

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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B E F O R E:

RITCHIE J. TORRES

Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

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JAMES G. VAN BRAMER

LAURIE A. CUMBO

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

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Resident Association President
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Carlos Ruiz
President of Harlem and Bronx Chapter
New York Community for Change

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NYCHA Clinton Houses Development

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A P P E A R E N C E S (CONTINUED)

Reginald Bowman
Citywide Council of Presidents
New York City Housing Authority Resident
Association

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Good afternoon

ladies and gentleman. I'm City Council Member Ritchie Torres and I chair the Committee on Public Housing. I am proud to be joined by the members of the Public Housing Committee. We have Council Member Mendez from the lower eastside, Council Member Richards from the Far Rockaways, Majority Leader Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer. And we also have with us who is not a member of the public housing committee but whose district is substantially affected by the Governor's decision Council Member Mark Levine whose district is set to lose over three million, yes. Well thank you for being here. NYCHA's moment in Albany had finally come. Just a few months ago with the budget nearing passage it appeared likely that after decades of disinvesting from NYCHA Albany would finally get back in the business of supporting the nation's largest but increasingly endangered public housing stock. Indeed the last time NYCHA had received a steady stream of state funding... chair of this committee was in elementary school. The leaders of the city and state's political establishment had an

uncoordinated but unified message for Albany, reinvest in NYCHA. On February 11th, 2015 city council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito who represents the highest concentration of public housing I the state gave the council's annual state of the city address in a public housing complex calling on the state to revive investment in NYCHA. On February 25th Mayor Bill de Blasio testifying before a joint committee of the state senate and the state assembly requested 300 million dollars in state funds for NYCHA and promised a match of 300 million dollars in city funds in return. On March 16th, 2015 a broad cross section of elected officials and advocates spearheaded by Senators Jeff Cline and Diane Savino of the independent democratic conference as well as Senator Adriano Espaillat of the democratic conference, and member organizations of the real affordability for all campaign led a historic mobilization of public housing residents at the million dollar staircase in the state capital. And on the eve of the budget Assembly Member Keith Wright joined by chairperson Shola Olatoye held a press conference driving home the same message of reinvestment. All the stars

were aligned, all the power brokers in agreement. On March 31st, 2015 the state acknowledging the organic and overwhelming consensus that ha a reason around NYCHA's need for state support, allocated a historic 100 million dollars in capital funds for public housing. But what appeared at first glance to be a multi-million dollar investment in NYCHA's critical infrastructure at a moment of dire need became undone at the whim of one man Governor Andrew Cuomo. Within two weeks of the governors signing the budget into law NYCHA submitted a detailed plan for spending the 100 million dollars on replacing the worst roofs in public housing. Of all the physical needs plaguing public housing none is more urgent and none has a greater return on investment than replacing dilapidated roofs which strike at the root cause of chronic living conditions like mold growth and water leaks. Yet to the astonishment of many the governor rejected the use of state funds for, for replacing the worst roofs deciding instead to turn a need based capital fund into a political slush fund. The purpose of today's hearing is to examine both the historical context and the human consequence of the governor's

1 decision to play politics with the pressing needs
2 of an endangered public housing stock. The public
3 housing stock here in New York City has a capital
4 need of 17 billion dollars. Devastated by decades
5 of disinvestment NNYCHA is facing what the
6 Community Service Society describes as a state of
7 accelerating decline. Buildings are getting older
8 and older. Living conditions are getting worse and
9 are getting worse faster. Budget cuts are getting
10 deeper and deficits wider. Here in New York City as
11 well as elsewhere in the nation public housing is
12 dying slowly but surely. Confronted with the
13 reality of its own decline NYCHA needs every dollar
14 it can get and it needs every dollar it gets to be
15 spent on critical infrastructure. The mayor gets it
16 hints the city's investment of a hundred million
17 dollars in roof replacement in the upcoming fiscal
18 year. And never has the moral contrast between the
19 governor and the mayor been so pronounced as on the
20 subject of public housing. While the governor is
21 playing politics in the crudest form the mayor is
22 showing the kind of moral leadership seldom seen in
23 politics. As the daily news puts it next gen NYCHA
24 which is the mayor's plan for saving public housing
25

represents the most significant acceptance of mayoral responsibility for NYCHA in decades. Instead of running away from the magnitude of NYCHA's challenge or instead of ignoring it woefully as the governor has done. The mayor has put forward a historic framework for both stabilizing the housing authority and reversing the accelerating decline of its housing stock. Whatever your opinion on the details of the mayor's plan there is no denying the leadership he is showing. Back to the governor. Now according to the daily news the governor's office said the following. Noting NYCHA's poor track record a promo spokesperson said the governor wants as much input as possible to make sure that state funding is spent correctly and with accountability. The governor sites the need for accountability as an excuse for seeking legislative input which is his euphemism for political slush fund. Now we decide for a moment the obvious fact that political slush funds produce less accountability, not more. Here are three reasons why the governor's argument is specious. First the state budget which is signed in, which he signed into law imposes multiple

1 layers of accountability on NYCHA. It requires
2 NYCHA under the supervision of DHCR to develop a
3 capital revitalization plan detailing how, when,
4 and where the hundred million dollars in funds will
5 be spent. And that plan requires the approval of
6 both DHCR and the state budget decision, division.
7 It requires NYCHA to enter into a construction
8 management agreement with DASNY which will
9 supervise the scope, procurement, and
10 administration of contracts relating to state
11 funding. And it requires the city comptroller to
12 audit NYCHA's management in contracting process for
13 repair and maintenance and to make recommendations
14 for improvement. The second reason why the
15 governor's wrong, despite the governor's criticism
16 of NYCHA's track record the housing authority has
17 made measurable progress toward improving capital
18 project delivery. In 2014 NYCHA delivered three
19 times as many capital projects in one-third of the
20 time than it had in years past. And the third
21 reason the governor's criticism of NYCHA is not
22 only inaccurate but it's irrelevant for one simple
23 reason. The budget charges DASNY, not NYCHA with
24 executing a hundred million dollar capital program.
25

1 Instead of dedicating the hundred million dollars
2 toward replacing the worst roofs in public housing
3 the governor has decided to divvy up the pie among
4 a select set of state legislatures with each one
5 receiving about two million dollars. The governor's
6 office released a memo setting forth guidelines on
7 how each two million dollar earmark should be
8 spent. And the most controversial guideline reads
9 as follows. These state funds are not intended to
10 supplant NYCHA planning for routine capital
11 activities thus projects related to basic
12 infrastructure such as roofing or mechanical
13 systems are not recommended. So in addition to
14 rejecting funds for roof replacement the governor's
15 memo explicitly advises against investment in any
16 project pertaining to NYCHA's critical
17 infrastructure. Here is a list of the capital
18 projects not recommended under the governor's
19 plans; boiler replacement, elevator replacement,
20 roof replacement, exterior restoration, brick work,
21 electrical system upgrades, heating system upgrades
22 are all ineligible under the governor's plans. So
23 which projects are eligible are landscaping,
24 recreational equipment, appliances which include
25

