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**DE BLASIO ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES UNPRECEDENTED EXPANSION OF SHELTER  
FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio and Human Resources Administration Commissioner Steve Banks today announced that New York City is expanding its shelters for survivors of domestic violence, adding space to serve a total of about 13,300 children and adults a year, a 50 percent increase over the current 8,800 individuals served yearly. The City is adding a total of 700 Tier II units and emergency beds – an unprecedented addition to the City’s current domestic violence shelter capacity. The City added 736 units between 2002 through 2010, of which 85 percent were emergency beds, and none since 2010.

The expansion will provide the following:

- 400 new units of Tier II transitional family shelter, almost tripling capacity to 643 units.
- 300 new emergency shelter beds for single survivors of domestic violence, including single pregnant women and women with very young children.

“It is our responsibility to ensure that victims of domestic violence have the resources and support they need,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “With this significant expansion – the largest increase in recent history – we’ll be able to provide both the space and specialized services to help survivors of domestic violence rebuild their lives.”

“In all our programs at HRA, we are seeking to end a one-size-fits-all approach with programs designed to more effectively help our clients improve their lives. For domestic violence survivors, that means more specialized shelters that provide them with the services that will help them safely return to the community and independence as soon as possible,” said **Human Resources Administration Commissioner Steven Banks**.

“DHS is committed to ensuring our clients, especially those with specialized needs, receive the care, attention and services they deserve” said **Department of Homeless Services Commissioner Gilbert Taylor**. “These newly dedicated shelters will provide survivors of domestic violence an opportunity to reestablish their lives in and a safe environment.”

“Emergency and transitional shelter is among the top priorities for the clients that seek assistance through the New York City Family Justice Centers and particularly for high-risk survivors who come to the Office to Combat Domestic Violence through our Domestic Violence Response Team. The NYC Human Resources Administration’s expansion of shelter is another significant step by the administration to strengthen the City’s safety net for victims of domestic violence,” said **Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence Rosemonde Pierre-Louis**.

New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer has approved HRA using an emergency procurement for six months of services at a cost of \$14,770,000, which will allow the agency to find and open shelters more quickly. The emergency contracts will then be replaced by long-term contracts.

HRA oversees the largest network of domestic violence services in the country, including shelters and many other services. The HRA domestic violence shelter system currently consists of 45 confidential facilities throughout all five boroughs of New York City with a total capacity of 2,228 emergency beds and 243 transitional shelter units, known as Tier II units. The system served 8,838 individuals, including children, in fiscal year 2015. To protect survivors, the locations of domestic violence shelters are kept strictly confidential. The new units will bring the domestic violence shelter system to a total of 2,528 emergency beds for single adults or families with very young children and 643 units of transitional shelter for families including children, almost tripling the number of these most needed units.

In both types of shelter survivors receive support services including counseling, preparation for permanent housing, assistance in locating adequate housing, child care services, help applying for benefits such as public assistance, and access to job readiness and placement programs. Both individuals and families will be helped to see if they qualify for one of the City's rent assistance programs designed for survivors of domestic violence so they can move out of shelter.

"The grip that victims of domestic violence find themselves in is that the very idea of escape seems intangible. There is an illusory feeling that the obstacles they face are insurmountable, the logistics too difficult, and so they continue living in a home where they do not feel safe. Domestic violence shelters, like the ones provided by the Human Resource Administration, not only provide victims a haven, but also hope. Hope that, with one step at a time, there is a way out from the abuse they've suffered. I commend the Human Resource Administration for expanding its shelter. With every room added is another family saved," said **State Senator Tony Avella**.

"By expanding New York City's capacity to provide safe housing with specialized services for survivors of domestic violence by 50 percent, Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Banks have exponentially increased the chances of success for thousands of adults and children who have experienced life altering trauma. They are to be commended for this bold action," said **Assembly Member Andy Hevesi**.

"I applaud the de Blasio administration, Commissioner Banks, and the Human Resources Administration on this historic expansion of shelter housing for survivors of domestic violence. This represents well over a 60 percent increase over the current bed capacity for domestic violence survivors and is the latest example of real action by the City to help those most in need," said **Council Member Steve Levin**.

"Intimate partner violence is the leading cause of murder for women both in New York City and throughout the U.S. Over the past few years, NYC has taken steps and allocated additional resources to provide increased support to victims of domestic violence to ensure they can safely leave abusive situations. URI applauds Commissioner Banks and HRA's new initiative to address the shortage of beds for victims of domestic violence who often have no safe place to go after fleeing their abuser," said **Nat Fields, President and CEO of Urban Resource Institute**.

"The most dangerous time for a domestic violence victim is when she decides to leave. In fact, it is estimated that up to 75 percent of domestic violence related homicides occur upon separation. Sanctuary for Families manages 200 shelter beds throughout New York City and we see, first-hand, how powerful supportive shelter is in helping victims turn their lives around. Shelter provides the time and space to heal. The crucial services provided give families the life skills and support they need to remain stable – and thrive – once they re-enter the community. We applaud the de Blasio administration and Commissioner Banks for this life-saving investment in increasing the number of domestic violence shelter beds throughout the city," said **Judy Kluger, Executive Director of Sanctuary for Families**.

"This is an extraordinary opportunity to reduce crisis for many families. We can now go to our communities with these resources and options. Talk about life saving opportunities," said **Cecilia Gaston, Executive Director of the Violence Intervention Program**.

