



November 6, 2023

The Honorable Eric Adams  
Mayor of the City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Adams:

For more than forty years, New York's bedrock Right to Shelter has served as an inviolable baseline of humanity and decency, ensuring that people without homes are not relegated to bedding down in public spaces, dangerously exposed to the elements. It is because of this right that New York City does not have the vast tent encampments seen in so many other cities around the country. Since 1981, the Right to Shelter has meant that hundreds of thousands of homeless individuals have had an alternative to sleeping on the streets. Simply put, the Right to Shelter saves lives, and is integral to the humanity of our community.

We, the undersigned organizations, are vehemently opposed to your efforts to undermine the legal Right to Shelter for both new arrivals and longtime New Yorkers, as you propose doing in your October 3, 2023 letter to the court, and see such efforts as an abrogation of your moral and legal duties as the mayor of a sanctuary city, a city that has been a proud beacon of humane and progressive values for its entire history, and where we, as community, have long been dedicated to the ideal that no one should be left to live, or die, on our streets.

Further, we urge you to cease spreading the false narrative that people from other nations would simply cease coming to New York City if there were no Right to Shelter. People come to New York because it has a well-earned reputation as a welcoming and tolerant city of humane values, of opportunity, and of diverse cultures. That will not change, nor do we believe it should change. And thus gutting the Right to Shelter will not deter people from coming here. In fact, between 1970 and 1980, roughly 80,000 immigrants per year came into the city – *before* there was a Right to Shelter.

Destroying the legal Right to Shelter for homeless New Yorkers and newcomers would have a devastating impact on our community, would cause irreparable harm to countless people who lack a safe place to sleep, and would do nothing to solve the problems you are trying to address.

We urge you to continue working with Governor Hochul to ensure that no one without a home is turned away, left to sleep outside, exposed and vulnerable. There are better

solutions to the current situation, some of which you and the Governor have already begun implementing, and which should be given time to have impact. And efforts must be made to move thousands of homeless households currently in shelters into permanent housing as quickly as possible.

This is a moment in history that will define your legacy. Removing the longstanding Right to Shelter and putting countless individuals at grave risk of injury and death is not the legacy we believe you wish to leave.

We stand ready to assist in all efforts to ensure that all in our community have access to safe and appropriate shelter, sufficient food, and a pathway to housing and stability.

Sincerely,

Coalition for the Homeless  
The Legal Aid Society  
Hunger Free America  
Coalition for Homeless Youth  
Cabrini Immigrant Services of NYC  
Ulster Immigrant Defense Network  
Equality New York  
Transnational Villages Network – Red de Pueblos Transnacionales  
Jackson Heights Immigrant Solidarity Network  
Henry Street Settlement  
The Partnership To End Homelessness  
Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC)  
Community Voices Heard  
The Gathering for Justice  
Open Hearts Initiative  
Interfaith Assembly on Homelessness and Housing  
New York Civil Liberties Union/ACLU of New York  
Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD)  
Center for Community Alternatives  
BronxWorks  
Safe Horizon  
New York County Defender Services  
VOCAL-NY  
RENA (Riverside Edgecombe Neighborhood Association)  
NY Working Families Party  
South Bronx Unite  
Housing Rights Initiative  
Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition  
Housing Works  
Catholic Migration Services  
Caribbean Equality Project

Neighbors Together  
Riverside Language Program, Inc.  
Sanctuary for Families  
Samaritan Daytop Village, Inc  
Refugee and Immigrant Support Services of Emmaus, Inc.  
Corporation for Supportive Housing  
Strong Economy for All  
Roads to Success  
University Settlement  
United Neighborhood Houses  
The Health & Housing Consortium  
Volunteers of America-Greater New York  
The Harding Ford Vision, Inc  
Parents Supporting Parents NY  
The Children's Village  
Jews for Racial and Economic Justice (JFREJ)  
WIN – Women in Need, Inc.  
Covenant House New York  
Public Health Solutions  
Workers United NY NJ Regional Joint Board a/w SEIU  
Rising Ground, Inc.  
Citizen Action of New York  
Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco)  
Metropolitan Community Church of New York  
National Youth Rights Association – NYRA  
The Black Institute  
Health x Housing Lab at NYU Langone Health  
Tenants & Neighbors  
UM Church of the Village  
Project Hajra  
Children's Rights  
Make the Road NY  
New York Legal Assistance Group  
The New York Women's Foundation  
PATHHSEO  
Pratt Center for Community Development  
Envision Freedom Fund  
Center for Popular Democracy Action  
Project Hospitality  
New York Communities for Change