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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

***Housing Justice for All Launches 2020 NYS Legislative Campaign
With Statewide Day of Action***

#NYHomesGuarantee Platform Calls On Albany To Enact “Good Cause” Eviction Legislation And Home Stability Support; Bolster Funding For Public Housing; And Act Immediately On Other Housing Priorities

Other States Have Already Enacted Some Of These Key Reforms - Albany Must Follow Suit

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Housing Justice For All campaign – a coalition of over 70 organizations that represent tenants and homeless New Yorkers from across the State – unveiled its 2020 New York State legislative agenda today, which seeks to build on the historic housing reforms enacted into law this past June. The 2020 platform calls on the State Legislature and the Governor to pass and enact “Good Cause” eviction legislation and the Home Stability Support Act; bolster funding for public housing; and to act on other housing priorities to guarantee that every New Yorker has a home.

New York State’s budget is nearly \$180 billion, yet only 3% of that budget is spent on the housing crisis. As a result, 92,000 people are homeless and the majority of New York State

residents can't even afford their rent. The Housing Justice for All coalition urges Governor Cuomo and the Legislature to pledge to end evictions and rent hikes, rehouse 92,000 homeless New Yorkers, and to invest in housing as a human right in 2020.

PRIORITIES INCLUDE:

Good Cause Eviction: Every tenant in New York should live free from the fear of eviction - either formal, through housing court, or informal, through the landlords' decision not to renew the lease, or a sudden rent hike. Rent stabilized tenants benefit from the right to renew their leases, and from protections against large rent hikes. Good cause eviction would guarantee all New York renters, in non-owner occupied buildings, the right to renew the lease with regular annual rent increases.

Home Stability Support (HSS): 92,000 people across the State of New York are homeless - a number that has grown dramatically under Governor Cuomo. The long term solution to the homelessness crisis is both an end to evictions and a dramatic increase in the number of social and supportive housing. However, New Yorkers need immediate action to address the current crisis. HSS is a statewide rent supplement for low-income families and individuals who are facing eviction, homelessness, or loss of housing due to domestic violence or hazardous conditions. HSS helps bridge the difference between public assistance shelter allowance and fair market rents.

Invest in Public Housing Statewide: Public housing is in a state of severe disrepair. State Legislature must invest \$3 billion annually to fix and preserve public housing, with \$2 billion directed to NYCHA. In order to be successful, public housing must be fully funded and democratically controlled by organized residents, labor, and other stakeholders. It must be energy efficient and capable of withstanding extreme weather events. Privatization and housing should never mix, and Albany must allocate funding to address repairs and operations.

Tax the Rich to fund a NY Homes Guarantee: These wasteful tax subsidies cost New York State billions annually, encourage gentrification, reward Cuomo's campaign donors, and provide no meaningful benefit to New Yorkers. We are calling on the State legislature to end these corrupt tax subsidies and instead invest in communities.

Other major Housing Justice for All priorities call on Albany to develop and preserve 600,000 units of social housing over the next 10 years to ensure every New Yorker has a home they can afford; to enact legislation that would afford residents the first opportunity to purchase rental buildings and manufactured home communities that are up for sale or demolition; to invest in healthy and habitable homes, to eliminate the costly and ineffective 485-a and 421-a tax subsidies for big developers and adopt other fair-share revenue proposals; and to implement other critical reforms that New Yorkers need.

“Housing is a human right. It's fundamental for all people's well-being. Governor Cuomo continues to pretend we don't have a housing crisis, yet homelessness in NY continues to rise dramatically. He must be held accountable for this crisis under his watch. The same tenants that won landmark rent protections last June are back to fight for more, until every person in this state

has an affordable place they can call home and live with dignity,” said **Winsome Pendergrass, tenant leader with New York Communities for Change.**

“We are in a housing crisis. There are 92,000 homeless people in New York state, and public housing across the state is unsafe for families. We need to guarantee a safe, equitable home to every New Yorker. The governor and the legislature need to act now to stem this crisis, and prevent it from getting worse. Let’s act now and house every New Yorker,” said **Jonathan Westin, Executive Director, New York Communities for Change.**

