



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 11, 2016
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ADVOCATES APPLAUD MAYOR DE BLASIO'S COMPREHENSIVE HOMELESS SERVICES PLAN

Mary Brosnahan, CEO of Coalition for the Homeless said, "We are heartened that the City has completed its thorough 90-day review process and will increase its focus on preventing homelessness and providing permanent housing to homeless families and adults. We are also pleased that Commissioner Banks, who has decades of experience helping vulnerable New Yorkers, will become Commissioner of Social Services. There is much work to do to improve conditions and services for homeless New Yorkers, and we are pleased that the City is taking this urgent work seriously."

Christine C. Quinn, President and CEO of Win, formerly Women in Need, the City's largest provider of shelter and support services for homeless women and their children, said, "Mayor de Blasio's latest series of reforms once again makes it clear that the administration understands full well that in order to break the cycle of homelessness, any serious approach needs to attack the issue from all sides. The city is taking concrete steps to recognize the factors that lead to families becoming homeless, what leads to persistent homelessness and what supports families' needs as they cycle out into permanent housing. Furthermore, we hope this new, consolidated management structure overseeing all homeless services will lead to more efficient, thoughtful management of the homelessness crisis. Win stands at the ready to work with Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Banks to help implement their vision."

George T. McDonald, Founder and President of the Doe Fund said, "New York sets the standard for civic life for the nation, especially when it comes to addressing our greatest challenges. And no challenge is greater than serving those who struggle at the very bottom of our society. Commissioner Banks's 90-day review of homeless services will yield essential insights from our city's concerted, thirty-year effort to uplift the lives of homeless New Yorkers and return them to their families and communities. No other city in the world spends as much time, energy and money to address this incredibly complex issue. With Commissioner Banks's review now complete, those resources can be leveraged to the greatest possible effect: improving not only the lives of the homeless, but breaking the cycles of poverty and incarceration that have impacted our poorest communities for generations."

Tom Hameline, Ph.D., President and CEO, HELP USA said, "HELP USA has welcomed the intensive review of homeless services conducted by Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Banks."

We look forward to working collaboratively with the Administration on enhancing services in shelters. We are pleased that there will be a focus on coordinating shelter inspections and we encourage the administration to standardize the inspection protocols and to provide operators with capital reserves to maintain shelters in excellent condition over time. Further, we believe that permanent housing is the solution to homelessness and we therefore applaud the administration for proposing tighter coordination with the Continuum of Care and for convening the Supportive Housing Task Force to ensure that housing is targeted to meet the needs of people who are chronically homeless or living on the streets. We commit the resources of HELP USA to assist the Administration to realize these positive reforms.”

Monsignor Kevin Sullivan, Executive Director of Catholic Charities and Archdiocese of New York said, “A review that takes a hard look at current realities and makes constructive recommendations to more effectively assist those who struggle with the reality and threat of homelessness is very welcome and to be applauded. Catholic Charities continues to work closely with our Public and other philanthropic partners to provide critically needed services.”

David R. Jones, President and CEO of the Community Service Society, said, “We commend the mayor for conducting a thorough review of homelessness services. But we need both the City and State to work more collaboratively on pressing issues of homelessness and housing if we are to make real progress on these critical fronts. Consolidating City homelessness strategies and resources will certainly improve the delivery of services to vulnerable New Yorkers. And we are confident the mayor has chosen the right person to lead this effort in Steve Banks.”

Jeanette Ruffins and Laura Mascuch, co-Chairs of CCoC said, “The New York City Coalition on the Continuum of Care is pleased to be incorporated into the homeless planning and policy structure and looks forward to working on coordinated assessment and placement with the city.”

Rosanne Haggerty, President of Community Solutions said, “The plan's focus on prevention, on improving the quality of data to connect families and individuals to effective help more quickly and consistently, and its emphasis on rapid rehousing reflect the best practices in the field.”

Muzzy Rosenblatt, Executive Director of BRC said, “I applaud Mayor de Blasio for taking decisive action today to address the crisis of homelessness in our city, and I further applaud him for entrusting the success of this effort to Steve Banks. A plan of action is only as great as the general in whose charge it is placed. Having worked with him on this issue for 25 years, first as legal adversaries and most recently as partners in service to our City’s most vulnerable, I know that Steve Banks brings the necessary experience, wisdom, insight and tenacity to see the mission through with success.”