1 stoves and refrigerators. By diverting funds away
2 from the basic structures and systems and toward
3 feel good projects like landscaping the governors
4 discussing the state's continued disinvestment from
5 NYCHA's critical infrastructure as a historic
6 investment in public housing. And we are asking the
7 public not to be fooled by this 100 million dollar
8 public relations gimmick. The governor's memo goes
9 on to state that basic infrastructure improvements
10 are expected to be financed through the existing
11 NYCHA capital program. This statement is factually
12 false. And the governor knows that NYCHA's capital
13 need far exceeds the funding it receives. He even
14 said as much in an appearance at ABNY in late
15 April. Acknowledging that NYCHA's need had grown so
16 dire that the state had no option but to intervene
17 with capital support. Quoting the governor I used
18 to be HUD secretary. You've really never had cities
19 or states fund NYCHA. NYCHA is funded by the
20 federal government. Because we're saying that the
21 federal government hasn't funded NYCHA enough we're
22 actually going to subsidize a federal program which
23 is a different precedent but we really had no
24 option. Now Governor Cuomo's notion of public
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housing as a federal responsibility has some merit but it conveniently overlooks one simple fact.

NYCHA is an authority, a state authorized entity.

It is a creature of the state government that the governor leads. And by disinvesting from an

institution that it created the state has been for the last 20 years effectively NYCHA's deadbeat

parent. The governor's also revising history when

he claims that there is no precedent for either the city or state funding NYCHA. Quite the contrary.

The statements that he had both historically funded

NYCHA the state did so consistently until 1998, the

latter into 2003 nor is the governor telling the

full story when he portrays public housing as a

federal program. Left unmentioned are the 15

developments NYCHA built using state funds. Those

developments had a dedicated stream of state

funding until 1998 when the state withdrew all

operating subsidies from its own public housing

units. Not NYCHA is the largest provider of

affordable housing in both the city and the state.

And the largest provider of public housing in the

country. Preserving public housing is therefore

federal, state, and city obligation. Although the

1 federal government should remain the primary source
2 of funding for NYCHA both the city and the state
3 must due their fair share. The city through next
4 gen NYCHA is rising to that challenge. The state,
5 far from it. Of all the three levels of government
6 the state under Governor Cuomo has the dubious
7 distinction of disinvesting the most from public
8 housing. Now it's worth noting that NYCHA has about
9 26 hundred roofs in its portfolio. And NYCHA rates
10 the condition of a roof on a scale of one to five
11 with one representing the absolute best condition
12 and five representing the absolute worst. And the
13 123 worst roofs from which the governor has
14 diverted funding have an average rating of 4.3
15 which means that those roofs are in poor condition
16 and are past their useful life. Now replacing the
17 worse roofs would improve the living conditions of
18 public housing residents. It would prevent the
19 reoccurrence of mold growth and water leaks. It
20 would provide insulation that increases the heating
21 levels of a building thereby placing less strain on
22 the heating system which would have a longer
23 lifespan as a result. And it would restore a public
24 housing units that had been taken off the rent
25

roles because of uninhabitable living conditions particularly mold and water leaks. Replacing the worst roofs in public housing would mean fewer maintenance tickets for mold and leaks and fewer tickets for plastering and painting. It would mean an overall reduction in the day to day cost of operating a building. Consider the impact of capital investment in the following cases. In Malba houses a 33 million dollar capital investment led to a 43 percent reduction in maintenance tickets. In Johnson Houses a 105 million dollar capital investment led to a 77 percent reduction in maintenance tickets, in tickets. So capital investment is a win for everyone. It is a win for the tenants who benefit from improved living conditions and reduced wait times for repairs and it is a win for NYCHA itself which benefits from lower operating costs and freed up resources. And I want to just put a human face on, on today's topic. Everyone saw today's daily news and there's a, what I would consider a heartbreaking anecdote about a senior citizen who lives in the top floor of Cedrick houses which has the worst rating of all the worst roofs. And I'm going to read directly

from the article. It reads; Built in 1951 Cedric's seven roofs are now rated 4.68 on a scale of one for good to five for beyond useful life. If Cuomo had granted the money for roof repairs NYCHA wanted the authority said it would have spent 7.5 million dollars and finished a job a Cedric by September 2016. Now Blanca Rivia, 68 has lived in her 14th floor Cedric Houses apartment for 38 years. She is on the top floor and is the most susceptible to leaking from the roof. She says they have to fix it. When the water comes in it comes through the wall and fills up the floor she said. Once I had a big flood in the house and the tiles came out she said adding that she has logged hundreds of complaints. Rivia was stunned to learn that the money for roof repairs was not coming. They have to, she says. All these buildings are broken. They have to finish she pleaded. Now Blanca is 68 years old. She's a senior citizen. She is someone's grandmother. And when I read about Blanca's story I thought of my own grandmother who lived in public housing before passing away ten years ago. And to think that my grandmother, or your grandmother, or someone's grandmother would be forced to live in

conditions of never ending mold growth or water leaks is unacceptable to me and it should be unacceptable to everyone in this room. The daily news noted that Bianca pleaded with the governor to repair these roofs. No one's grandmother should have to beg for a livable home. No one's grandmother should have to plead for a home free of mold and leaks. The governor is playing political games but this is not a game. Because there are grandmothers like Blanca who continue suffering because of what the governor has done. Under the governor's plan the hundred million dollars would go toward projects like recreational equipment, landscaping, stoves. But if you're hoe becomes unlivable, if your apartment becomes overtaken by mold and water leaks because of a dilapidated roof what good is a new stove? What good is a new recreational equipment or landscaping if your apartment is no longer livable. The governor as we all know is the most powerful elected official in the state. And the incredible power that he wields has led him to believe that he can do whatever he wants. But none of us in elected office including the governor can do whatever we want. There are

1 certain ethical lines that should never be crossed.
2 And there are certain things that should never be
3 politicized and the health of public housing
4 residents should be one of them. With that said I
5 would like to give my colleague Mark Levine an
6 opportunity to say a few words.
7

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Thank you Mr.
9 Chair. And I apologize I have to leave shortly but
10 I did not want to miss the opportunity to speak out
11 on this issue. My district is one of those... short,
12 short changed by the Governor's shameless act. I
13 represent Northern Manhattan including... very large
14 NYCHA developments Douglas Houses being one of
15 them. This is a development on 102nd street in
16 Columbus thereabouts over 2,000 apartments. Even
17 by the standards of NYCHA your status of the
18 buildings in Douglas Houses is shocking. This is a
19 place where, when it rains the roofs leak, where
20 elevators regularly go in and out of service, where
21 there's a rat infestation, where the incinerator
22 broke meaning that residents couldn't use the
23 shoots for trash. They had to put their trash where
24 it piled up and piled up and became infested by
25 rats. This is a development where multiple

