



THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER  
ELECTIONS  
COMMITTEES  
BANKS  
CONSUMER PROTECTION  
CORPORATIONS, AUTHORITIES AND  
COMMISSIONS  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION  
INVESTIGATIONS AND GOVERNMENT  
OPERATIONS  
JUDICIARY  
SOCIAL SERVICES

March 10, 2018

The Honorable John Flanagan  
Temporary President, NYS Senate  
Room 330, State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12247

The Honorable Jeffrey D. Klein  
Independent Democratic Conference Leader  
Legislative Office Building, Room 913  
Albany, NY 12247

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
Democratic Caucus Leader  
Legislative Office Building, Room 907  
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Legislative Leaders:

We write to seek your support to restore \$2 million and invest an additional \$1 million in the FY 2018-19 budget to Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC) and Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NNORC), which provide comprehensive services for older adults in New York. Last year, the New York State Legislature awarded an additional \$2 million for the expansion and preservation of the NORC program. However, the \$2 million from the Legislature was not delivered to the New York State Office of Aging (NYSOFA).

NORCs are age-integrated housing developments in neighborhoods not originally established for seniors but that are now home to a significant number of older individuals. N/NORCs have been woven into the fabric of many communities and provide more than just integral services to our aging population. The NORC program enables older adults to age in their own homes rather than in costly institutional settings. N/NORCs play a pivotal role in supporting successful health outcomes for our seniors by keeping them healthy, active, and social. Funding for the NORC program would not only go toward sustaining these programs and services, but expanding them to meet the needs of New York's rapidly-aging population.



In 2016, legislation was updated to allow for the expansion of the NORC program. The FY 2016-17 budget amended the NORC-Supportive Service Program (NORC-SSP) to allow NORCs to request and receive up to \$200,000 for programing, a \$50,000 increase from the previous limit. In December 2016, NYSOFA issued a Request for Application (RFA), and in August 2017 awards were announced to applicants. During this procurement process, nine existing NORC programs were not awarded contracts, leaving these communities scrambling to connect seniors with supportive services elsewhere. In October 2017, NYSOFA rescinded this RFA and announced its intention to continue funding for the currently contracted N/NORCs while revoking the funds that were awarded to three new programs.

NYSOFA's initial decision to cut nine programs and create three new programs in the RFA, and then subsequently rescind them caused understandable confusion for NORC programs. To avoid a similar situation from emerging in the future, we must ensure that a new RFA has sufficient, stable funding to both preserve existing NORC programs and expand the number of N/NORCs in New York State. Restoring the \$2 million allocated for FY 2017-18 and investing an additional \$1 million will grant stability to the 29 currently funded NORC programs and provide an opportunity to expand their programing and services. N/NORC contracts span five years, and it is crucial that NYSOFA has secure funding to cover the duration of N/NORC contracts. Furthermore, this funding will allow for the establishment of at least 15 new NORC programs throughout New York State. In the previous RFA process, which was later withdrawn, there were several programs that were denied funding. With this funding from the Legislature, NYSOFA can better ensure that every N/NORC that applies and qualifies for funding receive the money they need to grow their programs to better suit the needs of the seniors they serve.

We have a rapidly aging population across our state. NORC programs afford seniors a sense of independence and familiarity associated with community-based programs that are irreplaceable. In addition, N/NORCS act as preventative care, keeping our seniors at home and in their communities. If the state wishes to facilitate the expansion of NORC programs, NYSOFA must have adequate funding available to commit to helping these programs grow. Moreover, there are existing quality programs for older adults that are thriving which could be added to the overall N/NORC pool and need increased funding as social services face cuts.

These health and human services are vital to communities, and we urge you to support New York State's aging population by preserving and expanding NORC programs.

Sincerely,



Brian Kavanagh  
State Senator  
26<sup>th</sup> District



cc: The following Senate members join in this request:

**Signatories:**

Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.

Senator Marisol Alcantara

Senator Tony Avella

Senator Jamaal T. Bailey

Senator Neil D. Breslin

Senator Leroy Comrie

Senator Martin Malavé Dilan

Senator Jesse Hamilton

Senator Brad Hoylman

Senator Velmanette Montgomery

Senator Kevin Parker

Senator Gustavo Rivera

Senator Diane J. Savino

Senator Jose Serrano