Adriene Holder, Attorney-in-Charge of Civil Practice at The Legal Aid Society, said, “We commend the leadership shown by Mayor de Blasio to reform decades of punitive policymaking by prior administrations, and look forward to working with the administration to put these broad principles into action for the benefit of homeless New Yorkers.”

Joan Montbach, Interm Executive Director of Homeless Services United, Inc. said, “Homeless Services United strongly supports the systemic changes to the homeless delivery system announced by the Mayor today. In developing these plans, the City reached out – and listened to – hundreds of stakeholders, including the leadership of our member agencies. Our voices can be heard in a number of these recommendations, and for that we are grateful. In the coming months HSU will work collaboratively with the City to ensure that the initiatives announced today are implemented and address the root causes of homelessness. These proposals hold the promise to make a real difference in the lives of homeless and at-risk New Yorkers.”

Eileen Torres, Executive Director of BronxWorks, said, “BronxWorks is very encouraged by the Comprehensive Services Plan announced today by Mayor de Blasio. The necessary focus on expanding programs such as Homebase and other prevention services will have a positive impact on families and individuals who are most at-risk of becoming homeless. BronxWorks is also in support of the increase in resources and drop-in centers for our most vulnerable neighbors. By offering more support to the street homeless population, the quality of life will undoubtedly increase for all New Yorkers.”

Judi Kende, Vice President and New York Market Leader of Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. said, “Mayor de Blasio clearly recognizes stable, affordable housing is the solution to New York’s homelessness crisis. Enterprise applauds the administration’s mandate for close coordination among all agencies working with homeless populations. We believe this will ensure that families and individuals get the right housing and service supports they need to end the cycle of homelessness. Thanks to this holistic, cross-agency 90-day review, the City is better equipped to tackle homelessness on three pivotal fronts: prevention, shelter, and rehousing.”

Susan G. Stamler, Executive Director of United Neighborhood Houses, said, “For more than three decades Steve Banks has pursued a vision of a City that better addresses the needs of low-income New Yorkers. Through his leadership at both HRA and DHS, he has taken steps to improve major government programs and provide our communities with the education, training and support they need to succeed. I look forward to Steve’s continued leadership to provide services and stability for our neighbors.”

Brenda Rosen, President and CEO of Breaking Ground, said, “Breaking Ground applauds the de Blasio administration for taking action to address the city’s homelessness crisis, including new structures and leadership that will make all of our work more efficient. Breaking Ground is proud to be working with the City to bring resources and housing to more homeless New Yorkers. We are significantly expanding street outreach work through HOME-STAT, adding new Safe Haven beds and drop-in centers, and are working to build more than 1,000 new supportive housing units to provide the homeless with safe, stable homes and the resources they need to restore their lives.”

Tony Hannigan, Founder and Executive Director of Center for Urban Community Service, said, “These are the most sweeping set of changes and new initiatives that I have seen in twenty five years of working with the city’s homeless services and shelter system.”

Kristin Miller, CSH Greater Metro Director, said, “By establishing an Interagency Homeless Accountability Council, the Mayor is sending a clear message that business as usual is over, every department and unit in his administration must work together and share resources to end homelessness; it's a priority. He also underscores the determination to build a services delivery system where those providing housing and housing assistance are instinctively collaborating and coordinating with healthcare, workforce development, criminal justice agencies, family-child welfare services and others to quickly and appropriately meet the needs of those who require help to get off our streets.”

Wayne Starks, board member of VOCAL-NY, said, "We commend Steve Banks and City Hall on a truly holistic approach to addressing our City's homelessness, which we are confident will continue to improve shelter conditions and reducing their numbers and formerly homeless individual. "Just as Banks did at HRA, he has meaningfully engaged clients, staff and service providers to develop a set no nonsense policy changes that will benefit all parties involved, and New York City as a whole."

Mitchell Netburn, President and CEO of Project Renewal, said, “Project Renewal applauds the Mayor’s proposals to expand the City’s services for homeless New Yorkers, and to strengthen the system for delivering them. These comprehensive plans demonstrate that the City listened carefully to the hundreds of stakeholders with whom it communicated during its exhaustive review of the Department of Homeless Services. By addressing homeless New Yorkers’ wide array of needs, from housing to mental health care to job opportunities, these proposals represent a significant moment in the fight against homelessness.”

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