1 buildings have little or no hot water on the
2 regular basis or the plumbing is old and leads to
3 internal leaks which cause mold. It wouldn't be
4 considered habitable I think for most people. But
5 when people were in Douglas Houses heard the news
6 that there was going to be repairs to their roofs
7 it was joy that finally, finally something was
8 going to be done in Douglas houses. All this
9 disbelief but really a sense that people felt like
10 they were being heard, and a sense of hope that I
11 hadn't seen before in Douglas Houses. And, and Mr.
12 Chair could you hold up the, the front page of the...
13 because I just, I think it encapsulates and says
14 governor's 100 million dollar spit in the face. And
15 that's how people in Douglas houses felt, that they
16 were spit in the face, that they've been given this
17 false hope that their roof is going to be repaired
18 only to learn because of political calculations
19 that really had nothing to do with the residents of
20 this development and which had never have affected
21 the residents of this development, that money was
22 being yanked back almost as soon as it was offered.
23 It's really, is a disgrace. And I just have to tip
24 my hat to you Mr. Chair for being incredibly bold,
25

1
2 being so eloquent in the way you have spoken truth
3 to power on this issue. I'm, I'm actually hopeful
4 that you'll be heard. I think your arguments are so
5 unassailable that we have no choice but to address
6 them. I'm going to leave it there. What I want to,
7 I want to congratulate you and thank you for your
8 eloquence and the power of your words and your
9 leadership. Thank you Mr. Chair for allowing me to
10 speak.

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Of course. I want
12 acknowledge a few colleagues who have come in;
13 Council Member Treyger who's losing over a million
14 dollars for emergency roof replacement as a result
15 of the governor's decision. Do you have a few words
16 or...

17 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: I thank you
18 chair and I think this committee has been very
19 instrumental along with mine in highlighting the
20 needs of many of the needs of many of the public
21 housing complexes that were also impacted by the
22 storm and I appreciate that. What I am pleading is
23 that we put an end to the politics, put an end to
24 division, put amend to ego-trips and put residents
25 and their needs first. Because I am someone who

1
2 hears about the roofs that are leaking. I am
3 someone that hears about infrastructure needs on a
4 daily basis. And this is a time where we need
5 leaders to step up to the plate o all levels and
6 make sure that the needs of the residents are being
7 addressed. We in public service enter public
8 service to address needs and help and service
9 people. And I am urging every leader to take note
10 of that... obligation. Let's get these roofs fixed.
11 Let's address infrastructure issues that have
12 plagued these complexes for too long and no child,
13 no family, no grandparent should live in an
14 apartment where mold infested apartments where they
15 don't have adequate heat and hot water and that
16 their safety and their quality of life is
17 compromised on the daily basis. Thank you Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you Council
19 Member Treyger. Now it's worth noting Governor
20 Cuomo is planning to divert over seven million
21 dollars in state funding away from roof replacement
22 for East Chester gardens which is represented by a
23 Council Member King. So would you like to say a few
24 words regarding the governor's decision.
25

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Just quickly.

Thank you Mr. Chair. I just think at this day and time where New Yorkers who are just surviving in our NYCHA developments they need a piece of mind. And those of us who have been hired to do a particular job to make sure the quality of life is that much more safer in saying we need to take on that response and be a lot more seriously and do, do right by the people of New York. So I do urge the governor and all those who are making decisions to not fund the NYCHA and making sure that our roofs are not dripping and our elevator shafts are not flooded and, and people's quality of lives and food being ruined and roaches and rats running around your apartment and all the smells that come from when you get rain and rust and mildew that we just come to our senses and do right for al New York. So Mr. Chair I thank you for leading this conversation today and I'm looking forward to the governor doing what's right for all of New Yorkers in NYCHA developments. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And under the governor's plan Council Member Arroyo is set to

lose, district is set to lose nearly six million dollars for roof replacement.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Thank you Mr. Chairman and thank you for holding this, this hearing. One of the things that we can absolutely do as government officials and, and government is to work with the authority to improve the quality of the housing in our communities. We do that. We can increase the jobs that go to the residents of housing and to those who live in our communities. We can engage in workforce development that enables individuals who earn a living wage at a minimum without discussing minimum wage. But the lack of coordination and collaboration is a huge concern of mine because we miss incredible opportunities to address a multitude of issues that affect our communities, not the least of which is quality housing and good employment for the people that live in our community. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And then we're joined by my colleague in Brooklyn, Council Member Reynoso whose district is set to lose over 11 million dollars for emergency roof replacements.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Thank you chair for opportunity to speak on this issue. I just want to say to my community usually applauds... something but it isn't in losing 11 million dollars for a very important infrastructure issues. But in game plaza one and two in my district is possibly the largest senior housing development in my district. And, and we talk about a aging community that needs all the help it can get. We're talking about real infrastructure issues. They don't need another swing in the park. And things that I can address through my capital, through my capital dollars what we're talking about is real infrastructure upgrades especially when we're talking to, about the roof. I just also want to say that without the chairs notifying me that this was happening this is something I probably wouldn't have caught until today. And I just want to thank you for giving me, for coming to me and letting me know what was happening and that I hope state senator Martin Dilan and Assemblywoman Maritza Davila are fighting in the state to make sure that we keep the money that belongs in the district here. So thank you again Chair.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And speaking of state senators I want to note that Senator Jeff Cline actually was the only state elected that I know of that actually spoke out against the governor's decision which is a courageous decision knowing the governor's reputation. Council Member Rosenthal your district is set to lose funding under the plan. Would you like to say a few words?

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I would. I actually did not realize that my district was set to lose funding until I walked into this hearing. So thank you so much for your hard work to bring the attention to the exact units. 589 Amsterdam is a building that absolutely needs its roof replaced. Thank you NYCHA for putting it on the list. I appreciate that. No thanks to Governor Cuomo for taking it off the list. And now I see I'll be lobbying my state assemblyman to try to get him to put the money into that roof. It's, it's dumbfounding to me what is going on. You know as Council Members we work so hard with NYCHA trying to get basic level of services. And to now not only put on a knife the putting salt in the wound so that our job is even more difficult. We're talking

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. Thank you. I want to thank my colleagues for their remarks. But obviously the most important voices are those of the tenants who obviously can speak about the miserable conditions of mold growth and leakage often as a result of defects in the roof. So I want to call up the first panel of residents. We have Ms. Torres from Smith Houses. We have Carlos Ruiz from Wilson Housing NYCC. We have Mr. Ahmed from Clinton Houses. We have Javier Sepulveda from Clinton Houses. And then we have Vic Bach from the Community Service Society. I'm going to start with, we're going to have a time limit of three minutes. I'm going to start with Ms. Torres because the governor is planning to divert about nine million dollars in state funding away from emergency roof replacement for Alfred Smith Houses and the roofs at Smith Houses are in poor condition with an

average condition rating of 4.28. So Ms. Torres the floor is yours.

