



ANDREW HEVESI
Assemblyman 28th District
Queens County

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIRMAN
Social Services Committee

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March 19, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Governor Cuomo,

We write to draw your attention to an urgent matter, and ask that New York State take all available measures to protect vulnerable New Yorkers during the COVID-19 outbreak.

As you are fully aware, New Yorkers who are experiencing homelessness, or who are on the verge of experiencing homelessness, face daunting obstacles in their efforts to secure and retain stable, affordable housing, and as we all know, housing is healthcare. In times of crisis, these obstacles grow exponentially, and we therefore ask that additional assistance be made available for this population.

New York State must:

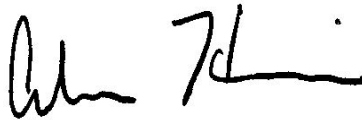
- Add \$2 million to the “Emergency Needs of the Homeless” line in the final state budget - bringing the total to \$3 million. These funds are essential to expand services, including additional food assistance from the Coalition for the Homeless at a time when soup kitchens are closing down, eviction prevention services which are vital beyond the current time limited eviction moratorium, crisis staff, and other essential resources.
- Immediately authorize basic needs allowances for individuals in shelters and on the streets, including for those who are presently receiving the much smaller personal needs allowances.

- Immediately suspend local requirements to pay shelter rent or participate in mandatory savings programs or program fee agreements as a condition of receiving shelter.

In times of crisis, we must ensure that our most vulnerable neighbors have access to vital crisis resources, and we must support our providers on the front lines with resources to adequately serve them.

Thank you for your consideration, and thank you for your efforts to protect all New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Hevesi'.

Andrew Hevesi, Chair
New York State Assembly Committee on Social
Services

cc: The Honorable Carl E. Heastie, Speaker of the New York State Assembly
The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Majority Leader of the New York State Senate