

1 **NYSAC 2025 Legislative Conference**
2 **Standing Committee on Medicaid and Human Services**
3 **Resolution #1**

4
5 **Resolution Urging the Governor and Legislature to Become True Partners**
6 **in Addressing Homelessness by Focusing on Rent Allowance and Standard**
7 **of Need that Includes the Restoration of 50/50 Cost Sharing for Safety Net**
8 **Programs, and Provide Actual Brick and Mortar Solutions by Making**
9 **Permanent Housing the Central Focus**

10
11 **WHEREAS**, homelessness and housing affordability continue to be major concerns
12 across the state; and

13
14 **WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic made the situation worse through increased
15 rental rates, decreased housing supply and an increased reliance on temporary housing
16 assistance provided in shelters and motels; and

17
18 **WHEREAS**, Governor Hochul and the Legislature indicate they want to prioritize
19 housing affordability and availability; and

20
21 **WHEREAS**, while the influx of migrant asylum seekers since the Spring of 2022 has
22 slowed dramatically it is estimated that close to 150,000 are present in communities
23 across the state, adding more strain to an already overburden statewide shelter system;
24 and

25
26 **WHEREAS**, many areas of the state are seeing increases in homelessness even without
27 the addition of asylum seekers due to shortages in affordable housing, increases in
28 evictions, and fewer landlords willing to rent their properties to the clientele local social
29 service districts serve; and

30
31 **WHEREAS**, according to some data sources, New York State has the highest
32 homelessness rate in the country per 10,000 people at 53; and

33
34 **WHEREAS**, the state's unprecedented reduction in fiscal support implemented over a
35 decade ago when the state reduced its Safety Net program support from 50 percent to 29
36 percent has made the situation worse; and

37
38 **WHEREAS**, with the exception of homeless veterans', federal support in this area has
39 been relatively flat in nominal dollars and declined sharply in housing cost adjusted
40 dollars; and

41
42 **WHEREAS**, shelter allowances provided by the state are so low today that homeless
43 clients cannot compete in the current housing market; and

44
45 **WHEREAS**, the net effect of low shelter rates for individuals and families that have
46 been displaced and are residing in temporary housing is that current shelter allowances
47 serve as a barrier to moving to permanent housing; and

1 **WHEREAS**, the homeless population is facing new problems as the needs of families
2 have become more complicated; and
3
4 **WHEREAS**, regardless of family size and demographics, many of those facing
5 homelessness or seeking emergency shelter can have challenging medical needs, mental
6 health and substance abuse issues, some are registered sex offenders, and still others are
7 state prison parolees or on probation; with some facing several of these challenges at the
8 same time; and
9
10 **WHEREAS**, the state requires counties to fund 71 percent of costs for Safety Net
11 individuals and 100 percent of the costs of administering these programs; and
12
13 **WHEREAS**, local social service districts focus scarce resources on achieving
14 permanent housing, preventing homelessness and providing temporary placement; and
15
16 **WHEREAS**, counties maintain that preventing homelessness in the first instance is the
17 best way to keep families safe and secure; and
18
19 **WHEREAS**, counties maintain that while it is important to provide help in a crisis, it is
20 better policy to maintain stability and prevent emergencies by providing sufficient
21 resources up front.
22
23 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the New York State Association of
24 Counties (NYSAC) calls on the Governor and State Legislature to prioritize permanency
25 in housing and to update rental allowances and the standard of need, which have not
26 been properly updated in decades to fully address the dramatic growth in housing,
27 energy, and food costs; and
28
29 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, as part of the effort, the State must restore the Safety
30 Net state share to 50 percent; and
31
32 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, counties need brick and mortar solutions to existing
33 housing problems and encourage Governor Hochul and the State Legislature to increase
34 state funding support to achieve these ends; and
35
36 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the State should coordinate a timely transition to
37 supportive housing for the highest need individuals with mental health and substance
38 abuse issues in collaboration with OTDA, other state agencies, and local social services
39 districts; especially those that have been repeatedly homeless and in need of supportive
40 placements overseen by OMH, OASAS, OPWDD and DOCCS; and
41
42 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the State should work with counties in developing a
43 public education campaign to ensure people better understand the plight of families and
44 individuals struggling with homelessness and how everyone can benefit by helping them
45 achieve stable housing in our communities; and

1 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, counties seek the support of state officials to
2 encourage New York’s congressional delegation to increase national funding for the
3 Community Mental Health Services Block Grant by \$1 billion annually and target the
4 increase to ensure mental health and substance abuse services are available for
5 homeless families and individuals, and to help prevent homelessness in the first
6 instance; and

7
8 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, copies of this resolution be sent to the counties of
9 New York State encouraging member counties to enact a similar resolution; and

10
11 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, NYSAC shall forward copies of this resolution to
12 Governor Kathy Hochul, New York State Legislature, New York’s Congressional
13 Delegation, Office for Temporary Disability Assistance, Office of Mental Health, Office
14 of Addiction Services and Supports, and all others deemed necessary and proper.