AIXA TORRES: Good afternoon Chairman Torres and all the members of the council, the NYCHA committee. I'm here today to say that my name is Aixa Torres and I'm the Resident Association President of Smith Houses. And this morning I speak on behalf of the residents of Alfred E. Smith Houses, the good 'ol lower east side, GOLES. Thank you council members for taking the time this morning to address our concerns about the hundred million dollar allocation to NYCHA. As you know the, the significant investment is, is critical, critically important in addressing a estimated 16 billion baglog [phonetic] of urgent needed capital improvements. In April the state committed an unprecedented 100 million in its capital budget. On April 10th NYCHA submitted a re-realization plan for this to Albany calling for the 100 million to be allocated for the roof replacement and 123 buildings in 18 developments where the need was most urgent. It is argued that failing roofs cause leaks down the line to many apartments on healthy mold and generates many work orders. Alfred E Smith

1 is one of, on this list of developments where the
2 need is urgent. There are 12 buildings and 1,933
3 apartments and over 400, 4,300 residents. As a
4 resident association president and often receiving
5 and many complaints I have first-hand knowledge of
6 the impact of the roof conditions have on my
7 residents. The buildings needing roof replacement
8 have constant water issues I the building as well
9 as the apartments to the point where I have a
10 building where the water is coming literally to the
11 lobby to the street. While the needs of the 18
12 developments didn't plan among the most critical
13 and prime cause of accelerated apartment
14 determination Governor Cuomo has set aside NYCHA
15 plan and decided to distribute two million each to
16 the legislative, with public housing in the
17 district. The state is now seeking proposals for
18 each legislative prohibiting use of the money for
19 basic infrastructure repairs such as roof or
20 mechanical equipment. Instead they suggested
21 improvements like lighting, landscating [phonetic],
22 playground equipment, appliances, and security
23 system. There is also no criteria spelled out for
24 determining what a good proposal from a bad one.
25

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2 Additionally there is a great difference among the
3 districts. Some have more developments and units
4 than others. Districts with a lot of public housing
5 in their, in poor condition will have less than
6 they need while other districts will have more
7 money to distribute. This is simply an unfair
8 distribution of resources and a waste of money on
9 second or third order needs across the large number
10 of district. This money should go where it is most
11 urgently needed. It is for this reason that we
12 support NYCHA's revitalization plan and object to
13 the use of capital fund for political favors rather
14 than for urgent needs. We urge the governor to give
15 further consideration to NYCHA's revitalization
16 plan. And this money should be used for major
17 improvements like roof replacement. Other needs may
18 be valid but the money should go where it is needed
19 most. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I want to quickly
21 acknowledge Council Member Darlene Mealy who
22 represents Brownville Brooklyn and... governor's
23 plan. You, your district is set to lose about six
24 million dollars in state funding for roof
25

1
2 replacements. So if you would like to say a few
3 words or...

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Thank you chair.
5 And I hope all our NYCHA presidents get involved
6 and make sure to let the mayor know this is a
7 disgrace...

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: The governor, the
9 governor.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: The governor...

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: ...well...

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: The mayor's plan...
14 [cross-talk]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: ...mayor's trying
16 but the governor is saying no. This is no time for
17 politricks [phonetic] and we need this money. And a
18 majority of our NYCHA developments need just more
19 than roofs. So I just pray that the governor step
20 back, reassess what is going on knowing that NYCHA
21 is the only place where we have affordable housing.
22 And I still have a problem with even raising NYCHA
23 rents. I'm taking that up with the mayor because it
24 was not stated to me that they was going to raise
25 people's rent. And that's the only place where we

1
2 could live. And if that is change, and NYCHA has to
3 do so much to these developments. I just pray that
4 your body, I, I thank you Council Member Torres for
5 your advocacy and you've been diligent on
6 everything. So I just hope that we all come
7 together as one, as one and make the Governor
8 understand. Come as one unified front to get this
9 done. Get our buildings taken care of. Period,
10 thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you so much
12 for your, the kind words. Mr. Ruiz will resume
13 panel testimony. And three minute time limit.

14 CARLOS RUIZ: First I want to thank you
15 Councilman Torres and all the other... council people
16 that are here. Good afternoon everyone. My name is
17 Carlos Ruiz. I'm the president of the Harlem and
18 Brags, Bronx Chapter of New York Community for
19 Change. And I'm also NYCHA residents of 35 years
20 and a member of the real affordability for all
21 coalition. On one... day on March 16 over 500 NYCHA
22 resident bussed it to Albany to press for the state
23 capital commitment for major improvements to NYCHA.
24 In April capital, capital budget and the state
25 committed 100 million dollars on April 10th

1 following the state... NYCHA submitted a revelation
2 plan to Albany calling for roof replacement in 123
3 buildings, 18 developments where the needed repairs
4 were most urgent. The exterior and roofs of the
5 buildings are in need of the most extensive
6 repairs. But let's not forget the interior NYCHA
7 buildings that also need most urgent repairs... we
8 can... in plaster. I have, have some pictures here of
9 the conditions I live in in NYCHA buildings.
10 Instead the Governor Cuomo set aside NYCHA plan and
11 they started to distribute 12 million dollars to
12 each legislature with public housing in their
13 district officially turning capital money into
14 political park. The state is now seeking proposal
15 for each legislature, agency guideline... the use of
16 money for public in frustration repairs such as
17 roof and... improvement. Instead they suggest
18 improvement like better lighting, playground
19 equipment... security systems. This procedure takes
20 into the account that they are great difference
21 among the districts and the number of development
22 and units the capital money will be wasted on
23 second and third order needed across the number of
24 districts. We object to the use of capital fund for
25

1 political favors rather than for urgent needs like
2 roof repair and most urgent interior repairs. Over
3 the last several years New York Communities for
4 Change have been working with NYCHA residents of
5 Harlem, Brooklyn, and the Bronx to identify its
6 most urgent needs of repair. New York Community for
7 Change and NYCHA residents would like to work with
8 NYCHA, our city councils, and elected officials to
9 identify the buildings that are in most need of
10 urgent repairs. Governor Cuomo and... have no clue
11 which NYCHA buildings are in most urgent needs of
12 repairs. We propose that a 100 million dollar go
13 straight to NYCHA with someone to oversee how the
14 money is being spent. That may be city controller,
15 city advocate, somebody in public office besides
16 the governor and the mayor. As a result we urge the
17 governor to give further consideration the the
18 revitalization plan to submit by NYCHA. The money
19 should be used for major repairs through the
20 exterior and interior of the New York City housing
21 buildings. Others may be valid but the money should
22 go where it is most needed. Only NYCHA and the
23 residents know which NYCHA buildings are... [cross-
24 talk]
25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Please conclude.

