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Elected Officials, Homeless New Yorkers, and Advocates Defend Hotel Placements, Renew Calls for Greater Affordable Housing

Advocates and Electeds say that Pushback Against the Hotel Placements Reeks of Race-based NIMBYism, all While the Policy is Saving Lives

New York, NY: City Councilmembers, homeless New Yorkers and community advocates will hold a press conference to push back against racist, NIMBY, anti-homeless attacks that are stemming from wealthy, predominantly white neighborhoods like the Upper West Side. They are also calling on the Mayor and City Council to pass Intro 146, a bill that would expand the city's largest housing voucher program, CityFHEPS, to cover market rate apartments. COVID-19 has been particularly devastating to New Yorkers without housing, who are 61% more likely to die of the disease. Advocates say the right thing to do is clear- keep people safe and distanced while opening up pathways for permanent homes.

Press will have the opportunity to ask questions.

WHO: Councilmember Levin, VOCAL-NY, Neighbors Together, Safety Net Activists and Safety Net Project, Human.nyc, Upper West Side Open Hearts

WHEN: Wednesday, September 2, 10AM

WHERE: <https://vocalny.zoom.us/j/81946803946>

Background: On March 13th, the #HomelessCan'tStayHome Campaign launched with the goal of securing an individual hotel room for every New Yorkers who could not properly social distance due to the dangerous conditions of crowded, congregate shelters. Since then, over 15,000 people have been moved into hotel rooms throughout the five boroughs. In recent weeks, we have seen a sharp rise in hateful, anti-homeless, and racist rhetoric from communities that historically have never been home to shelters. Vigilante groups like the Guardian Angels have used baseless claims of increased violence as an excuse to patrol and harass homeless people. Homeless New Yorkers staying in these hotels are now subject to follow "Good Neighbor Policies", punitive, one-strike "agreements" and "contracts" enforced by shelter providers attempting to appease the loudest, angriest NIMBY voices. Under these new "agreements" clients at these hotels risk immediate transfer back to congregate shelter for breaking arbitrary and punitive rules.

As outlined by the [#HomelessCan'tStayHome campaign](#), the safest option for homeless New Yorkers during COVID-19 is permanent housing. Advocates have called upon the city to fix and expand its largest tool to escape homelessness, the CityFHEPS housing voucher. Currently CityFHEPS payment standard [falls far below market rate rents](#) in New York City, leaving thousands of homeless New Yorkers unable to exit shelter despite having a voucher. Intro 146, sponsored by Councilmember Levin, would increase the voucher's payment standard to fair market rent, opening the pathway to permanent housing for thousands of people. The bill currently has a veto proof majority in the City Council.

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