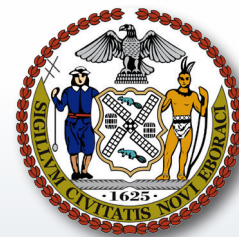




**Senator Jeffrey D. Klein &
Councilman Ritchie Torres**



Independent Democratic Conference

NYCHA 2020:

**Revitalizing New York City's
Crumbling Public Housing**



March 2016

Introduction

The Independent Democratic Conference unveiled a plan to revitalize the New York City Housing Authority in its 2015 Invest New York agenda. After decades of divestment at every level of government, the critically important policy plan aimed to cure a state of emergency at NYCHA. Last year, the IDC successfully ensured that the New York State appropriated \$100 million in JP Morgan settlement funds for NYCHA repairs. Unfortunately, pervasive mistrust of the agency's ability to use money effectively meant that these funds were appropriated in a manner that lessened their usefulness to make critical repairs.

NYCHA is like a small city with 179,000 public housing units. It represents 13.5% of all rent-regulated apartments in New York City that are affordable to low- and very low-income tenants. But with NYCHA buildings' fast-paced deterioration, the city's most affordable housing could be lost to disrepair and neglect. These conditions further exacerbate the city's affordable housing crisis. Revitalizing NYCHA not only requires increased funding for capital repairs and upgrades, but reforms to NYCHA's operating procedure and increasing oversight of NYCHA's performance by New York City elected officials.

This year, the IDC wants the state to appropriate \$100 million for NYCHA capital needs in a manner that guarantees funds will be used to repair the most serious problems and include NYCHA management reforms. In addition, we need to increase oversight of NYCHA's activities, particularly by giving the New York City Council additional powers to compel the Authority to provide information. The IDC's plan would also provide future sources of capital funds for NYCHA repairs through a new capital revenue stream and create a system which would bring private funds and expertise for NYCHA repairs.

As part of its advocacy for NYCHA revitalization, the IDC, in partnership with the Office of City Council Public Housing Chair Ritchie Torres surveyed over 230 NYCHA residents across the city regarding building conditions. The findings spotlight abysmal living conditions and reinforce the need for city and state stewardship of one of our most critical housing resources.

Residents indicated unsafe, dirty and poorly maintained buildings. Over 60% of respondents reported something broken or damaged in their apartment at the time surveyed. A similar percentage of residents reported having issues with mold at some point during their tenancy. Nearly half of respondents stated that the conditions in their own apartment made them feel unsafe and just over half of respondents stated that the conditions in their housing development made them feel unsafe.

Although many tenants take pride in their homes and communities and nearly all pay their rent on time, residents see issues go unaddressed for months and years at a time. NYCHA residents deserve better.

Key Findings:

- 50% of Households reported having a member who suffers from Asthma, and 30% reported members with additional breathing problems.
- 19% of respondents reported having mold issues at the time they were surveyed. 61% reported having had issues with mold at some point in their tenancy.
- 63% of respondents reported something being damaged or broken in their apartment at the time they were surveyed.
- 51% of respondents felt unsafe for themselves or their families due to the physical conditions of their buildings, while 48 % felt unsafe due to the conditions of their own apartments.
- When we asked tenants to rate NYCHA's delivery of services, 75% of those willing to answer rated NYCHA's delivery of services as unsatisfactory or poor.

Housing Conditions at the New York City Housing Authority

**Table 2 – Summary of Deficient Dwelling Units
by Housing Type in 2011**

All Housing Types	15.0%
Owners occupied	4.8%
Market Rate Rental	10.6%
Rent Regulated	24.4%
NYCHA	34.8%

Source: NYC Comptroller's Office from New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey microdata

In 1934 Mayor Fiorello La Guardia established the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), making it the very first public housing authority in the United States. The very first development opened in 1935 on Avenue A and Third Street, the appropriately named First Houses . Today, NYCHA is

by far the largest public housing authority in the country and its approximately 179,000 units constitute over 5% of the City's entire housing stock, which numbers 3.35 million units¹. These 179,000 units also comprise 13.5% of all the housing units in New York City under some form of rent regulation². Over 400,000 low-income individuals New Yorkers reside in these units³. The de Blasio Administration's recent report on his new housing plan shows that there are only 425,000 housing units in the city, including NYCHA's units, that are truly affordable to low-income New Yorkers⁴ but this is less than half of what is needed since there are over 979,000 low-income households in New York City. The already pressing housing crisis for low-income New Yorkers will only become worse if NYCHA units become unlivable due to poor conditions.

Unfortunately a recent report issued by the Office of the NYC Comptroller shows that the overall level of repair of NYCHA units has deteriorated significantly in the last decade. The

¹ Information on size of NYC housing stock available in: 2014 Housing Supply Report, New York City Rent Guidelines Board (May 29, 2014). Report available at: http://nycrgb.org/downloads/research/pdf_reports/14HSR.pdf

² Ibid, pg. 4

³ "About NYCHA fact Sheet" available at: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycha/html/about/factsheet.shtml>

⁴ Housing New York, a Five-Borough, Ten Year Plan. The City of New York, pg. 18. Available at: http://www.nyc.gov/html/housing/assets/downloads/pdf/housing_plan.pdf

Comptroller's report⁵ lays out a litany of issues with maintenance and repairs at NYCHA. The Comptroller's report examined seven different categories of possible housing deficiencies between 2002 and 2011, which is the last year for which comprehensive data is available. While the Comptroller's data shows that all other types of housing did see some increases in deficiencies over that period, none of the other stocks of housing have seen the same level of deterioration as NYCHA's stock. This data accumulated by the city substantiates statements by NYCHA's own residents about the poor conditions of their apartments.

Survey Methodology

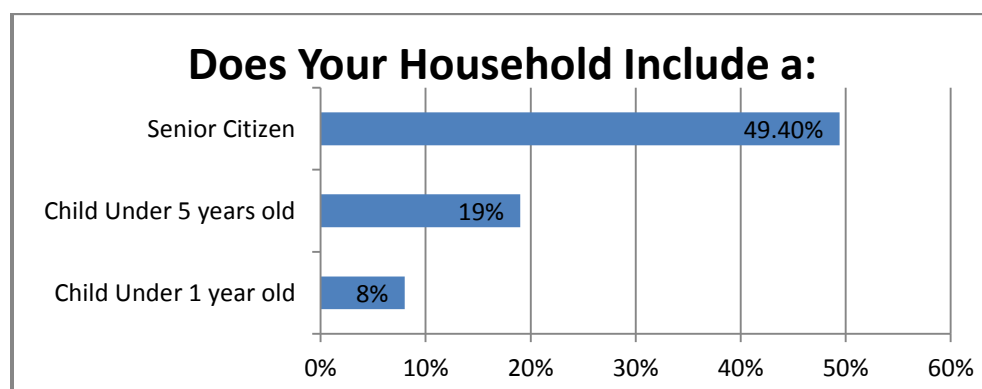
The IDC designed a 28 question survey for NYCHA residents about the physical conditions in their apartments and buildings. The survey asked about these conditions, NYCHA's responsiveness to complaints, and how the agency communicates with tenants. Finally, we asked residents about NYCHA's delivery of services and whether the conditions of their apartments and of their developments make them feel safe.

The survey was administered in person by staff members of the New York State Senate and New York City Council to residents in all five boroughs. Staff members were also able to capture photos of the deplorable conditions of various apartments and developments. Other residents were surveyed over the phone. In total we surveyed 231 NYCHA residents .