CARLOS RUIZ: ...the most needed repairs, not the governor and other legislations. NYCHA residents deserve no less than that. [cross-talk] Council members I thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you. Mr. Ahmed.

AKRM AHMED: Imagine having to sit down on your toilet to use the restroom with an umbrella. This is a reality for several residents in my development. My name is Akrm Ahmed. I'm a community leader as well as an organizer with Community Voices Heard. I live in public housing in east Harlem and I have been the resident for 17 years now. For nearly a decade my family and I have been battling NYCHA to make effective repairs in our apartment and building. The moisture in our walls have caused mold, wall damage, and rusted pipes. We have experienced severe issues with mold as many residents are dealing with now. Mold has been proven to cause serious respiratory illnesses. It pains me to see my mother travel weekly to the hospital to receive medical attention and treatment. After going door to door in my

development, over 700 apartments at that and having doors slammed in my face I found enough residents to actually ally with me to get things done. But I also discovered that the tenants in my entire line are experiencing the same issues. People are literally losing lives, losing years off their lives as well as some people losing their actual lives in this in the midst of this back and forth between the entities organized to serve the very people who elected them as officials and representatives. While we continue our work to hold NYCHA accountable to our needs we must address that the true culprits behind this, our disdain are seated in higher positions in government who over the years have defunded NYCHA and to this day are diverting much needed funds. While our politicians are busy with political infighting us residents are caught in the crossfire. We fight to live and we the people are the only ones that suffer. Through Community Voices Heard and our citywide campaign to eradicate mold NYCHA is finally starting to move in the right direction. They're addressing the structural root cause is mold. Although I do not live in one of the developments that will be

1 receiving these state funds as a member of CVH I'm
2 fighting for a plan that systemically attacks mold
3 starting where it is the worst. The state capital
4 revitalization plan that was submitted by NYCHA is
5 exactly what the residents have been fighting for.
6 Tenants and community leaders didn't travel all the
7 way to Albany to win a hundred million dollars in
8 funding just to have that funding... used on
9 beautifying the appearance of these developments.
10 It has been a constant struggle for us to live in
11 inhabitable conditions. To finally receive the
12 sketch funding that we have to be told that these
13 funds will be allocated in a way that does nothing
14 to resolve our problems is upsetting. And I'd like
15 to end with an analogy. Imagine taking care of five
16 children one of those children being starven
17 [phonetic] malnourished and only having enough
18 money to either feed that one child or to... yeah
19 take deep breaths right... or to split that equally
20 amongst all five subsequently resulting in the
21 death of that one starving child. Thank you for
22 your time.

23
24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Mr. Sepulveda.
25

JAVIER SEPULVEDA: Thank you Chairman Torres for this opportunity to speak today. Council members... thank you. Thank you for this opportunity to speak today. My name is Javier Sepulveda. I've been a resident of NYCHA Clinton Houses development federally funded for the past five years. I am also a member of Community Voices Heard. My family and I moved into public housing with the expectation that having a safe, clean, and habitable home. Instead I immediately discovered deplorable conditions to which I was never afforded a HUD required pre-move-in inspection. The worst being a concealed leak behind the master bathroom wall and the attached air vent. The leak also was cascading the adjoining hallway wall. I filed work orders and communicated with all levels of NYCHA management in order to have the repairs done to no avail. I, I got bleach, patch, and paint repairs. During this time my youngest daughter developed a persistent cough and difficulty breathing. Her condition was diagnosed as Asthma. She has had to miss school and carry an inhaler and limit her sport activities which she loves. Despite making NYCHA aware of her medical condition I was met with disdain and continued

1 patchwork. In December 2013 I won a 80 percent
2 abatement of nearly 30 thousand dollars as NYCHA
3 tenants educate themselves to their rights. NYCHA
4 will continue to be subject to similar costly
5 litigation and lost ret revenue. The state capital
6 plan moves in the direction that residents and CVH
7 have been calling for. I am here today to ensure
8 that this 100 million is spent where the residents
9 need it to be; systematically addressing the root
10 cause of mold starting with the buildings with the
11 worst conditions and bringing the developments back
12 to safe, clean, and habitable for all NYCHA
13 tenants. To not fund this plan with subject, many
14 more families to suffer as my family has and many
15 are. I understand the concept of robbing Peter to
16 pay Paul, well my name is not Peter. It's Javier
17 Sepulveda and my assembly member is not Paul. Thank
18 you very much.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you for your
21 testimony. Vic Bach from the Community Service
22 Society.

23 VICTOR BACH: Thank you. I want to thank
24 the chair and the committee for giving this public
25 hearing to such a compelling issue about our public

1 housing. I also want to thank the Daily News for
2 the appropriately generous and pointed coverage
3 they gave today to the issue. I hope that does some
4 good. I think I've submitted our written testimony
5 which echoes what has already been said but I think
6 the question now is what do we do about it. And I
7 think there, there are a number of things we should
8 try. At least one assembly member to my knowledge
9 has gone ahead and requested roof replacement
10 despite the HCR guidelines. I think the, the
11 legislatures ought to be encouraged with a fix our
12 roof card campaign to, to devote their priorities
13 to the roof replacement and support the NYCHA plan.
14 I would also hope we can get as many sign-ons to a
15 letter that's coming out of the Alliance to
16 Preserve Public Housing. And finally I would urge
17 the council to pass a resolution and get it as
18 quickly as possible to Albany in support of the
19 NYCHA revitalization plan. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I want to thank all
22 of you for your testimony. Thank you. I'm going to
23 call up the next panel; the New York City Housing
24 Authority. Representing the New York City Housing
25 Authority is Ray Ribeiro who is the executive VP,

1
2 the executive vice president for the capital
3 projects division. Mr. Ribeiro can you raise your
4 right hand? Do you swear to tell the truth, the
5 whole truth in your testimony before our today's
6 committee? You may proceed.

