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Homelessness Experts Release Comprehensive Plan for the Next Mayor to End Mass Homelessness in NYC

NEW YORK – Homelessness experts, including the Coalition for the Homeless, Community Service Society, The Legal Aid Society, VOCAL-NY, Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development, Neighbors Together, and CSH today released "Housing is the Solution: A Plan to End Mass Homelessness in NYC," a comprehensive policy blueprint that outlines concrete, realistic strategies to address New York City's homelessness crisis. As mayoral candidates develop their platforms for the upcoming election, experts are urging all candidates to make ending homelessness a central campaign issue and to adopt the plan's recommendations.

The newly released plan highlights the stark reality of New York's homelessness crisis: While New York City boasts 350,000 millionaires, it also has approximately 350,000 people without permanent, stable housing. On any given night, roughly 125,000 people sleep in shelters, thousands more on streets, and over 200,000 in overcrowded shared housing situations.

"The next mayor of New York City will inherit a homelessness crisis of historic proportions," said **David Giffen, Executive Director of the Coalition for the Homeless**. "What our plan makes clear is that this crisis is solvable, but only with the political courage to implement solutions at the necessary scale. For too long, our city has failed to invest in deeply affordable housing for those who need it most. We're calling on every mayoral candidate to commit to the concrete actions outlined in our plan and make ending homelessness a cornerstone of their campaign."

"For too long, mayors and mayoral candidates have promised to address New York City's longstanding homelessness crisis, and yet year after year, administration after administration, the crisis only persists and worsens," said **David R. Jones, President and CEO of the Community Service Society of New York**. "This plan calls for deeper investment in programs that work and reforms to programs that don't, emphasizing that—at its root—mass homelessness is a product of a broken housing system."

"To end mass homelessness in NYC, our next Mayor has to enthusiastically invest in a number of proven solutions to lessen the severity of this crisis," said **Adolfo Abreu, VOCAL-NY Housing Campaigns Director**. "We must prevent people from being evicted as much as we need to house those living in the broken shelter system. We must create new, deeply and permanently affordable housing opportunities while ensuring that as we house our people, they have access to the care and services they need. This report is a blueprint for the next mayor to ditch short-term, bandaid solutions and finally address New York City's housing crisis."

"The actionable strategies in this plan show a clear path out of NYC's homelessness and affordable housing crisis. The next mayor must stop acting as though their hands are tied on this

issue, and address the housing crisis head on. The City's budget is over \$114 billion dollars; homelessness is a result of policy choices and lack of political will to invest in long term solutions. The test of true leadership for any mayoral candidate or administration will be their willingness to invest in solving the issue of homelessness," **said Amy Blumsack, Director of Organizing and Policy at Neighbors Together.**

"The 'Housing is the Solution' plan provides a clear, actionable roadmap to ending mass homelessness in New York City, and the next mayor must embrace its recommendations with urgency," said **Adriene Holder, Chief Attorney of the Civil Practice at The Legal Aid Society.** "Decades of failed housing policies and underinvestment have fueled this crisis, but we now have a real opportunity to change course. By expanding truly affordable housing, strengthening tenant protections, and fully funding proven homelessness prevention programs, we can finally ensure that the people we serve and all New Yorkers have access to stable, permanent homes."

"New York City's next mayor who is firmly committed to ending mass homelessness, and the strategies outlined in this platform provide a path to do so. We must move away from a tacit acceptance of homelessness as an unfortunate but unsolvable dilemma and invest in real solutions - first and foremost by investing in deeply affordable permanent housing, and expanding access to proven programs for eviction prevention and supportive services," said **Emily Goldstein, Director of Organizing & Advocacy at the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development.**

"This plan equips New York City's next mayoral leader with proven, cost-effective solutions that build safe and thriving communities where everyone has a place to call home. New York City, the choice is simple: if we do not want to see people living on our streets, we must invest in building more affordable housing and providing the essential services and healthcare people need to thrive. The next mayor has the opportunity and responsibility to prioritize these proven, lasting solutions," said **Lauren Velez, Director, CSH Metro, NY, NJ, and PA.**

The policy document emphasizes that homelessness in New York City continues to grow primarily due to the city's affordable housing crisis, with one-third of all NYC renters, and three-quarters of extremely low-income renters, paying more than half their income toward rent.

The plan outlines four primary strategies:

1. **Create more affordable housing** by building 12,000 new deeply-subsidized units annually for homeless and low-income households and completing 15,000 supportive housing units within three years..
2. **Prioritize homeless households for federal housing resources** by increasing Section 8 vouchers for re-housing to 3,000 and allocating at least 3,000 NYCHA units yearly for shelter residents.
3. **Fix and expand eviction prevention programs** by implementing CityFHEPS expansions, streamlining application processes, combating source-of-income discrimination, and increasing Right to Counsel funding to \$350 million annually.

4. **Ensure access to mental health care and low-barrier shelters** by implementing true "Housing First" programs at scale, opening 4,000 new Safe Haven beds, expanding Intensive Mobile Treatment teams, removing NYPD from homeless outreach, and increasing public bathrooms.

Homelessness experts are calling on voters to make homelessness policy a deciding factor in how they cast their ballots in the upcoming mayoral election, and to press candidates on their specific plans to address this crisis.