Survey Results and Data:

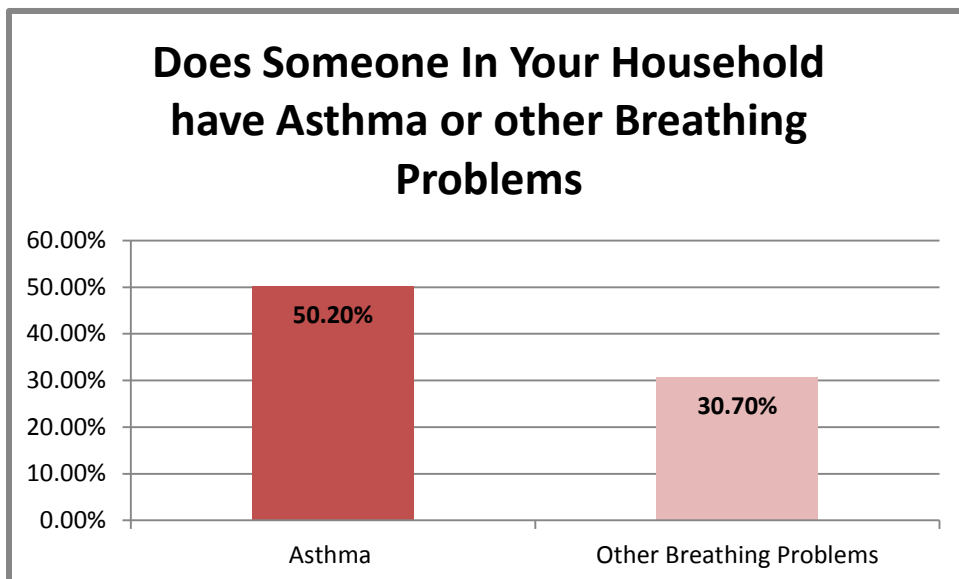
Demographics

Seventy-three percent of respondents lived in a household with three or fewer residents. Twenty-two percent of respondents lived in households with four to seven members. Two percent of respondents lived in households with eight or more members and 3% of respondents failed to provide a household size. Nearly half of respondents reported that a senior was part of their household, while 19% reported a child under five-years-old and 8% reported an infant under one-years-old in the household.



⁵ How New York Lives: An Analysis of the City's Housing Maintenance Conditions, Office of the NYC Comptroller, Bureau of Fiscal and Budget Studies. (Sept. 2014), available at: http://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/How_New_York_Lives.pdf

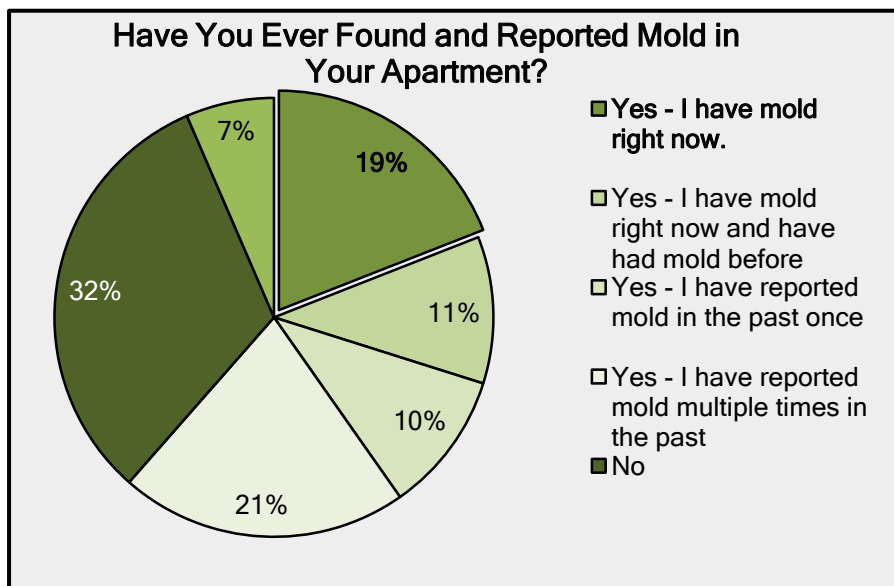
Shockingly, half of respondents reported having a household member with asthma, and 30% reported having members with other breathing problems. In New York City's poorest neighborhoods, asthma is a leading cause of emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and school absences.⁶



The Condition of Apartments

Mold

Residents were asked about the conditions of their own apartments, whether anything inside was damaged or broken and if they had mold issues. Almost one fifth of respondents reported having mold at the time they were surveyed. Only 32% reported never having had any issues with mold.



Of those residents who reported having mold in their apartments at the time surveyed or previously, almost one (18.8%) reported that NYCHA maintenance failed to respond to their complaint at all. The most common response was that it took NYCHA maintenance between two weeks and a month to respond to a mold

⁶ <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/asthma.page>

issue. The next most common response was that it took maintenance more than an entire month to respond. Given the seriousness of mold issues and related health impacts, these findings are frightening and unacceptable. When we remember that half of respondents reported having a household member with asthma, these answers indicate that NYCHA is putting the safety of its residents in danger by failing to respond to mold complaints in an expeditious manner.

The staff conducting these surveys was able to capture multiple pictures of the severe mold conditions plaguing residents of NYCHA apartments, such as the ones on the following pages:

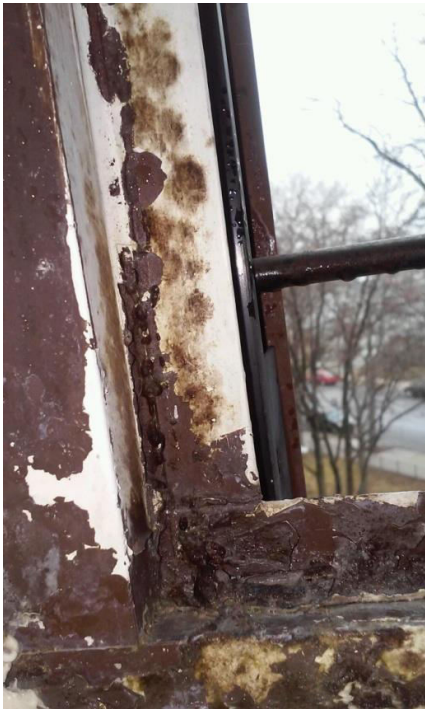


Image of mold at South Beach Houses in Staten Island



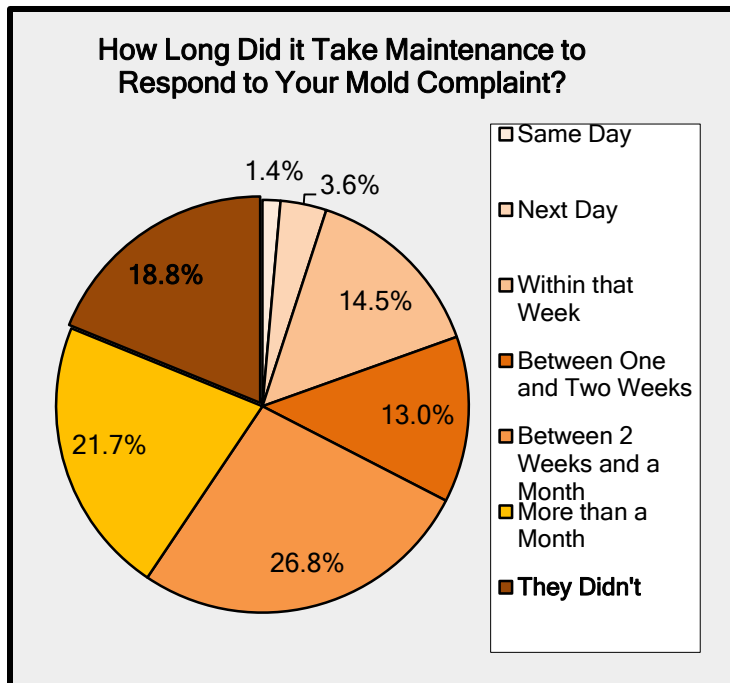
Image of Mold at Throggs Neck Houses in The Bronx