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Chairman Ritchie
8 Torres, members of the Committee on Public Housing
9 and other distinguished members of the city council
10 good afternoon. I am Ray Ribeiro, the New York City
11 Housing Authority's Executive Vice President for
12 Capital Projects. Thank you for the opportunity to
13 discuss NYCHA's proposal to invest 100 million
14 dollars of state capital funding for the
15 replacement of the worst roofs at 123 NYCHA
16 buildings. We believe that this work could have a
17 tremendous positive impact. Unfortunately this
18 proposal was recently rejected in favor of a piece
19 meal approach funding smaller projects. Before I
20 tell you about our proposed state capital
21 revitalization plan I want to provide some context
22 that sheds light on the compelling need for major
23 state investment in our infrastructure. From 2001
24 to 2013 annual federal capital grants have declined
25 162 million or 36 percent from 420 million dollars

to 259 million dollars. As a result NYCHA has experienced a cumulative federal capital grant funding loss of more than one billion dollars since 2001 on top of previous years of state and city disinvestment. Even in the years of flat appropriations to the capital fund rising costs have resulted in very real cuts to the program. This chronic funding gap severely constrains NYCHA's ability to make necessary repairs and upgrades to brickwork, roofs, elevators, building systems including heating and plumbing systems, and apartment interiors. Modernization is crucial for NYCHA to maintain its housing stock in a state of good repair and improve service levels and quality of life for the next generation of New Yorkers. Between 1960 and 1974 the state built 15 developments which it supported financially with operating and capital funding for many years. But in 1998 the state terminated its operating funding and began funding only minimal capital funding, only about six to eight million dollars per year. Annual capital allocations made by this city council alone are significantly higher than those from the state. As a result of the state's

disinvestment NYCHA must sustain its originally state funded units with already scarce federal operating and capital dollars. Since the state began its disinvestment NYCHA has spent a total of nearly 1.9 billion dollars of federal, capital, and operating funding at these 15 developments presenting an additional challenge, the state's abandonment of these 40 to 50 year old buildings occurred at a time when they required major capital infusion to preserve them and ensure that they can provide a decent living environment to more than 12 thousand families. They now have close to a one billion dollar unmet capital need. This diverts desperately needed money from other aging buildings in our portfolio affecting the quality of life for their residents. The state disinvestment has thus had a negative impact on these 15 developments as well as the rest of NYCHA's portfolio. Getting the state back to supporting public housing and investing much needed capital to help reduce or repair failing building systems is critical therefore we were pleased to be included in the governor's budget this year for the first time in many years. This January the governor included a 25

million dollar capital allocation for NYCHA in a proposed budget. We had hoped for a larger commitment but believed we could make the case to increase that number. During the fall of 2014 as part of preparations for NYCHA's 20, 2015 to 2019 five year capital plan NYCHA examined its five borough portfolio which contains 2,600 roofs and prioritize three types of work; roof replacement, mold abatement, and safety and security enhancements. Roof replacement is critical because it delivers multiple benefits at once. It prevents leaks that cause mold which in turn affects residents' health. It enhances a building.. insulation which lowers strain on boilers and reduces emissions. It promotes a safer environment and it significantly decreases a building's maintenance needs lowering operating cost and freeing up NYCHA's limited resources to do other pressing work. For example we saw that roof replacements at three developments reduced work orders by an average of 56 percent. Roof replacement can also be achieved relatively quickly and efficiently with minimal disruption to residents. In addition to bringing the improved

quality of life to residents and extending the life of our building's roof replacement work helps create union jobs for residents. NYCHA has focused on roof replacements and building... improvements because any investment that protects the building envelope helps preserve the building for years to come. Specifically NYCHA's capital projects division, CPD, along with property managers completed a roof assessment using rating systems that build on the 2011 physical needs assessment that is required by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD, We identified the roofs in need of improvement and allocated 296 million dollars in federal funding for exterior restoration and roof replacement to make the building envelopes weather tight to prevent future deterioration of the brick façades. This is on top of NYCHA's 500 million dollar bond D initiative that is delivering roof replacement and building façade improvements at over 300 buildings. But even with all of that investment of federal capital with some 2,600 buildings in our portfolio there are many more NYCHA roofs that leak, create mold, and need to be replaced immediately. It was obvious that the state

investment should be focused on roof replacements to ensure that as much of the NYCHA portfolio as possible could benefit from this preservation work.

In March NYCHA along with the mayor's office, city council, housing advocates, and resident leaders lobbied the state for more funding making a thoughtful, well researched, and practical argument to invest this money in roofs. Chair Olatoye

Intergovernmental Relations Director Brian Honen and I met personally with elected officials in Albany on several occasions. Our leaders in Albany focused on the benefits of roof replacements as I've just described as well as discussions around NYCHA's ability to deliver capital projects. A series of improvements within NYCHA's capital projects division in recent years puts it in a position to deliver these roof replacement projects effectively and efficiently. By incorporating industry best practices into our procedures and policies CPD has been obligating three times as much money in one-third of the amount of time while enhancing the quality of work. For instance CPD obligated over 740 million dollars on major modernization projects last year including the

entire proceeds of the 500 million dollar Bond B which was obligated about a year on your deadline. HUD's latest annual capital grant was obligated in only eight months, well ahead of the 24 month deadline. And NYCHA beat HUD's deadline it spending 330 million on critical infrastructure that's improving the quality of life for about 48 thousand families. Our proven track record is also being applied to the three billion dollar Sandy recovery program that is bringing repairs and resiliency measures to more than 200 buildings. Together we were successful. NYCHA's budget award was increased to 100 million dollars. Thank you to Governor Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Flanagan, and Assembly Speaker Heastie for working on this. NYCHA is committed to making these desperately needed improvements as quickly as possible. Within 10 days of the budget's approval we collected data and prepared a strategy for replacing the worst roofs in our portfolio at 123 buildings throughout 18 developments. NYCHA staff conducted hundreds of site surveys to identify the roofs most urgently in need of repair and replacement. Based on these evaluations we produced cost estimates, and project

schedules estimating that a number of these projects could be completed this year. Project cost were estimated using a formula based on roof size anticipated work scope and costs. Because NYCHA buildings are typically part of a development with multiple buildings in a campus like setting it can be more cost effective to replace the roofs of all buildings in a development if one building's roof is being replaced. So NYCHA staff reviewed the list of roof conditions in the context of the average roof condition at the entire development rather than by building. We compiled this information into the 50 page state capital revitalization plan which we submitted to the New York state division of housing and community renewal as required by the state's budget this submission was on April 10th, 2015. But three weeks ago we heard that the governor rejected our state capital revitalization plan without warning or consultation with us. This is disconcerting as our building systems and components have in many cases reached and exceeded their useful lives. We are being told that contrary to the plan we presented the 100 million dollar award will be allocated in two million dollar

portions to state lawmakers. We have already heard from many of these elected officials that this amount cannot address the significant capital needs of their buildings. So they'll have to use the allotment for smaller projects like playground upgrades instead of roof or façade repairs. In addition the funds are slated to be dispersed through the dormitory authority of the state of New York which does not have to adhere to the Section 3 program. Section 3 is a HUD regulation that requires housing authorities and their contractors to make best efforts to hire public housing residents for their workforce in these resident owned businesses as subcontractors. We had projected that our roof replacement proposal would have generated approximately 60 section 3 jobs. Modernization and revitalization are crucial to ensuring that NYCHA residents do not have to live with leaking roofs, unreliable heating systems, and broken elevators. These improvements along with energy retrofits and upgrades not only safeguard resident's quality of life but also benefit the environment and NYCHA's financial sustainability. Again this is why the roof work I've described this

