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**Habitat for Humanity New York City and Westchester County Celebrates
Landmark Budget Victory for Affordable Housing in New York City**

New York, NY (May 12, 2025) — Habitat for Humanity New York City and Westchester County is celebrating a transformational win for affordable homeownership and housing equity: the Affordable Housing Retention Act is now law, thanks to its inclusion in New York’s FY 2026 State Budget.

This groundbreaking legislation will help preserve thousands of affordable housing units while offering New Yorkers something that’s been out of reach for far too long: the opportunity to become homeowners.

“This law creates a pathway to homeownership for New Yorkers who have long been priced out—and gives the city a tool to preserve affordability without relying on new subsidies or market-rate development,” said Sabrina Lippman, CEO, Habitat NYC and Westchester. “We are proud to have worked alongside tenants, advocates, property owners, fellow housing and real estate organizations, and housing champions like Governor Kathy Hochul, Senator Cordell Cleare, and Assemblymember Harvey Epstein to make this possible.”

The Affordable Housing Retention Act targets a pressing and specific need. In previous decades, many mixed-income buildings in New York City were developed using public financing tools such as tax abatements, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and bonds. But the affordability restrictions tied to those incentives are now expiring, putting thousands of affordable units at risk of being converted to market rate.

This law allows the state and City to step in and preserve these homes. It enables tenants in qualified buildings to purchase their units and requires participating building owners to maintain or expand affordable housing in partnership with non-profit organizations like Habitat for Humanity. The goal is to prevent displacement while promoting economic mobility through homeownership.

The legislation is amongst a number of Habitat NYC and Westchester's housing priorities included in the budget and signed by Governor Hochul. The FY 2026 budget includes:

- \$50 million to develop more affordable starter homes
- Measures to disincentivize institutional investors from buying up one- and two-family homes
- \$50 million for the first year of the Housing Access Voucher Program to help New Yorkers experiencing or at risk of homelessness secure safe housing

Additionally, the legislature and Governor secured an agreement to establish an affordable homebuyer property tax incentive at local opt-in for homes built with assistance from governmental entities, nonprofits, land banks, or community land trusts, and sold to low- and moderate-income homebuyers – a top priority for Habitat for Humanity of New York State and championed by affiliates across the state.

"This is what housing justice looks like," Lippman continued. "We are not only preserving existing affordable homes—we are opening doors to homeownership, protecting communities, and proving that bold collaboration across the industry strengthens our collective impact—including sparking productive policy advancement and transformative change for all."

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