Image of Mold at South Beach Houses in Staten Island

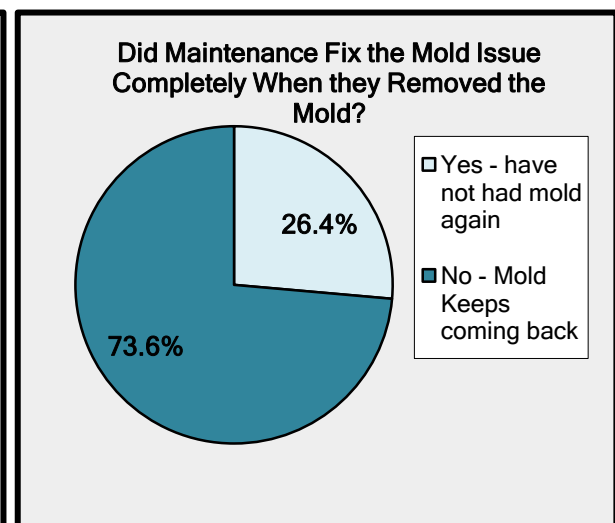
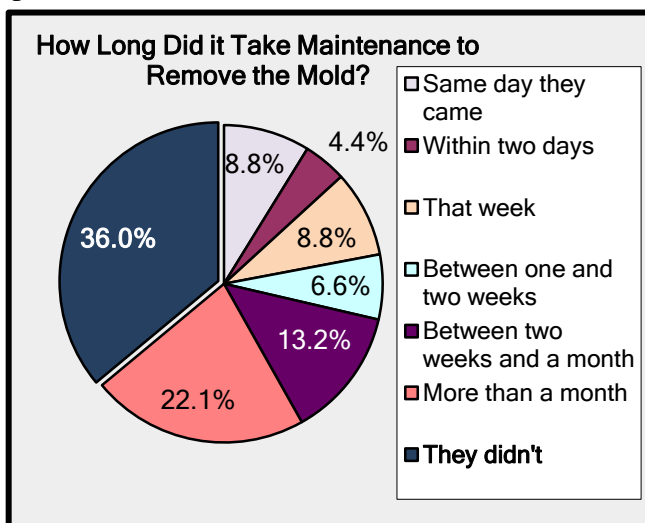


Image of Mold at Throggs Neck Houses in The Bronx



Residents report that NYCHA is not only slow to respond to complaints about mold but that they also provide inadequate remediation. More than one fifth reported that it took maintenance more than a month to remove the mold once they finally arrived. More than a third of respondents with mold issues reported that even when maintenance finally showed up, they failed to remove the mold. These responses highlight the need to revise remediation protocol. Respondents also report that NYCHA did a poor job of fixing the underlying problems that lead to mold; almost three quarters of respondents

reported that mold returned after NYCHA maintenance left.

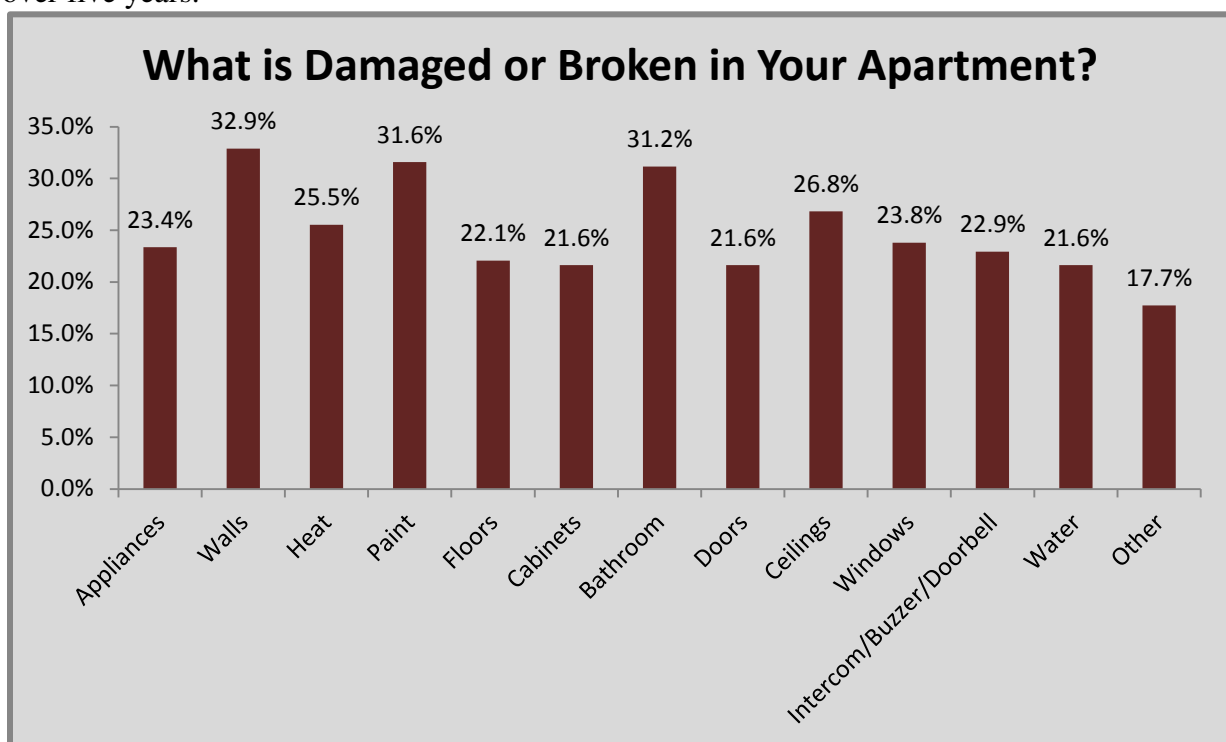
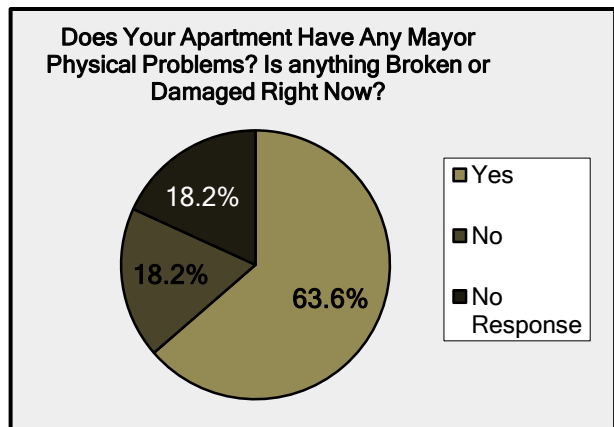


The Structural Integrity of NYCHA Apartments

Residents were asked about other physical issues with their apartments beyond mold. At the time of the survey, 63.6% of respondents reported that there was something broken or damaged in their apartment.

We asked residents what the physical problems were out of a list of 12 possible common apartment issues, as well as asking them for how long these problems existed. While, each potential apartment issue was identified by 20 percent or more of respondents, the most commonly reported issues were problems with paint (32% of respondents), the walls themselves (33% of respondents), and in resident's bathrooms (31%).

