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Senate Housing Committee Advances Legislation To Institute Homeless Access Voucher Program

New Statewide Program Would Provide Rental Assistance to New Yorkers Who Are Homeless or Facing an Imminent Loss of Housing

New York, NY – State Senator Brian Kavanagh, Chair of the Senate Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development, today announced that his legislation establishing a program of rental assistance in the form of housing vouchers for eligible individuals and families who are homeless or who face an imminent loss of housing, the Homeless Access Voucher Program (HAVP) ([S2804B/A 3701B](#)), has advanced through the Senate Housing Committee.

“Homelessness is a statewide crisis. We first introduced this bill in February 2020, and it’s long past time for New York to do what’s necessary to ensure that New Yorkers do not lose their homes because they are unable to pay their rent,” said Senator Kavanagh. “Even as we advocate for long-term capital funding to build new supportive and affordable housing, the most immediate and effective way we can respond to the urgent need is to pay the rent of New Yorkers who would otherwise be homeless. We also know that this approach will be cheaper, safer, and healthier than temporary shelter.

“I thank everyone who has joined the push for this program, especially the Assembly Housing Chair and Assembly sponsor of the bill, Steve Cymbrowitz, and the many advocacy organizations who have worked hard to get this program enacted, including Housing Justice for All, the Legal Aid Society, VOCAL-NY, Make the Road New York, Citizen Action of New York, the Community Service Society, Enterprise Community Partners, the Association of Neighborhood & Housing Development, the Coalition for the Homeless, Homeless Services United, the New York Housing Conference, Neighbors Together, the Real Estate Board of New York, the Safety Net Project, and Tenants PAC.”

The bill now heads to the Senate Finance Committee. Funding for the program was included in the Senate's budget resolution last year, but was not included in the final budget.

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