



Testimony for William J. Simmons, President,

**New York State Public Housing Authority Directors Association (NYSPHADA)
and Executive Director of the Syracuse Housing Authority**

2025 Joint Legislative Budget Hearing

February 27, 2025

Good afternoon. I come before you today to discuss NYSPHADA's budget request for this year.

Over the last several years NYSPHADA has worked closely with our partners in state government (NYS HCR, Governor's Office and Legislature) to urge PHA's to rethink how they rehabilitate public housing stock in need of modernization. Many of our authorities are considering RAD projects and pursuing innovative alternatives to repurposing their facilities.

NYSPHADA is very grateful to the legislature and executive for the incredible support in the past several budget cycles to help modernize and rehabilitate our aging facilities, including last year's \$75 million. Over the last several years 30-40 of our members have utilized this funding to pursue modernization projects. We are expecting more housing authorities to pursue major upgrades and Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) projects in the coming two years. Therefore, we respectfully request that the legislature and executive set aside \$75 million in this year's budget for for substantial or moderate rehabilitation and/or the demolition and replacement through new construction of public housing authority developments outside of New York City. This allocation would be the second half of last year's request of \$150 million. We think that by every measure, this public housing modernization has been a huge win for all of New York State!

We have taken advantage of over \$250 million in the last five years to help public housing authorities across New York State modernize their facilities. We want to

continue the momentum for our public housing authorities and provide the highest quality of life for all of our residents. Several of our authorities have undergone renovations utilizing New York State tax incentive programs including the following:

Albany
Amsterdam
Auburn
Buffalo
Freeport
Geneva
Glens Falls
Greenburgh
Herkimer
Ithaca
Kingston
New Rochelle
North Hempstead
Rochester
Rome
Saratoga Springs
Schenectady
Syracuse
Troy
Utica
White Plains
Yonkers

In addition to our budget request we want to address an issue pertaining to the rising cost of insurance for public housing authorities. This is a major issue crippling our public housing authorities. Many of our authorities have seen nearly 40 % increase in insurance costs (Please see graph below for summary). We are very encouraged to see that the Governor included funding for technical assistance for affordable housing developers who are interested in undertaking risk mitigation to lower their insurance premiums. NYSPHADA strongly supports this initiative. In addition, we are partnering with NYSAFAH and other industry partners to ask for \$500K in funding for a new “ NYS Captive Insurance Statewide Alternative Risk Feasibility Study for Affordable Housing” to undertake a market analysis on providing captive insurance in Upstate New York. We are also asking for \$3 million in capital funding to be used by affordable and public housing to help offset initial costs of joining a captive.

NYSPHADA Insurance Premiums by Year