There are some significant variances on how long physical issues remain a problem, according to residents. In most of the 12 categories, residents reported having had their issue for more than one entire year. The exceptions to this were problems with the doors or water issues. Only 1% of respondents reported having had a problem with their apartment door for over five years. The worst performing categories were issues with paint, cabinets, and the intercom system. Of all respondents, 11.7% reported these three components were damaged or broken for over five years.



Staff administering the survey were also able to collect images of problems with individual



apartments that highlight the difficult conditions that many NYCHA residents face daily within their own apartments. The image to the left shows a pipe above a resident's showerhead. As the image shows, the paint around the pipe has chipped badly and is flaking off both the wall and ceiling of the bathroom. Surveyers observed numerous instances of problems with the paint, walls, and bathrooms inside apartments, findings consistent with resident's responses to the survey.



These images were collected by staff conducting the survey, and highlight the problems with bathrooms, walls, and chipping paint NYCHA tenants deal with on a daily basis, as well as the half measures that NYCHA maintenance often resorts to.



In addition to the 12 categories presented to residents, several residents reported other concerns, like problems with vermin such as mice, roaches, and even mosquitoes, as well as clogged pipes that maintenance does not get fixed. One respondent stated that she had to pay for new appliances and a floor in her kitchen out of her own pocket, as well as painting herself. Another resident reported fixing their own walls. One resident reported that their carbon monoxide detector, an important and mandated piece of safety equipment, had been left broken for more than two weeks.

Stories from NYCHA residents surveyed:

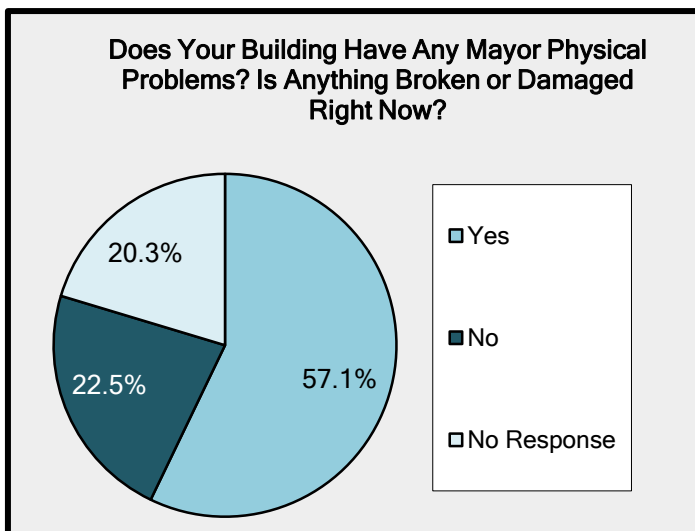
"Every time a storm hits, paint flakes from the ceiling and I constantly clean up so my children don't eat the chips. That problem hasn't been fixed. When NYCHA emergency technicians recently came to my apartment to fix an electrical problem, they left a mess of exposed wiring." – **Mother of two autistic children**

"My mom asked NYCHA to fix our leaking ceiling and she died before they ever repaired it properly. They came several times to temporarily patch it up, but in her lifetime it never fixed the problem." – **Anonymous resident.**

"I went out and purchased paint because the cheap paint NYCHA used is not okay for my child. NYCHA also refused to replaced my old appliances and so I also replaced them on my own. Things are so bad because of the broken intercom system that I have to lower a key down from my window to people visiting me so they can enter the building." **Mother with an asthmatic child.**

The Structural Integrity of NYCHA Buildings:

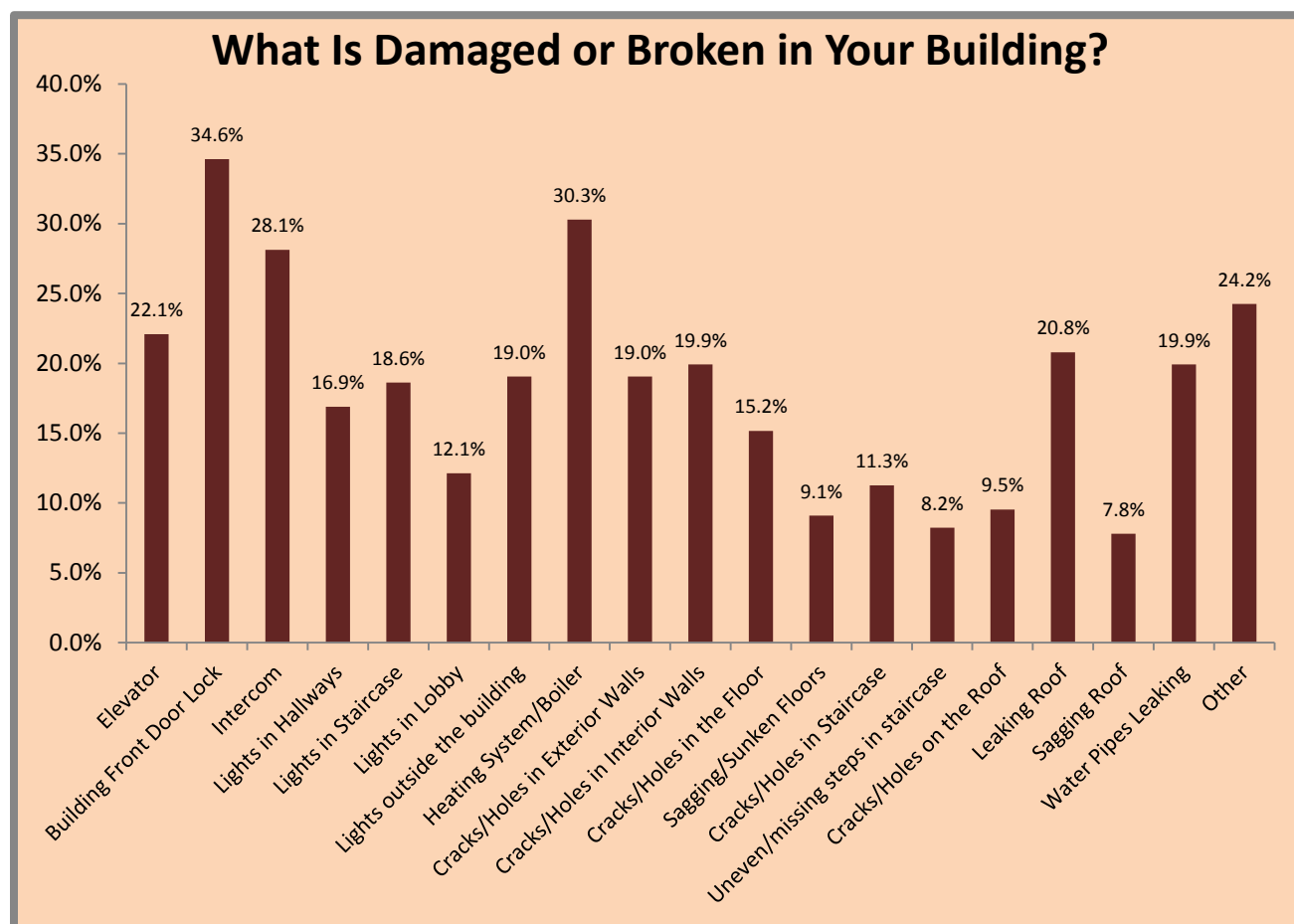
The survey also inquired about the conditions of the residents' building. Similar to the question about conditions in individual apartments, we asked residents to report any significant physical problems they knew of that affect the public areas of their buildings or the very buildings themselves.



A slightly smaller percentage of residents reported current problems with their building than reported current problems in their individual units. Even then, a clear majority of residents reported that their buildings had a current major physical problem.

