

Memo of Support:

Restoration of Funding for Adult Home Resident Advocacy and Support Programs

We strongly urge the Legislature and Governor to restore critical funding for adult home resident advocacy and support in the final New York State budget. These investments are essential to protecting the rights, dignity, and quality of life of thousands of New Yorkers living in adult care facilities.

****Coalition of Institutionalized Aged and Disabled (CIAD) – \$225,000**

****Adult Home Advocacy and Resident Council Programs – \$230,000**

****EQUAL (Enhancing the Quality of Adult Living) Program – \$6.5 million**

Adult home residents are among the most vulnerable individuals in our state. Many are low-income, living with mental health conditions, disabilities, or other complex needs, and rely on Medicaid and state-supported services. Without adequate oversight, advocacy, and support, these individuals face heightened risks of neglect, isolation, and loss of autonomy.

New York has faced this crisis before. More than two decades ago, unsafe conditions, lack of care, and systemic neglect in adult homes led to public outcry, legal action, and ultimately reforms that established vital advocacy programs and funding streams. These efforts were hard-won through the leadership and organizing of residents themselves and must not be undone.

We are deeply concerned that the Executive Budget proposed eliminating funding for several core programs that ensure resident protections and meaningful quality of life improvements. We urge the Legislature to restore the following:

1. Coalition of Institutionalized Aged and Disabled (CIAD) – \$225,000

This includes restoration of the long-standing \$75,000 Department of Health line and an additional \$150,000 for a total of \$225,000 to ensure full and sustainable funding.

CIAD is the only organization that consistently provides direct, on-the-ground advocacy for adult home residents, particularly in New York City. CIAD staff regularly visit facilities, train resident leaders, support the formation of resident councils, and ensure individuals understand and can exercise their rights. These services are essential to balancing the power dynamic between residents and facility operators and ensuring residents have a voice in decisions that affect their lives.

2. Adult Home Advocacy and Resident Council Programs – \$230,000

These programs provide critical legal support, advocacy, and organizing capacity that help residents prevent evictions, access benefits, and improve living conditions. They also foster community through resident councils, empowering individuals to collectively advocate for better care and services.

Eliminating this funding would severely limit access to representation, reduce residents' ability to assert their rights, and dismantle a key mechanism for accountability and system improvement. We call for the legislature to restore the full \$230,000 for these programs.

3. EQUAL (Enhancing the Quality of Adult Living) Program – \$6.5 million

The EQUAL program is a cornerstone of quality-of-life improvements in adult homes. It provides funding for basic necessities such as clothing, air conditioning, and improved living environments, while also supporting skill-building and staff training.

Critically, the program ensures that residents have a direct role in determining how funds are used, reinforcing autonomy and dignity. Eliminating this \$6.5 million investment would reverse progress made in improving conditions and supporting resident wellbeing.

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The elimination of these programs would represent a significant step backward for New York. Without them, residents will lose access to advocacy, legal support, and essential resources, increasing the likelihood of neglect and eroding the gains made over the past two decades.

At a time when we are working to strengthen community-based services and uphold the rights of people with disabilities and mental health conditions, it is imperative that the state maintain its commitment to those living in adult homes.

Together, we stand with our partners and, most importantly, with adult home residents in calling for the full restoration of these critical funding streams in the final budget.

Signed:

Alliance for Rights and Recovery

Medicaid Matters New York

Mobilization for Justice

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy

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