1 afternoon is so critical. I want to take this
2 opportunity to thank Mayor de Blasio for pledging
3 to match Albany's investment in NYCHA. His recent
4 commitment of a hundred million dollars will enable
5 us to replace roofs at 66 buildings benefitting
6 nearly 13 thousand residents. And this work will
7 begin next month. In line with the administration's
8 unprecedented support for public housing the mayor
9 has committed an additional 100 million dollars
10 each year for the next two years which we hope that
11 state will also match for similar purposes. This
12 potentially 600 million dollar investment will go a
13 long way in preserving New York's public housing
14 for tomorrow's families and better serving
15 residents today. 80 percent of NYCHA's 2,600
16 buildings are more than 40 years old. And the
17 entire portfolio has nearly 17 billion dollars in
18 unmet capital needs. And we expect that federal
19 funding to operate and maintain our developments
20 will only continue to diminish. It is only through
21 a partnership that NYCHA will overcome these
22 challenges and make progress. We look forward to
23 discussing additional ways that we can collaborate
24 with the governor, the mayor, and the city council
25

1 to ensure NYCHA's future. We thank you for your
2 support. Before I answer any questions I'd like to
3 take a minute and just present some of the
4 graphical information that we have shared regarding
5 our roof program. The chart in front of you
6 represents the ratings that we had referenced in
7 our testimony, the number of buildings that fell
8 into the various categories of roof rating as you
9 indicated from, from one being the best to five
10 being actively, visibly leaking. The chart in front
11 of you represents some analysis that we did at our,
12 at a project at Mall Borough [phonetic] Houses that
13 replaced the roofs and in essence the top line on
14 that graph shows the total number of work orders at
15 that development each year. And the green, the
16 green shaded area represents the construction
17 period and it's very obvious looking at that graph
18 that almost immediately upon starting construction
19 of roof replacement the number of total work orders
20 at the development immediately went to go, went
21 down. One particular category of work tickets
22 related to the walls which is directly attributed
23 to roof leaks was in particular, was particularly
24 affected by the construction. And we looked at that
25

at three other developments, two other developments to see the impact that those work, that work had at those developments. And as you can see from the chart those three developments, the brown bar represents work orders preconstruction and the green represents work orders post construction and those three developments averaged a 56 percent reduction in those types of work orders when we completed the construction. I referenced the CPD's improved performance in terms of delivering capital projects... the red bars in the chart in front of you represent historically how long it has taken NYCHA to obligate each year's federal grant from HUD and you can see historically we were just under the 24 month deadline obligating in 23 and 22 months. That has been reduced in the most recent grant year, 2014 that was done in only eight months, one third of the amount of time. The green line on that chart represents the amount of money that was actually obligated in that year and you can see while the time is actually being cut in one-third we actually obligated three times as much money. And the blue line represents the number of construction change orders which are an indication of overall

1 construction quality. And that too has been
2 steadily decreasing. Finally I just want to share
3 some, some photos that were part of the, the, the
4 report, the plan that was submitted. These are for
5 many of the developments that are, were included in
6 the plan. This particular picture is at... Plaza. You
7 can see in the picture on the left the ponding in
8 front of the bulkhead door, the red door, missing
9 roof drain in the picture on the right. And you can
10 see the damaged roof on the dark or the lighter
11 area right in the middle of that picture is more
12 than likely creating a leak into an apartment
13 below. This is at Hughs [sp?]. Again a close up of
14 a similar failing roof. That is the roof membrane
15 that is coming up through the, through the rocks on
16 the roof. And in the picture on the right in the,
17 in the, right along the edge of that roof you can
18 see the dark spot which is an indication also of a
19 roof failure that is more than likely resulting in
20 damage to the, to the ceiling and walls in the
21 apartment below. Similar, similar conditions at
22 East Chester Gardens you can see outside the
23 bulkhead door again. You can see outside the
24 bulkhead door again. You see the darker spots which

1 indicate roof failures an active ponding on the
2 roof at Eastchester Gardens. This is an example of
3 what happens when you don't fix a leaking roof.
4 This was actually taken at Harlem River Houses.
5 This apartment was vacated because of the roof
6 leaks. This apartment is part of an active
7 construction project that is underway right now to
8 not only replace all of the roofs at Harlem River
9 Houses but to restore those top floor apartments
10 that are no longer occupied because of the leaks.
11 And then finally just a picture of what, what the
12 plan could do. The picture you're seeing there is
13 of Rangel Houses. This was a, a development that
14 was included in a bond B initiative to replace all
15 of the roofs. And you can see in that picture all
16 of the lighter white roofs are the new roofs. Those
17 are part of NYCHA's green initiative to install
18 white roofs. There is one remaining building sort
19 of in the middle of the picture there, the darker
20 roof which is, which is still in the process of
21 being replaced but we want to get to a point where
22 all of our developments have those same white brand
23 new roofs. So with that I am happy to answer any
24 questions that you might have.
25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Mr. Ribeiro thank you for your testimony. I want to acknowledge that we've been joined by my colleague from Brooklyn, Council Member Carlos Menchaca who represents Sunset Park and Red Hook Houses. And I believe Red Hook Houses is the largest public housing development in Brooklyn and maybe the second largest in the city, second to Queens Bridge. So I want to revisit the timeline right. The state passes a budget on March 31st, so April 1st allocating a hundred million dollars for public housing. So how long after the passage of the budget did NYCHA submit a plan for how where and when to spend the money.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: NYCHA submitted our plan 10 days after the budget was approved.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So within in a relatively very, a very quick time?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: It was an, it was an extremely, extremely difficult exercise to physically as I said in the testimony we physically visited every, every building, inspected every roof, collected design details, created projected schedules, and had to develop cost estimates for

each one of those buildings and then rolling that up by development. It was a, a very difficult and time consuming task but one that we completed in 10 days, yes.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So you, you submitted a plan within 10 days of the budget's passage. And you submitted the plan to which agency; DASNY, DHCR, directly to the governor's office?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We submitted it to DHCR.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: In writing.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Did you, when did you receive a response from DHCR?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I have not received a response to date from DHCR.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So you submitted a plan for how to spend a hundred million dollars but you received no official response?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.
Correct.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So as, the daily news obviously reported that the governor's

diverting a hundred million dollars from the worst, a hundred, 123 of the worst roofs in public housing? And so give us a sense of how dire are the conditions of these roofs?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: As, as you've indicated right we, we do regular inspections of our roofs. We rate our roofs on a scale of one to five. A five would be an indication of a roof that is obviously damaged, visibly leaking, well beyond its expected life, and is in essence not performing the, the, the, the task that it's supposed to perform. So a four would be a roof that is, shows evidence of leaking, evidence of damage is beyond its expected life, but we don't see the actual leaking. So the, the fives and the upper range of fours are the most egregious. The, the fours would be roofs that are, are likely leaking, probably leaking, we just can't see the water but we see evidence of it. And then when we get to the threes those would be roofs that, roofs that are beyond their expected life, or at their expected life, no visible damage, and you know quite frankly 50/50 whether they're, whether they're actively leaking or not. And, and as I indicated a majority of the,