The most commonly reported problems involved the front doors of buildings, the heating system/boiler, and the intercoms, all of which were reported by more than a quarter of respondents. Problems with the elevators and water problems, both from

leaking roofs and from leaking pipes were also commonly reported concerns, with approximately 20% of respondents reporting them. In terms of how long these problems last there was a wide variety of responses.



When asked how long it takes to resolve a building wide issue when residents report the issue that seemed to take the longest was the intercom systems – with a vast majority of respondents who reported problems with the intercom system indicating that the problem had been ongoing for at least a year. Almost half of residents who reported a problem with the intercom system stated that it had been ongoing for more than five years, and a full 75% said that the intercoms had been damaged for more than a year. This is similar to residents’ responses regarding the intercom in their own apartments. Given that an individual apartment’s intercom is connected to the building wide intercom system, it makes sense that residents would report similar timeframes for the two components. Problems with water leaks from both roofs and pipes were similarly reported to be ongoing for more than a year by over 70% of respondents who reported these to be problems.

In addition to complaints about those components we specifically asked residents about, 24% of respondents had concerns about other issues in their buildings, such as broken mailboxes. A common issue reported by residents was the general cleanliness of buildings, including issues with garbage, graffiti, or pests such as mice or roaches. Some even reported urine and feces

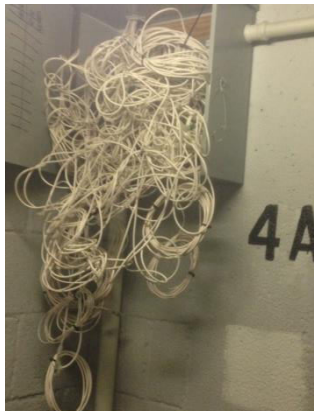
being issues. Problems with the front doors and the intercom system also lead to concerns about trespassers and individuals getting into the building who shouldn't be inside.



Stained walls in a hallway



Additional exposed electrical wiring



Exposed electrical wiring



Damaged and possibly moldy ceiling tiles in hallway



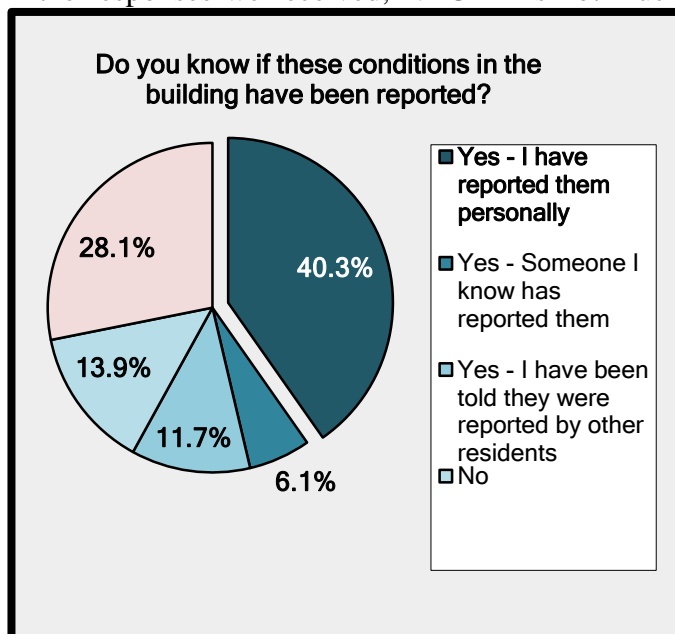
Peeling paint on exterior wall



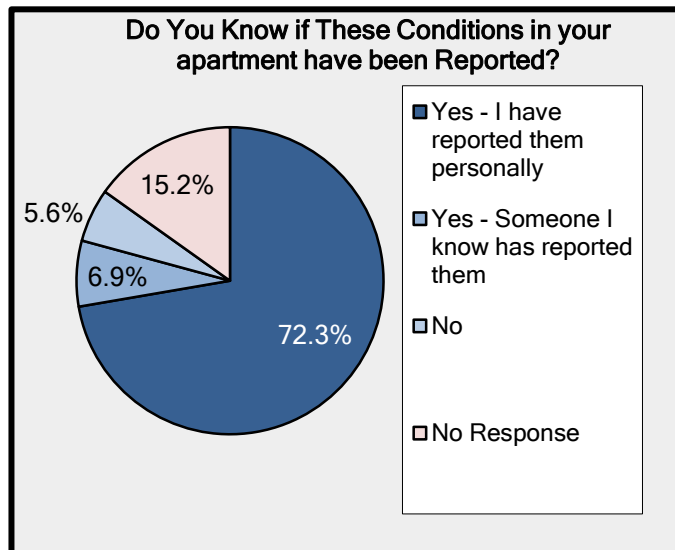
Graffiti on staircase doorway

Resident's Interactions with NYCHA

We asked residents about their interactions with NYCHA when trying to deal with physical problems in their apartments and buildings. We already covered resident's reports of serious failings on the part of NYCHA when having to deal with mold issues. Unfortunately, based on the responses we received, NYCHA is not much better about dealing with residents' concerns



about problems in their own apartments or in their buildings. We asked residents whether the problems in their apartments had been reported. Almost three-fourths of respondents (72%) reported personally informing NYCHA about the issues. We also asked residents whether they knew if NYCHA has been informed about the problems they reported regarding their buildings. Forty percent of respondents reported that they had personally reported the conditions they were concerned about to NYCHA, while an additional 17.8% reported that they had information that other residents had informed NYCHA about the problems.

