

**New York State Senate
New York State Assembly
February 4, 2019
State Budget Hearing for Housing**

Thank you to the Senate and Assembly for the opportunity to testify today.

LiveOn NY's more than 100 members provide community-based services reaching more than 300,000 older New Yorkers each year. These services include senior centers, Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs), homecare services, home-delivered meals, and more. Additionally, many of LiveOn NY members develop, operate, manage and provide services in affordable senior housing buildings throughout the five-boroughs of New York City, as well as Nassau and Suffolk counties. In addition to the numerous other services, trainings, and programs offered by LiveOn NY, we also are proud to convene our Affordable Senior Housing Coalition, which works tirelessly to ensure the senior perspective is represented in the larger conversation of affordable housing needs in our state.

First and foremost, LiveOn NY thanks Governor Cuomo and the entire legislature for the ongoing investments in affordable housing capital funding. More specifically, we thank the state for the creation of the first capital funding stream for affordable senior housing, allocating \$125 million in FY18 and the continued investments in the budget.

LiveOn NY is also thankful and supports the investments in the State Office for the Aging (SOFA) including the proposed \$15 million increase to the Expanded In Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP) in the executive budget and increases in NY Connects funding. These services have been shown to reduce health care costs and are critical. We also support the proposal for the simplified elderly SNAP application (ESNAP). A full list of LiveOn NY budget priorities is attached.

Capital funding for affordable senior housing is critical due to the dire housing crisis throughout the state. In 2016, LiveOn NY conducted a survey, entitled "Through the Roof" which found that an estimated 200,000 seniors are on wait lists for housing through the HUD202 program in New York City. Subsequent research indicates that it is likely that this number only continues to rise. Further, research shows that the lack of affordable housing can have adverse effects on a senior's health as it forces one to make the difficult choice between skipping meals, going without medications, or avoiding needed healthcare in order to afford rent.

LiveOn NY is hopeful that the critical investments made will help to combat the current housing crisis for seniors and New Yorkers of all ages. Beyond these capital investments, however, LiveOn NY urges investments to be made in the upcoming fiscal year to fully support seniors by providing service coordinators in both newly constructed and existing senior residences. We support a \$10million investment statewide for a Service Coordination in Affordable Senior Housing program. A one page overview of this proposal is attached to this testimony.

Service coordinators in senior housing residences are proven to reduce health care costs. In fact, LiveOn NY's member Selfhelp Community Services recently released a study of the residents in their senior affordable housing program. The study compared Medicaid data for residents in their housing in comparison it to seniors

living in the same zip codes over two years. The crucial research found that the seniors living in Selfhelp's affordable housing had significantly more positive outcomes including:

- 68% lower odds of being hospitalized
- \$1,778 average Medicaid payment per person, per hospitalization for Selfhelp residents, versus \$5,715 for the comparison group
- 53% lower odds of visiting an emergency room compared to a non-Selfhelp resident

In addition, a 2016 study of residents in affordable housing in Oregon showed that Medicaid costs declined by 16% just one year after seniors moved into affordable housing communities. Results also showed that primary care visits increased by 20%, while emergency room visits decreased by 18% and that properties with on-site health services produced the largest decrease in emergency room visits. A 2014 evaluation of the SASH program in Vermont revealed that growth in the annual total Medicare expenditures of program participants was lower by an estimated \$1,756-\$2,197 per person when compared to the growth of total Medicare expenditures in comparison groups. These statistics point to the potential cost-savings that could exist through the funding of a service coordinator program, one that would also be a strong pillar of Governor Cuomo's Health Across All Policies Initiative.

LiveOn NY also supports ongoing investments in NYCHA as it is critical that funds are made available and are well-utilized to improve living conditions for NYCHA tenants. Additionally, it is important to note that community spaces operating within NYCHA have not been immune to the capital and operational challenges plaguing the developments.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

LiveOn NY's members provide community-based services that allow older adults to thrive in their communities. With a base of more than 100 organizations serving at least 300,000 older New Yorkers annually, our members provide services ranging from senior centers, congregate and home-delivered meals, affordable senior housing with services, elder abuse prevention services, caregiver supports, transportation, NORCs and NY Connects. LiveOn NY members also develop, operate, and provide services for affordable senior housing building throughout New York City. LiveOn NY advocates for increased funding for these vital services to improve both the solvency of the system and the overall capacity of community-based service providers.