“As members of the Housing Justice For All coalition, we are proud to launch our new 2020 campaign for #NYHomesGuarantee. While the state passed historic reforms in 2019, there is still much work to be done. Our clients and all low-income New Yorkers continue to face a housing crisis that has culminated in over 92,000 people experiencing homelessness across the state, and evictions steadily rising. We must keep pushing for meaningful tenant protections in 2020 and beyond,” said **Janet Sabel, Attorney-In-Chief and CEO of The Legal Aid Society.**

"In my 20 years that I've lived in NYC with my family, I have not had the luck to live in a regulated apartment and although I have always paid my rent and many times with high increments, I was evicted by the Marshall from my unregulated private apartment. After a lot of work I found another apartment in a 2-family building, also without regulation. I live every day in the uncertainty that the owner will increase my rent excessively or will ask me to move out of the apartment. It is time for the state government to create legal protection and pass "Good Cause of Eviction" so that millions of tenants of small buildings like me, can sleep more peacefully," said **Petra Luna, Make the Road NY.**

“We live in a City that has had Billions pumped into it while homelessness is on the rise and public housing is being dismantled. Canalside alone has had over 150 Million invested in it but the people are told they can’t fix the Perry projects. We need to #NYHomesGuarantee and you can’t tell me that we don't have the money to afford for everyone to have a safe place to live,” said **John Washington, PUSH Buffalo.**

The housing movement is uniting across all issues, to bring the kind of political and financial shift in our State's priorities and finally guarantee a home for every New Yorker,” said **Afua Atta-Mensah, Executive Director of Community Voices Heard.** “Community Voices Heard was proud to be a part of the coalition that passed historic rent protections in 2019, and now we are ready to build the campaign to win what we couldn't get last year: deep investment in and re-commitment to public housing, permanent supportive housing to help end homelessness, 600,000 units of social housing, universal rent control, and all the other structural changes we need for true housing justice. We recognize the strength and power in this coalition, and look forward to fighting with our allies for a NY Homes Guarantee.”

“I've been a New York City public housing resident for over thirty years, and I have seen how decades of disinvestment at the federal, state, and city level has hurt public housing residents,” said **Rose Fernandez, Member-Leader of Community Voices Heard.** “I—and thousands of others—suffer from poor health due to the poor living conditions in public housing. I know this fight is not just mine. We have to address the root causes of housing injustice. People like me,

grassroots leaders who have been directly impacted by housing injustice, established the vision for a NY Homes Guarantee. The idea is simple: in the richest country in the world, we can and we MUST guarantee that everyone has a safe, sustainable, healthy, and truly affordable home.”

“In the richest country in history, homelessness should no longer be an issue. New York is seen as the financial capital of the world, yet visitors see the juxtaposition of wealth and poverty clearly, as the state with more multi-millionaires and billionaires than any other turns a blind eye to the housing crisis so clearly evidenced by the number of people experiencing homelessness. This number has risen by nearly 40 percent since Governor Cuomo has been in office as a direct result of housing policies that favor luxury real estate developers at the expense of Black, Brown and low-income families. It's time to end the tax breaks for billionaires, pass the Good Cause Eviction bill in order to stop the unjust evictions and predatory rent hikes tearing apart our communities, and invest in tens of thousands of units of permanently affordable housing. Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature can build on the landmark rent laws that were passed in 2019 and end the housing crisis once and for all with a homes guarantee for every New Yorker in 2020,” said **Rosemary Rivera, Co-Executive Director of Citizen Action of New York.**

”Year after year, Governor Cuomo announces one commitment after another--never making an impact in the lives of homeless people and manipulating the public in the process. The lies end today. The housing movement agrees: every homeless person and every person struggling to have a roof over their head is a policy failure. The housing movement is united to win a fundamental shift in the financial and political priorities of the State. We join our allies to fight for a guaranteed home for every New Yorker,” said **Jeremy Saunders, Co-Executive Director, VOCAL-NY**

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