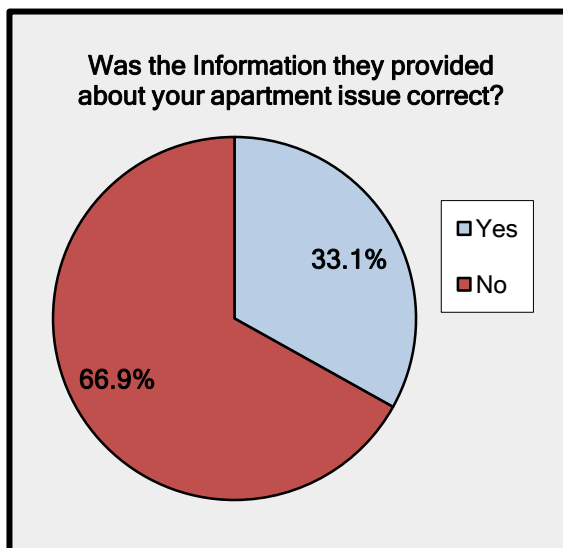
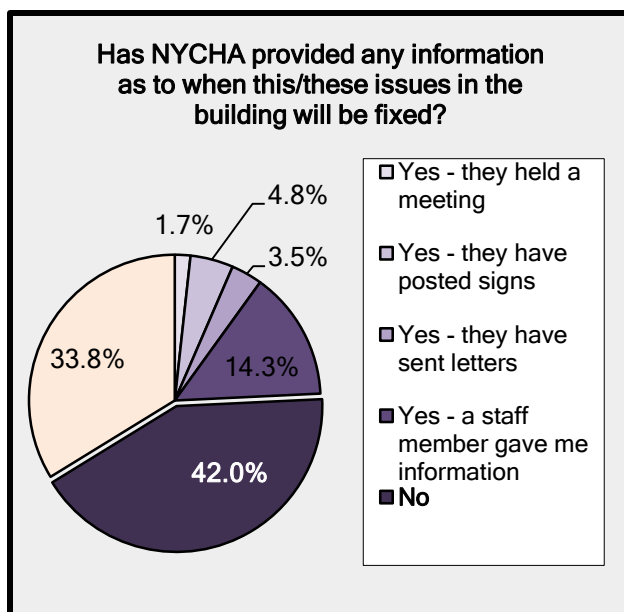
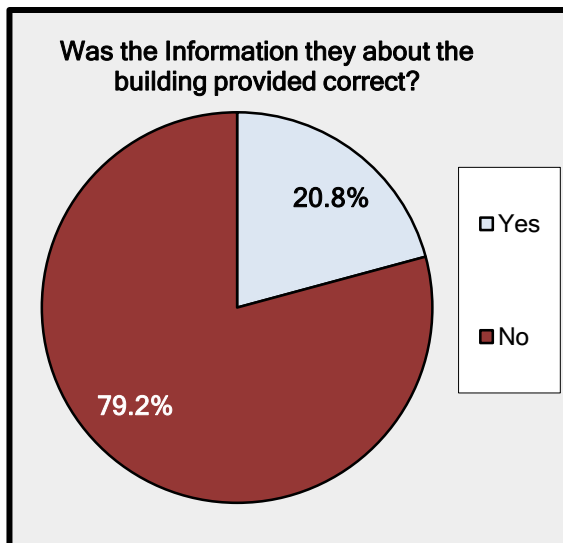
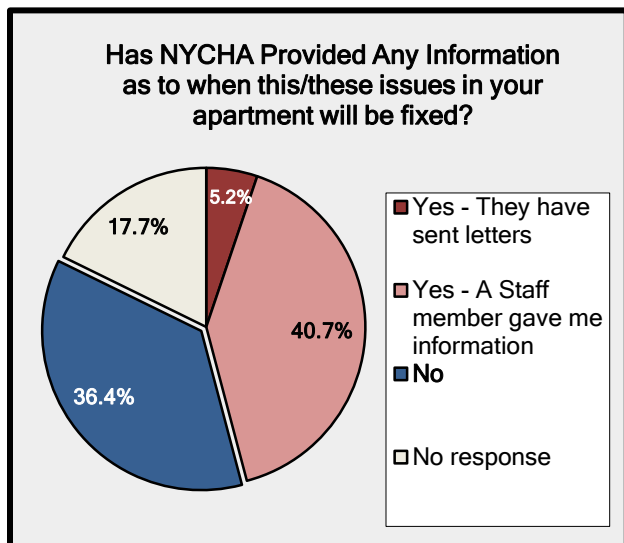


We then asked whether NYCHA had then provided residents with information about when these conditions, whether in their apartments or in their building, would be corrected. When it came to residents' own apartments, 41% reported that NYCHA staff had provided them with information, and 5% reported getting a letter. Thirty-six percent of respondents stated that they had received no information at all about their individual apartment complaints. The remainder did not provide an answer. With regards to building-wide issues, a quarter of respondents reported NYCHA providing information about when the issue would be fixed, with the most common method again being a staff

member. Just 10% of respondents stated that NYCHA had made information available publicly, whether through a meeting, letters, or posted signs. Forty-two percent of respondents reported receiving no information from NYCHA about how their problems would be fixed. The remainder did not answer the question.

We followed up with questions about whether the information provided had been accurate. These two questions proved to be the most problematic for residents, as they had by far the highest non-

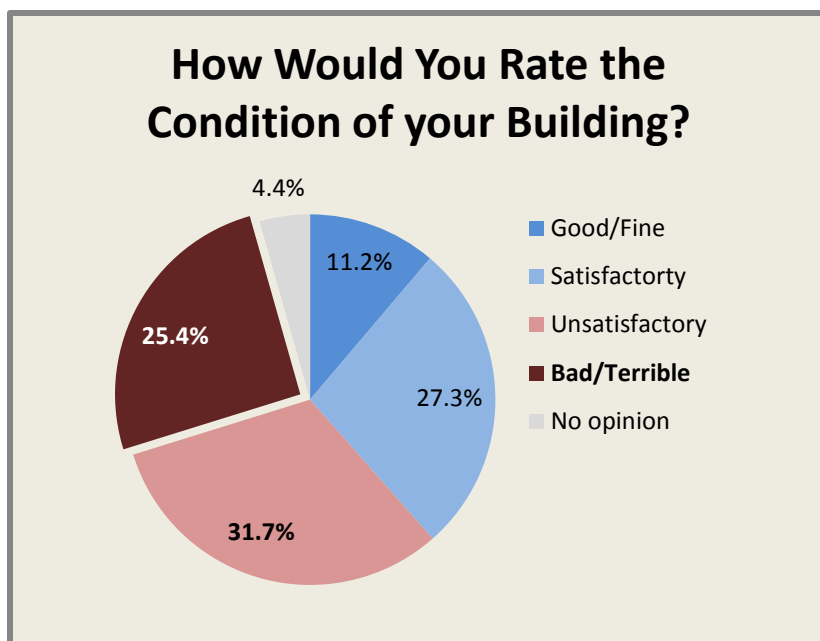
response rate of the entire survey. Many residents were reticent to answer the question of whether NYCHA had provided correct information. Of those that chose to answer, the vast majorities reported that the information provided had been incorrect.



Resident's Satisfaction with NYCHA

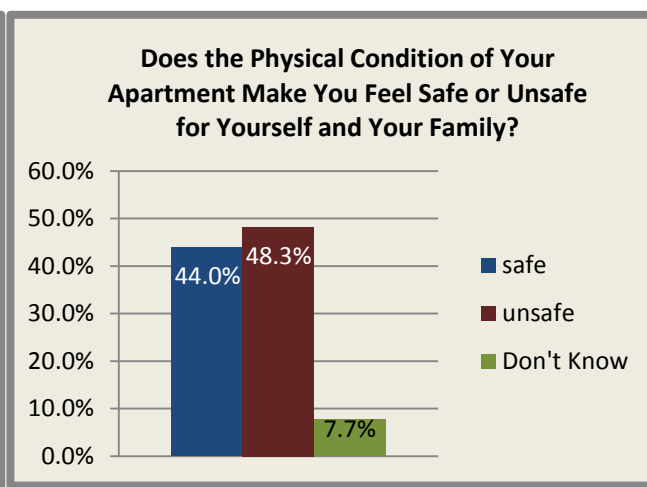
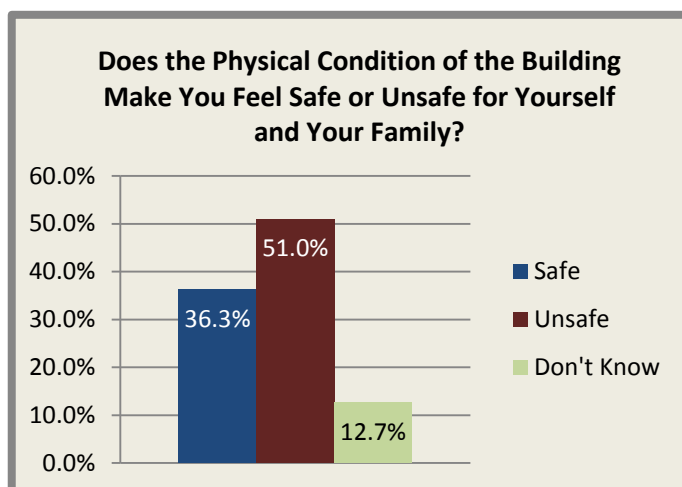
The survey also asked residents about their general satisfaction with NYCHA, whether it be the physical conditions within their own apartments and in their buildings, or with the service they receive from NYCHA in general.

