

## MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

### Waiting List Priorities for DV Survivors in Need of Housing

A.1113 Stirpe/ S.936 Bailey

The New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) urges the New York State Legislature to pass legislation granting domestic violence survivors the same priority afforded to other disenfranchised populations when applying for housing through statewide housing authorities.

Domestic violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and their children. In fact, 90% of homeless women report experiencing severe abuse at some point in their life and 63% identify as victims of domestic and/or sexual violence.<sup>1</sup> The intersection of domestic violence, housing insecurity, and homelessness is irrefutable. Safe housing can provide a path to freedom but there are many factors victims of domestic violence must take into consideration before leaving abusive partners.

Many victims of domestic violence are limited in their relocation options due to safety concerns. They may also face discrimination in their search for housing based on their status as a victim of domestic violence. These factors are compounded by the lack of safe and affordable housing available in many New York communities. Prioritizing the needs of domestic violence survivors seeking housing will immeasurably change the lives of survivors and their family members across the state.

This bill would amend the Public Housing Law by adding domestic violence survivors to those whose applications would be prioritized by a local public housing authority where the victim would continue to suffer from domestic violence if the individual continued to stay in their current residence, or if the victim has already left their home due to domestic violence and is not living in standard permanent replacement housing.

NYSCADV urges the Legislature to pass this legislation which would improve and expand access to housing for victims of domestic violence, breaking down barriers and enhancing their safety.

#### **ABOUT NYSCADV:**

Established in 1978, NYSCADV is designated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as the information clearinghouse, primary point of contact, and resource center on domestic violence for the State of New York. NYSCADV is responsible for supporting the development of policies, protocol, and procedures to enhance domestic violence intervention and prevention and also provides education and technical assistance to the network of primary-purpose domestic violence service providers statewide.

**For more information, contact: Joan Gerhardt, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy, 518.482.5465**

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<sup>1</sup> Browne, A. 1998. "Responding to the Needs of Low Income and Homeless Women Who are Survivors of Family Violence." Journal of American Medical Women's Association. 53(2): 57-64.