LiveOn NY also administers a citywide outreach program that targets seniors in communities where benefits are most underutilized. This program helps to educate thousands of older adults, including those who are homebound, about food assistance options, as well as to screen and enroll those who are eligible for SNAP and SCRIE/DRIE.

LiveOn NY

Making New York a better place to age

Our Mission

Founded in 1979, LiveOn NY is a membership organization of nonprofit aging service providers that builds power and capacity at the city and state level to change public policy, grow resources, and strengthen services for older adults.

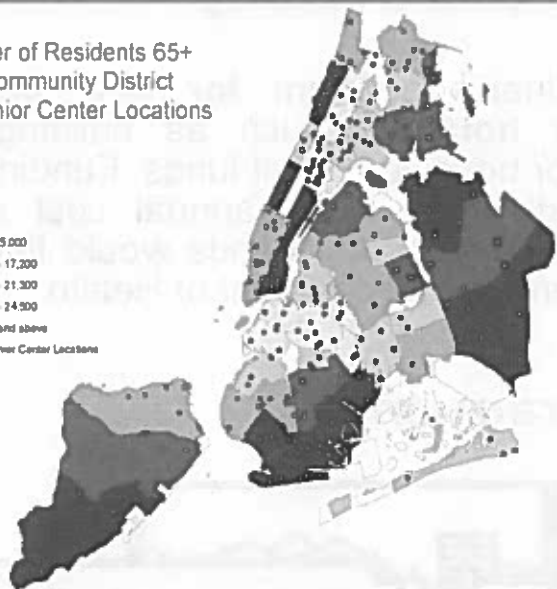


By 2040, New York's senior population is expected to reach 5.6 million, outpacing all other demographics

Senior Population Distribution NYC

Number of Residents 65+
by Community District
with Senior Center Locations

Legend



Comptroller Scott Stringer, 2017



Invest in Senior Services

\$19 Million in increased funding for Community Services for the Elderly (CSE)

Eliminates waitlists for community based services that allow seniors to remain independent, including home delivered meals, transportation and more.

\$10 Million for a new Affordable Senior Housing with Services program

A proven cost-effective way to support seniors in their community, reducing hospital & nursing home costs.

Support proposed \$15 Million in increased funding for Expanded In Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP)

Address the home care worker shortage, workforce development and eliminate waitlists for EISEP home care and case management.

Support proposed increase for NY Connects to address increased utilization

Fund program at \$41.476 million to connect seniors, professionals, & caregivers to information re: long-term care supports and community resources.

Support NY's Efforts for Shortened SNAP Form

The Elderly Simplified Application Process (ESAP) will remove barriers for SNAP applicants and address elder hunger.

Invest \$140 Million in new funding for Strong Nonprofits for a Better NY

Increased investment to support a COLA for the human services workforce.



Who Is Served

Investing in senior services assists not only New York's **older adults**, but supports family **caregivers**, improves the lives of **direct care workers**, & strengthens the capacity of **community-based service providers**.



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SERVICE COORDINATION IN AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOUSING

Why Services in Affordable Housing?



87% of seniors would prefer to age in their homes or communities

Services can help make this a reality and can be the difference between aging in place vs. a costly move to a nursing home or hospitalization

Older New Yorkers support our communities providing 119 million hours of volunteer service each year at an estimated economic value of \$3.25 billion.



Seniors at Selfhelp Community Services were found to have significant healthcare savings, for example:



Selfhelp residents were **68% less likely to be hospitalized compared to seniors in the same zip codes**

This represents an average savings of **\$3,937** per person, per hospitalization

How can New York make this a reality?

\$10 Million
OVER
5 Years

Establish a Service Coordinator program for new and existing affordable senior housing, such as buildings developed utilizing state senior housing capital funds. Funding would provide service coordinators at an annual cost of approximately \$70,000 per 100 residents. Funds would flow through HCR, to be administered by Department of Health.

What would this program entail?

MSW Level Service Coordinators Provide:

- Information & Referrals
- Benefits Assistance
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Socialization opportunities
- Culturally Competent Support
- Promotion of overall health and wellness



This program would model the successful (but underfunded) HUD202 program