We asked residents to rate the conditions of their own apartments and their building in general, and to tell us whether the physical conditions of their buildings made them feel safe or unsafe. A majority of residents had negative opinions about the conditions of their own buildings. Only 11.2% of respondents rated the condition of their building as good or fine and only 27.3% said



rated their building as satisfactory. Overall, less than 40% of respondents found the conditions of their buildings to be good or satisfactory. 31.7% said that the condition of their building was unsatisfactory while a full quarter of respondents (25.4%) said that the condition of their building was bad or terrible. Overall, 57.1% of respondents had a negative opinion of their own building. 45.2% had similarly negative opinions about their own apartments.

We asked residents whether the physical conditions of their apartment and their building made them feel safe or unsafe. More respondents said that the physical conditions made them feel unsafe than safe. The disparity was greater when it came to their building as opposed to their own apartments. Forty-four percent said the conditions of their apartment made them feel safe, while 48.3% said it made them feel unsafe. When it came to their building, 51% said the conditions made them feel unsafe, while only 36.3% felt safe. The rest of the respondents had no opinion.



We also asked residents to rate NYCHA on its delivery of services to tenants. This proved to be another problematic question for many respondents. Forty-eight percent of those surveyed chose not to provide a response. Those that did chose to answer gave NYCHA bad marks for its delivery of services to tenants. Only 4% of respondents said that NYCHA was good at delivering services to tenants. An additional 18.3% said that NYCHA satisfactorily delivered services to tenants. About 48% said that NYCHA delivered services in an unsatisfactory manner, and 26.7% labeled NYCHA's delivery of services as terrible or bad.

Survey Analysis:

The survey results make it clear that NYCHA residents are deeply concerned about the physical conditions they are being asked to live in. A majority of respondents report that their apartments have physical defects, and they report that NYCHA is slow in addressing their concerns. This is especially bad in the case of mold issues. Residents report that NYCHA is both slow to respond to complaints, slow to act on them once they respond, and that their response is inadequate because mold usually comes back. The fact that half of respondents report someone in their household as having asthma sheds NYCHA's failures in this area in an even worse light, since people with asthma and other breathing problems are especially vulnerable to the deleterious health effects that mold presents.

According to respondents, many problems in NYCHA are left to linger for many years, including serious physical problems like leaking roofs or pipes, or defects in structural elements like walls. Generally speaking, the longer defects are left unfixed, the more expensive it turns out to repair the damage, and long term problems with one important physical element of a building can lead to a cascade of additional problems. The failure of NYCHA to act in a timely manner to physical problems serves to exacerbate the overall physical deterioration of NYCHA buildings. The high number of respondents who feel unsafe due to the physical conditions of their buildings is a testament to this deterioration.

Residents report being left without information about when defects will be repaired either inside their own apartments or in the building they live in. NYCHA relies on staff to communicate information to tenants – and very few residents report seeing information being provided publicly about building-level issues. This lack of information likely contributes to the poor marks that NYCHA received with regards to how it delivers services to residents. It must be noted that many residents were clearly uncomfortable about providing certain commentary about NYCHA, as the questions which had the highest non-response rate were those in which they were asked to rate either the veracity of NYCHA's information or to rate NYCHA's overall performance. Those that did choose to provide answers provided ones that were negative about NYCHA's performance.

NYCHA's Financial Situation

As noted earlier, NYCHA is a key resource for New York City, making up over 40% of the units that are currently affordable to our lowest income residents. In order to remain affordable, NYCHA limits the rent charged to tenants at 30% of income. This means that NYCHA is not able to pay for all its operations with rental income. Public subsidies from the federal, state, and city governments allowed NYCHA to provide these affordable apartments. Unfortunately, beginning in the late 1990's support from all these different levels of government began to decline.

Support for NYCHA's Operations:

In 1998, Governor Pataki terminated operating subsidies to 15 state-financed NYCHA developments, burdening the Authority with an operating shortfall of \$60 million annually. By 2010, when the developments were federalized, the cumulative loss from state disinvestment amounted to \$720 million. These losses were reflected in growing NYCHA annual operating deficits, up to as high as \$235 million by 2006. To cover its operating gap, NYCHA had to stretch its federal operating subsidies thin, deplete its reserves, and transfer federal capital subsidies into operations, thereby deferring major infrastructural repairs and accelerating deterioration. In addition, the workforce headcount was reduced from 15,000 to 11,000, a 27% decrease, and contracted repairs were surgically cut. New York City followed the example of New York State in the early 2000's. New York City had followed the State's example and by 2004 it had essentially stopped subsidizing NYCHA operations. This move by the city put even more strain on NYCHA's finances.

The federal government is the primary source of funding for NYCHA. It is federal money that financed the construction of most of NYCHA's developments, and the federal government provides NYCHA with operational subsidies. The following chart shows federal funding for NYCHA operations over the last five fiscal years. Federal operational support for NYCHA has been declining over the past five years. It must be noted that 2010 and 2011 were the years that NYCHA received a significant increase in support from the federal government as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). As we can see, the coming of the Sequester in Washington D.C. has severely affected the amount of operational funding for NYCHA from its biggest source, and there is nothing to indicate that the situation will improve.

NYCHA FUNDING SOURCES 2010-214					
NYCHA Budgeted Federal Aid to NYCHA 2010-14					
Operating Budget					
Millions USD					
Fiscal Year	Federal Subsidy	Operating	Section 8 HAP	HAP Admin	Total Operating Revenue
2014	\$785		\$927	\$62	\$1,774
2013	\$907		\$1,010	\$73	\$1,990
2012	\$896		\$990	\$73	\$1,959
2011	\$915		\$997	\$80	\$1,992
2010	\$874		\$1,005	\$80	\$1,959

Capital Support for NYCHA:

Just as federal support for NYCHA operations has declined, so has federal support for NYCHA's capital needs. The chart below of NYCHA capital spending in its 2010-14 plan shows the

general decline in federal aid from the higher than normal funding that was received from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

NYCHA 5 Year Budgeted Aid 2010-2014 Capital Budget (Millions USD)		
Capital Beginning In:	Plan City	Federal
2014	\$195	\$1,440
2013	\$196	\$1,364
2012	\$164	\$1,619
2011	\$137	\$1,916
2010	\$182	\$1,820

In its initial 2015-19 capital plan, NYCHA stated that based on its latest Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) it would need \$18 billion over the next five years to bring its entire system into a state of good repairs⁷. Instead, during the 2015-19 period it proposed to spend \$4.217 billion, of which 59% were federal funds allocated specifically for recovery from Superstorm Sandy and which must be spent on those developments hit badly by Sandy and to make NYCHA's developments less vulnerable to future storms.

Since this plan went out there have been additional resources slated for NYCHA. New York City has announced that it will be kicking in \$300 million for a program of roof repairs, particularly to fix leaking roofs, which worsen mold conditions⁸. The program will begin with \$100 million commitment from New York City and \$80 million in federal funding at four different developments, with the remaining city money to follow as the roof program expands.

The IDC fought to ensure that the state would begin to provide capital dollars for NYCHA repairs. We had originally advocated for the state to provide NYCHA with \$250 million in the budget, to be matched by an equal amount from New York City that would be made available for capital repairs. In the end, the state's FY 2015-16 budget allocated \$100 million in funds from the JP Morgan settlement for NYCHA repairs. Unfortunately, this was only a partial victory. The money was allocated not to NYCHA but to the Department of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR), which 'in consultation' with NYCHA would pick the projects to be funded, and then utilize the Dormitory Authority (DASNY) as the project manager. This construct was picked because there was no confidence that NYCHA would be able to utilize those funds in a timely and efficient manner to conduct repairs. At the same time, the choice to provide funds in this manner created some concerns and questions about how projects would be

⁷ New York City Housing Authority, "Capital Plan Calendar Years 2015-2019" (December 2014), pg. 5. Report available at: <http://www1.nyc.gov/html/nycha/downloads/pdf/2015-2019-5-year-capital-plan.pdf>

⁸ Durkin, Erin, *The New York Daily News*, "De Blasio dedicates \$300M to replace crumbling roofs at NYCHA developments", August 24, 2015. Article available at: <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/de-blasio-launches-300m-project-replace-nycha-roofs-article-1.2336209>

chosen and whether they would be chosen based on need or for other reasons⁹. It has been announced that \$41.6 million of the \$100 million in state funds would finance security projects¹⁰.

