commissioner

Organizations

334 East 92nd Street Tenant Association

The Actors Fund

American Academy of Housing and Communities

The Arker Companies

Ascendant Neighborhood Development Corporation

Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development

Benchmark Title Agency LLC

Bernheimer Architecture

Breaking Ground

Bright Power

Brownsville Partnership

CAMBA, Inc.

Carroll Gardens Association, Inc.

Center for New York City Neighborhoods

Central Park Gardens Tenants' Association

Chhaya Community Development Corporation

Citizens' Committee for Children of New York

Citizens Housing and Planning Council

Coalition for the Homeless

Community League of the Heights. Inc

The Community Preservation Corporation

Community Service Society of NY

CREA, LLC

CSH

Curtis + Ginsberg Architects LLP

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation

Dattner Architects

Douglaston Development

Dunn Development Corp.

Enterprise Community Partners

Federal Home Loan Bank of NY
Fifth Avenue Committee
Fordham Bedford Housing Corporation
FPWA
Gateway Housing
Goddard Riverside
Goldstein Hall PLLC
Gotham
Greater Syracuse Tenants Network
Habitat for Humanity New York City
Highbridge Community Development Corp.
Housing Justice for All
Housing Rights Initiative
The Hudson Companies Inc
Hudson River Housing
Human Services Council
IMPACCT Brooklyn
Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing
JOE NYC Corp.
Kinetic Communities Consulting
LeadingAge New York
Legal Aid Society
LISC NYC
LiveOn NY
Low Income Investment Fund
Magnusson Architecture & Planning
MBD Community Housing Corp.
Mega Contracting
Merchants Capital
Metro Futures
MHANY Management Inc.
MLappin & Associates LLC
Mount Vernon United Tenants, Inc.
National Housing Conference
National Panhellenic Council of NYC, INC
Neighbors Helping Neighbors
New Destiny Housing

New York City Housing Partnership
New York Land Bank Association
New York State Association for Affordable Housing
New York State Council of Churches
New York State Rural Housing Coalition, Inc.
Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition
The NRP Group
Pennrose, LLC
Phipps Houses
Power of Two, Project of the Fund for the City of New York
Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY)
Red Hook Initiative
Red Stone Equity Partners
Regional Plan Association
Regions Affordable Housing
Related
RiseBoro Community Partnership
Rockabill
Selfhelp Realty Group
Settlement Housing Fund
SKA Marin
Slate Property Group
St. Catherine's Center for Children
St. Nicks Alliance
Supportive Housing Network of New York
UAI
Urban Builders Collaborative LLC
University Neighborhood Housing Program
Wavecrest Management
Win
YWCA BROOKLYN