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**CONTACT:** Nate Jackson, [nate.jackson@berlinrosen.com](mailto:nate.jackson@berlinrosen.com)

## **50+ Groups Launch Statewide Coalition to Demand Funding for Housing Voucher Program**

*Landlord, Tenant Groups Form 'Housing Access New York' to Call for \$250 Million Investment in State Housing Access Voucher Program*

*Members Include Robin Hood, REBNY, Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Legal Aid Society, New York Immigration Coalition, Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative*

**New York** (Feb. 15, 2024) — Today, more than 50 organizations from across New York launched **Housing Access New York** – a new coalition that brings together advocates for tenants’ rights, landlords, children, immigrants, criminal justice, and more – to urge Gov. Kathy Hochul to commit \$250 million toward the **Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP)** in the next state budget, which would serve more than 13,000 households in New York.

As the housing crisis grows worse in New York, HAVP ([S568B/A4021A](#)) would provide desperately needed rental assistance to New Yorkers across the state. Similar to Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher, HAVP would be a statewide program dedicated both to helping homeless New Yorkers find stable housing, and to preventing eviction for households at risk of becoming homeless. HAVP would be available to people regardless of immigration status or criminal record.

The launch of Housing Access New York comes as New York City and upstate organizations continue to sound the alarm about the dire housing crisis in their communities. In Niagara, Erie, Sullivan, Schenectady, Rensselaer and Nassau counties, between eight to 10% of all renters faced an eviction in 2022. In a [recent letter](#) to Gov. Hochul, nearly 40 upstate organizations wrote that HAVP will be critical to ensuring cities and towns can provide rental assistance to those who need it most. Furthermore, the latest findings from the New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (NYCHVS) showcase a vacancy rate of 1.4% in the city, highlighting the urgent need for HAVP for households at risk of eviction.

Housing Access New York member organizations include, among others: **Robin Hood, REBNY, New York Immigration Coalition, The Fortune Society, Legal Aid Society, Win and Citizens’ Committee for Children of New York.**

“There is no single silver bullet that will solve New York’s affordable housing crisis, policymakers across all levels of government need to be dually focused on increasing the supply of deeply affordable housing and helping tenants afford rent today,” **said Chloe Sarnoff, Director, Policy Research & Initiatives at Robin Hood.** “The Housing Access Voucher Program is an evidence-based, widely supported policy solution that will help tens of thousands of New Yorkers at risk of and experiencing homelessness afford stable housing immediately.”

"New York has long faced an affordability crisis that is hurting the ability of every resident to maintain a roof over their heads. The Housing Access Voucher Program is a critical investment in the health and well-being of all New Yorkers by helping all housing insecure families— whether facing eviction or unhoused---acquire permanent and stable housing to begin building their lives with some security and stability,” **said Murad Awawdeh, Executive Director, New York Immigration Coalition.** “It is imperative that Governor Hochul and the State Legislature invest in legislation that we desperately need to ensure that every New Yorker, regardless of immigration status, has equitable access to housing supports and vouchers that will allow our families to thrive."

“The Fortune Society is proud to be a member of the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) Coalition,” **said Rob DeLeon, Deputy CEO of The Fortune Society.** “This bill fills a significant gap by including formerly incarcerated people, and people leaving incarceration, among those eligible for this form of housing assistance. Having a safe and stable place to live gives people leaving jail and prison the necessary foundation to engage in programs, seek employment, and reunite with their families - that makes all of us safer. We look forward to its passage and full funding for its successful and much-needed implementation.”

“Solving New York City’s housing crisis will require a comprehensive policy toolkit that creates more supply while also helping vulnerable New Yorkers remain in their homes,” **said James Whelan, President of the Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY).** “REBNY is proud to continue to advocate for HAVP, a common-sense solution that offers immediate relief for families in need.”

“New York’s unprecedented homelessness crisis demands common sense, long term solutions that will help people leave shelter and stay in permanent housing. That’s why I’m proud to stand with over fifty organizations from across New York who are calling on Governor Hochul to fund the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) in the state budget,” **said Christine C. Quinn, President and CEO of Win.** “68% of New Yorkers support expanding housing vouchers to include more people in need because vouchers are proven to be one of the most effective tools for helping families leave shelter. I urge Governor Hochul and state leadership to fund this transformative policy that will help us break the cycle of homelessness for New Yorkers.”

"We are proud to stand with such a diverse coalition to demand that Governor Hochul invest \$250 million towards the Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) this budget cycle," **said Judith Goldiner, attorney-in-charge of the Civil Law Reform Unit at The Legal Aid Society.** "Amid an unprecedented homelessness crisis, HAVP is critical for our clients and all New Yorkers languishing in the shelter system or facing eviction, and the measure would benefit more than 13,000 households across New York State."

#### **Housing Access New York members:**

Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD)  
CAMBA Inc.  
Caribbean Equality Project  
Catholic Charities Community Services  
Churches United For Fair Housing  
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York  
Coalition for the Homeless  
Community Missions of Niagara Frontier, Inc.  
Community Service Society of New York  
Elmont Cultural Center  
Enterprise Community Partners  
ETC Housing Corp  
Family Homelessness Coalition  
Family Promise of WNY  
Hayden Schwartz, advocate, board member, & community organizer  
HEALING HANDS INC  
HELP Development Corp.  
HELP USA  
Henry Street Settlement  
Her Migrant Hub  
Homeless Services United  
Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc.  
Housing Visions Unlimited, Inc.

Jericho Road Community Health Center  
Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter, Inc.  
Neighbors Together  
New Destiny Housing  
New York Housing Conference  
New York Immigration Coalition  
New York Legal Assistance Group  
NMIC  
Open New York  
Project Hospitality  
Providence House, Inc  
Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY)  
Robin Hood  
Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI)  
Safe Horizon  
Samaritan Daytop Village  
Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy Inc  
Services for the Underserved  
St Joseph's Community Outreach Center  
The Building & Realty Institute  
The Fortune Society  
The Legal Aid Society  
Trinity Church Wall Street  
Urban Pathways  
Voices of Community Activists and Leaders New York  
Volunteers of America - Greater New York  
West Side Federation for Senior and Supportive Housing  
Win

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### **About Housing Access New York**

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