



23

**Testimony of Judi Kende
VP and Market Leader
Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.**

**For the New York State
Joint Legislative Public Hearing on
2020-2021 Executive Budget Proposal on Housing
February 5th, 2019**

Good afternoon. My name is Judi Kende, and I am the Vice President and Market Leader for the New York office of Enterprise Community Partners. I am joined today by my colleague Lorraine Collins, our market's Director of Public Policy and External Affairs. Enterprise is a national affordable housing nonprofit whose mission is to create opportunity for low- and moderate- income people through affordable housing in diverse, thriving communities. We invest capital to create and preserve quality affordable homes, reinvest revenues to develop programmatic solutions, and scale these solutions through policy change. Since our New York office opened in 1987, we have helped build or preserve more than 63,000 affordable homes for over 167,000 New Yorkers through capital investments, programmatic initiatives, and policy advocacy. We have committed more than \$3.6 billion in equity, loans and grants to affordable housing and community development in the state and we create and lead groundbreaking programs statewide focused on manufactured homes, community land trusts, land banks, and anti-displacement.

On behalf of Enterprise, we would like to thank the Assembly Housing Committee Chair, Assembly Member Cymbrowitz, and the Chair of the Senate Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development, Senator Kavanagh, as well as Senate Finance Committee Chair Liz Krueger and Assembly Ways and Means Committee Chair Helene E. Weinstein, for the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon. We are pleased to join so many housing providers, advocates and community development groups, echoing similar comments in our industry. We will speak today about several key programs and their funding needs.

Current Five-Year Housing Plan: We applaud the Governor's commitment to fully fund the final year of the State's 5-year housing plan. This year's budget re-appropriation shows the State's ongoing commitment to addressing our ongoing housing crisis and provides potential investors with the confidence to invest in housing developments, knowing that public funding is in place in upcoming years. While funding the current housing plan is a step in the right direction, we join a coalition of affordable housing advocates to call for funding to supplement the final year of the housing plan. While we are pleased to see that funding for the Homeless Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP) was doubled from last year's amount, from \$64 million to \$128 million to support the acquisition, construction or rehabilitation of housing for people experiencing

homelessness, we need to see similar funding increases for other programs related to public housing, supportive housing, senior housing and affordable homeownership.

New Five-Year Housing Plan: As we approach the end of the Five-Year Housing Plan from FY 2018, New York faces the challenge of a production gap. The continuous availability of affordable housing financing resources from the State is necessary for affordable housing developers to maintain a pipeline of affordable housing sites and buildings. We call on the State to adopt a new Five-Year Housing Plan beginning in Fiscal Year 2021-2022, with appropriations for affordable housing preservation, new supportive housing, public housing preservation, rental assistance, affordable homeownership, and rural housing. The state should also enact a requirement that a statewide affordable housing plan with a capital budget be developed and funded at least every five years, to ensure continuous funding for affordable housing long-term.

Source of Income Discrimination: Last year, thanks to your leadership, New York added non-wage income to the State's protected class list, effectively outlawing source of income discrimination, the practice of rejecting a potential tenant because they use non-wage income to pay rent. It will take State resources to effectively enforce the new law and educate tenants, property owners, and real estate professionals. On behalf of the Statewide Source of Income Coalition, we are asking for \$5 million to be allocated each year in perpetuity to enforcement and education efforts to fund the New York State Division of Human Rights, six full-service fair housing groups, and local community-based organizations across the state. This money would support activities like legal services for renters, fair housing testing, and outreach efforts.

Prevailing Wage: For the past year, Enterprise has been working with fellow advocates to respond to prevailing wage legislation and strike the balance between the State's desperate need for new affordable housing, and economic well-being and mobility for workers in our industry. This year's executive budget includes language that expands prevailing wage on State-funded projects, with some significant carveouts for affordable housing. Enterprise looks forward to continuing conversations with legislators this session, particularly regarding racial and gender equity concerns about prevailing wage legislation, as well as a need for a living wage.

Regional Affordable & Fair Housing Roundtable: In 2017, Enterprise co-convened a Regional Affordable and Fair Housing Roundtable in partnership with the Fair Housing Justice Center. The roundtable, comprised of nearly 30 affordable housing, community development, fair housing, for- and nonprofit organizations, set out to educate organizations and identify shared priorities that the affordable and fair housing sectors could advance collectively. In 2019, we debuted the Roundtable's shared policy agenda - *Closing the Divide: Creating Equitable, Inclusive and Affordable Communities*. The Roundtable has developed a set of policy priorities for 2020, related to strengthening tenant protections, justice-involved housing, overcoming land-use barriers, and maximizing density. We look forward to working with the legislature this session on these priorities and discussing other ways to further affordable and fair housing in the New York City region and statewide.



In closing, we would like to thank you again for the opportunity to testify here today and for your continued leadership to address housing issues in New York. Enterprise joins countless groups and communities from every region of the state in asking the Legislature to lead on housing. We are happy to answer any questions, and we look forward to working with you this coming session.

