

MEMORANDUM

A.3807 (Cymbrowitz)/S.2193 (Kavanagh)

AN ACT to amend the public housing law, in relation to an affordable housing five-year capital plan

This legislation would modify Article 2 of the Public Housing Law to require the development of a five-year capital spending plan for New York State Homes & Community Renewal as part of the annual executive budget for the fiscal year beginning on April 1, 2023 and every fifth fiscal year thereafter. The bill would require that the development and/or rehabilitation of affordable housing targeted to low-income seniors be specifically addressed as part of the five-year capital spending plan.

Since the implementation of New York's first five-year housing capital spending plan in 2017, significant progress has been made in the development and preservation of affordable and supportive housing stock throughout the state. To date, the original five-year plan has created 66,500 affordable units, but an ongoing capital commitment is necessary to continue this momentum. Without a guarantee of future investment, New York's affordable and supportive housing development community will be unable to ensure continued, uninterrupted unit production.

A guaranteed investment in affordable senior housing is more important than ever as New York prepares for substantial growth in its aging population. Between 2015 and 2040, the number of adults aged 65 and older will increase by 50 percent, and the number of adults over 85 will double. Older New Yorkers are the fastest growing demographic in our state and will comprise an estimated 4.3 million households by 2030. As this population increases, strains on New York's already limited affordable senior housing stock will only continue to grow. In New York City, waitlists for HUD Section 202 Senior Housing average seven years, with some seniors staying on waitlists for upwards of ten years. To combat these long waitlist times and address this growing population, it is imperative that housing that is targeted to seniors, and that is affordable, be developed. A.3807/S.2193 accounts for the need for this housing and would help ensure that New York's seniors have safe and affordable places to call home.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also demonstrated just how connected the availability of safe, decent, and affordable housing is to health outcomes. Those New Yorkers who do not have access to safe and affordable housing, who are living in dangerous, often overcrowded housing, or who have no housing at all are unable to follow the public health directives that have helped keep communities safe throughout the pandemic. The shortage of safe, decent, and affordable housing in New York is therefore a threat to the State's physical health and wellbeing. This threat can be mitigated through the adoption of a proactive housing capital spending plan such as what is outlined in A.3807/S.2193.

For these reasons, LeadingAge NY strongly supports this legislation and recommends that it be adopted.

LeadingAge New York represents over 400 not-for-profit and public long term care providers, including nursing homes, home care agencies, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living, adult care facilities, adult day health care and managed long term care.