The NYCHA 2020 Public Housing Revitalization Plan

The IDC's NYCHA 2020 Plan aims to provide capital funding for improvements and repairs at NYCHA. The IDC believes that in order to make substantial improvements to the condition of NYCHA housing, the state and city must work together to invest significant sums to restore and revitalize these communities. The IDC calls for the state and city to work hand-in-hand to provide for NYCHA capital needs. The IDC believes that the state should make an initial investment to be matched by New York City, and then we will work with the community and developers to further improve living conditions for NYCHA residents. This greater funding will only work if NYCHA becomes more accountable and shows a willingness to improve its operations. Increased aid would be contingent on NYCHA reforming its operations and showing a willingness to be more transparent with both public officials and the community. The NYCHA 2020 proposal is comprised of the following elements:

1. The Public Housing Revitalization Fund:

The state would provide an investment of \$100 million to supply the initial capitalization of this fund. The city would be asked to put an equal amount into the fund. This proposal has been introduced into the State Senate as Senate bill 5366-A, sponsored by Senator Klein. This capital fund would be available immediately to NYCHA to finance repairs, reconstructions, and upgrades.

Given NYCHA's poor track record of operations, the IDC believes that any capital assistance must be matched by reforms at the authority. In order to ensure that these capital funds are utilized in an effective and efficient manner, the continued use of this fund beyond January 1, 2017 would be conditioned on NYCHA's adoption of a Public Housing Revitalization Plan. This revitalization plan, largely based on a study commissioned by NYCHA in 2011, will provide clear goals and accountability throughout NYCHA's restructuring process, and should include, but not be limited to, the following items:

1. Property-Centric Model: recommendations on implementing the transition to a property-centric property management model with more empowered property managers. This includes decentralizing maintenance and repair staff to the property level. Devolving power to the property managers will ensure accountability is closer to the point of service provision to residents.

⁹ *The New York Daily News*, "Oink, oink, oink: Cuomo's scheme to spend \$100 million on NYCHA smells like pork", May 28, 2015. Article available at: <http://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/editorial-cuomo-porky-nycha-scheme-article-1.2237991>

¹⁰ Smith, Greg B. *The New York Daily News*, "EXCLUSIVE: NYCHA will receive \$41.6M in state funds to beef up security at projects", Oct. 23, 2015. Article available at: <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/exclusive-nycha-41-6m-state-funds-security-article-1.2407980>

2. **Faster Repairs:** Redesign maintenance and repair policies to drastically cut wait time.
3. **Better Procurement:** Overhaul NYCHA's procurement system to cut RFP wait time in half, and create a centralized, streamlined system that will leverage NYCHA's scale with suppliers.
4. **Streamlined Customer Service:** Improve customer service to provide a more reliable and user-friendly experience to both residents and applicant.
5. **Reduce Bureaucracy:** Reduce internal bureaucracy by flattening the organization, reducing redundant or unnecessary steps and requirements, and improving cycle times.
6. **Long-Term Financial Sustainability:** Develop a long-term financial sustainability plan, updated bi-annually.

In addition, the IDC recommends that any funds the Battery Park City Authority Funding collects in excess of those they need to meet their existing obligations be diverted to this Public Housing revitalization fund. According to estimates from the NYC Comptroller, this would provide \$400 million in funding over the coming decade¹¹. Currently, such excess funds are being used to finance a variety of affordable housing programs. As the NYC Comptroller notes, since this arrangement was created, the excess funds coming in are higher than what were expected. At the same time, NYCHA is the sole largest provider of affordable housing in New York City, and it is the largest provider of funding for very low-income New Yorkers. If we are truly serious about providing and maintaining affordable housing in New York City, then we must do everything we can to meet the vast capital needs at NYCHA.

2. Greater Oversight:

The IDC believes that it is critical for NYCHA to submit itself to greater oversight. The IDC proposes additional reporting requirements for NYCHA which would mandate that it submit additional information about the conditions of NYCHA developments. In addition we support giving the New York City Council the power to demand and receive information from NYCHA, ensuring that the Authority's operations remain transparent. These proposals for greater oversight are included in senate bill 5365-A, sponsored by Senator Klein.

3. The NYCHA Repair Certificate Program

The Mayor's Housing Plan calls for upzoning large tracts in the five boroughs in exchange for deeper and wider affordability requirements. In many cases, such as Astoria Cove, further exactions are also secured, such as an investment in public transit infrastructure. The concept is simple: since upzoning creates significant value to the developers, the City is in a position to ask for substantial exactions in return. The IDC believes that private developers can assist NYCHA to expedite certain critical capital repairs. In order to give private developers an incentive to

¹¹ NYC Comptroller's Office: "COMPTROLLER STRINGER: USE SURPLUS DOLLARS FROM BATTERY PARK CITY AUTHORITY TO REPAIR NYCHA BUILDINGS". Available at: <http://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/comptroller-stringer-use-surplus-dollars-from-battery-park-city-authority-to-repair-nycha-buildings-2/#sthash.noLx8w5t.dpuf>

make these repairs faster, we plan to create a Certificate Repair Program. The proposal is embodied in Senate bill 5658 by Senator Klein.

Using this program, private developers would conduct repairs directly at NYCHA, leveraging their expertise and efficiency with construction contracts. A NYCHA RFP takes 20 months on average, whereas private real-estate firms could complete the necessary service in a fraction of that time. How much money is raised for NYCHA repairs using this program would depend on how widely it was used, and the value of the increased development rights that developers would have access to. The IDC will also work with developers to identify training opportunities for NYCHA residents so that they can pursue meaningful careers.

Conclusion

NYCHA housing is the largest single collection of affordable apartments in New York City and this makes it a critical asset for New York State. For too long this vital housing stock has been allowed to deteriorate through inadequate financing. NYCHA itself has also been allowed to provide poor services to its tenants for too long. The findings of the survey conducted by the IDC and Councilman Torres' office showcase the serious physical defects in NYCHA housing that tenants are forced to deal with on a daily basis. The fact that more than 60% of tenants surveyed reported something broken in their apartment and that a similar amount have, or have had to deal with mold at some point in their time there is unacceptable. When one considers that half of the households surveyed reported a member with asthma, then the findings become shocking.

Residents report problems lingering for years both in their own apartments and in their buildings. Unsurprisingly, they do not feel unsafe for themselves and their families because of these deficiencies. Those residents willing to answer questions about the quality of the information and services NYCHA provides its tenants rated both poorly.

The IDC is pushing for the adoption of our NYCHA 2020 proposal to reverse these problems. Additional funding is critical for our public housing, but just as critical is additional trust from taxpayers that these funds will make a difference and trust from tenants that NYCHA will do better by them. The IDC stands ready to work with residents, advocates, fellow legislators and officials, and with NYCHA itself to ensure that we do everything necessary to protect our public housing. We will advocate for greater public investment to maintain, repair, and upgrade this critical public asset. At the same time, we will work with stakeholders and NYCHA to ensure that our public housing is being managed in the most effective way possible. The IDC believes that the implementation of the NYCHA 2020 Plan is the first critical step towards meeting those goals.