

1 **NYSAC 2022 Legislative Conference**
2 **Standing Committee on Medicaid and Human Services**
3 **Resolution #2**

4 **Resolution Urging the Governor and State Legislature to Focus on Rent**
5 **Allowance and Standard of Need, Including the Restoration of 50/50 Cost**
6 **Sharing for Safety Net Programs and Clarifying Its Homelessness**
7 **Prevention Goals by Making Permanent Housing the Central Focus**

8 **WHEREAS**, homelessness and housing affordability continue to be major concerns
9 across the state; and

10 **WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has made the situation worse by increasing
11 rental rates and decreasing housing supply, while state policy is increasing the reliance
12 on temporary housing assistance in shelters and motels; and

13 **WHEREAS**, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program funding provided by Congress
14 to prevent people from losing their homes and increasing homelessness was an essential
15 strategy as the human hardships would have been far more devastating if we had not
16 kept people housed; and

17 **WHEREAS**, the homeless population is facing new problems as the needs of families
18 have become more complicated; and

19 **WHEREAS**, regardless of family size and demographics, many of those facing
20 homelessness or seeking emergency shelter can have challenging medical needs, mental
21 health and substance abuse issues, some are registered sex offenders, and still others are
22 state prison parolees or on probation; with some facing several of these challenges at the
23 same time; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the state is contemplating new hotel regulations that could reduce the
25 number of units available to homeless families, leaving county officials with very limited
26 options that may be less effective and more expensive in managing local homeless
27 populations; and

28 **WHEREAS**, the state requires counties to fund 71 percent of costs for Safety Net
29 individuals and 100 percent of the costs of administering these programs; and

30 **WHEREAS**, local social service districts focus scarce resources on achieving
31 permanent housing, preventing homelessness and providing temporary placement; and

32 **WHEREAS**, counties maintain that while it is important to provide help in a crisis, it is
33 better policy to maintain stability and prevent emergencies by providing sufficient
34 resources up front.

35 **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the New York State Association of
36 Counties (NYSAC) calls on the Governor and state legislature to prioritize permanency

1 in housing and to update rental allowances and the standard of need which have not
2 been properly adjusted in decades to fully address the dramatic growth in housing,
3 energy and food costs; and

4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, as part of this reform effort the state must restore the
5 Safety Net state match to 50 percent; and

6 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, as most counties rely on hotels and motels to shelter
7 homeless individuals and families, the state should pare back or end highly burdensome
8 hotel and motel regulations that end up limiting the supply of rooms available to
9 counties that have little choice but to rely on this method of temporary housing; and

10 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the State should coordinate a timely transition to
11 supportive housing for the highest need individuals with mental health and substance
12 abuse issues in collaboration with OTDA, other state agencies, and local social services
13 districts; especially those that have been repeatedly homeless and in need of supportive
14 placements overseen by OMH, OASAS, OPWDD and DOCCS; and

15 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the state should target funding to counties that allow
16 them to work with community partners to develop service models that achieve
17 permanency through innovative and flexible approaches that meet local needs; and

18 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the State should work with counties in developing a
19 public education campaign to ensure people better understand the plight of families and
20 individuals struggling with homelessness and how everyone can benefit by helping them
21 achieve stable housing in our communities; and

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

24 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NYSAC shall forward copies of this resolution to
25 Governor Kathy Hochul, the Office for Children and Family Services, the Office for
26 Temporary Disability Assistance and all others deemed necessary and proper.