

DECENT, AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR ALL NEW YORKERS

Empire State Economic Security Campaign

The Problem: Though some in Washington say that our communities are recovering from the worst recession since the great depression, New Yorkers are still reeling from record unemployment and all of the instability that comes with it. This includes housing instability. For example, 2010 began with a record number of homeless families living in New York City shelters (as reported by the NYC Department of Homeless Services) and according to a 2008 report by Congressman Anthony Weiner, 28% of New York City renters pay 50% or more of their income towards rent. This is an increase of 14.9% in the last nine years. The amount of affordable housing is also shrinking. A good example is New York State's own Mitchell-Lama program which has provided hundreds of thousands of lower and middle income residents an affordable safe place to call home since the program's inception in the 1970s yet 31% of the program's subsidized apartments have been lost since 1990. In addition, the city has lost 12% of other affordable housing programs, primarily Project Based Section 8 (the Community Service Society's policy brief *Closing the Door 2009: Risks of Boom and Bust*).

Therefore, New York's affordable housing stock needs to be preserved or New Yorkers will not have a stable place, within their communities, to call home. Yet Governor Patterson's proposed budget drastically cuts funding to the very programs that keep families from becoming homeless and or achieving housing stability.

ES2 supports the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of New York State's policy agenda which includes the "Campaign to Fund Affordable Housing for All New Yorkers" which contains funding for an array of efficient, coordinated programs that are essential to ameliorating the affordable housing crisis, providing safe, affordable homes, investing in local economies, protecting our communities, and creating a safer society.

What the Public Thinks: Most people, regardless of income, think that affordable housing is an important issue. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition over 50% of respondents support government policies to fund low-income housing and over 75% of those "consistently support" programs to create housing even if tax increases are needed and support a housing candidate over a tax cut candidate.

The 2010-2011 Session

We urge you to:

- Fully restore the Supplemental Homelessness Intervention Program (SHIP), which was completely eliminated from the Governor's budget, and restore the cuts to the Homelessness Intervention Program (HIP). Together, these programs keep over 6,000 families in their homes, saving the city and state \$112,086,000 in shelter costs.
- Support adequate protections for former Mitchell-Lama & Section 8 tenants by granting them protections under rent regulation S3326 (Stewart-Cousins, et al.)/A9230 (Rosenthal, et al.).
- Fully Repeal Vacancy Decontrol - S2237-A (Stewart-Cousins, et al.)/A2005 (Rosenthal, et al.) which allows landlords to pull apartments out of rent regulation once the monthly rent reaches \$2,000 and the apartment turns over.
- Repeal the Urstadt Law of 1971 - S749 (Krueger, et al.)/A1688 (Lopez, et al.) and allow New York City to determine its own rent regulations.
- Do NOT support Senator Espada's "rent freeze" bill (S6811) which provides large and immediate economic gains for landlords while only protecting a few tenants and jeopardizing the housing stability of thousands more.
- Support the Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of New York State's "Campaign to Fund Affordable Housing for All New Yorkers" which includes funding the Neighborhood Preservation Program at \$15 million (the Governor's budget contains a \$5.3 million cut to the program).

NEW YORK MUST DO MORE TO SUPPORT FAMILIES' AND INDIVIDUALS' HOMES!!