of the roofs in NYCHA's portfolio are, are in that range.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Now as you know while probably the greatest enemy of public housing is water right. You know water is essentially human life but it could be poisonous to the building structures and systems of public housing. And so can you give us a sense of the impact that water can have, water infiltration on the living conditions of public housing residents, the systems and structures of a building and the day to day operating costs.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Absolutely. So water, water is perhaps the, the number one enemy of any owner of a building. And it has impacts on the, the, the building itself, the structure itself. When water infiltrates a building it gets behind the façade. It, it seeps through the brickwork when, when we have the changes in temperature that water expands and contracts, causes bricks to crack, causes damage to our... walls. That same water can ultimately get under the roof and do the same thing. But ultimately that water will find its way into the building or at least on the exterior walls

1 of that building. Water or even just a presence of
2 moisture has, of course is a big reason for mold.
3 In order to abate mold you have to do more than
4 simply remove the mold and repaint. You need to
5 address the root cause of that mold and, and the
6 root cause of mold is moisture within the building.
7 So, so the impact of water not only on the, the
8 structure itself but then ultimately into the, into
9 the individual apartments. And as I testified that
10 then has a direct impact on the health and
11 wellbeing of our residents.
12

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Now we have the
14 governor's memo on how he feels the hundred million
15 dollars should be spent. And, and I'm going to
16 read, I'm going to read a guideline, the most
17 controversial guideline. It says that these state
18 funds are not intended to... NYCHA funding for
19 routine capital program activities. So the governor
20 is giving the impression that these worst 123 roofs
21 are going to be funded through your routine capital
22 program. You have enough funds to meet the capital...
23 Is, is that an accurate assessment or...

24 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That is, that is not
25 accurate. As I indicated in my testimony we, NYCHA

has allocated almost 300 million dollars in our regular five year capital program to address roofs. NYCHA recently initiated and is well underway with a 500 million dollar bond issuance that is replacing roofs at several hundred other NYCHA buildings. But even with that we still have not been able to get, that's still not enough funding for us to address all of the roofs that we know today are leaking.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So it's I guess just to contextualize it. You have 26 hundred roofs. How many of those roofs fall within category five and four?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So the, the, the chart in front of you is a representation of the number of roofs. As you can see in the, in the, from the forth up to the five on almost about 900, 900 buildings fall into that, into that category. And then another 900 in the, in the three to four range.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Right. So it's fair to say that the need, the capital need, the physical need of public housing far exceeds the funding that you're receiving right.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Which means that the governor's decision to withdraw a hundred million dollars from those 123 buildings means that there's no telling when those roofs are going to be replaced or funded.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That is correct.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So I want to, I want to speak about deferred maintenance. That you know if, if we defer capital investment in these 123 worst roofs I guess what kind of long term cost could it potentially impose on public housing. You know deferred maintenance is expensive. And so how much more expensive could it potentially become to replace these roofs. You mentioned the useful life of the roof so what's the cost difference between the pace, replacing a roof at its useful life versus replacing a roof five, 10, 15 years beyond its life expectancy. I think, I think there are a couple of, a couple of different additional costs that you incur when you don't replace the roof when it reaches its expected life. One you're day to day operating cost increases. So you're responding to mold tickets, you're responding to a request to fix

1 a leak. All of that places a burden on our already
2 constrained operating budget requires additional
3 maintenance staff to be responding to maintenance
4 issues relating to the roof rather than other
5 issues that, that are occurring at, at the, at the
6 building. So it has a, a daily impact on our
7 operating expenses. But it also has a, a, a longer
8 term impact on the capital expenses. The picture,
9 the picture I, I, I'm demonstrating on, on there is
10 a picture of what happens when you don't replace a
11 roof when it needs to be replaced. So this project
12 instead of being a project to simply replace the
13 roof at Harlem River Houses has become a project
14 that now requires replacement of the roof and
15 significant interior rehab of all of those top
16 floor apartments. So all of that plaster, all of
17 the electrical work, all of the, the new work in
18 that particular, in most particular units now
19 becomes part of your, your capital cost for
20 rehabbing that particular building.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Now you mention
23 some of these top floor apartments that are under
24 defective roofs probably have become so infested
25 with mold and leaks that they might no longer be

1 livable right? There are apartments that NYCHA has
2 taken off the rent rolls because of uninhabitable
3 living conditions. How many units fall into that
4 category?

5 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I don't, I don't have
6 the exact number of...

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Just portfolio-wide
8 do you know?

9 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I, I don't have that,
10 I don't have the number of... [cross-talk]

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...hundreds or
12 thousands or...

13 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: It would depend on, it
14 would depend on which category they were vacant on.
15 But they are probably related to specifically
16 issues like you see in front of you on Harlem River
17 Houses, probably hundreds of apartments that are in
18 that category.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: But these tend to
20 be top level apartments that have been taken off
21 the rent roles?

22 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And they're...
24 [cross-talk]

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: For, for this particular issue yes.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: For reasons relating to defective... [cross-talk]

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The roof.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...roofs. So if you replace the roof you could potentially restore hundreds of units of affordable housing?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Absolutely. And that's exactly what the, the project that I described before at Harlem River Houses that's underway that's exactly the intent of the project.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. I want to speak about NYCHA's project delivery. You have obviously a reputation... I'll be blunt, NYCHA has a reputation for inefficiency and the governor is obviously presenting a caricature of NYCHA. Is that consistent with... have you made progress toward improving capital project or... just give a sense of where you are?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: And... yeah as, as I indicated in, in our, in our testimony and I think NYCHA has acknowledged that in years past we have struggled to, to meet our obligations and to comply

1 with HUD's mandate to obligate money within, within
2 24 months. We, we established you know a, a, a, a
3 goal to reduce that to 12 months which was, we felt
4 was reasonable considering the magnitude of the
5 program it was reasonably, felt it was reasonable
6 if we were to implement you know best practices.
7 What are other entities that deliver construction
8 programs. How do they deliver them and how we can,
9 how can we simply adopt those practices within
10 NYCHA. And that's exactly what we did and you can
11 see on the, the chart that I referenced earlier you
12 can see that we were able to not only meet that 12
13 month deadline but in only, in only a few short
14 years we were able to accelerate our project
15 delivery and, and as the chart indicates we've
16 delivered three times as much projects in one third
17 of the amount of time just by implementing some of
18 the best practices that the rest of the, the
19 construction industry uses on a, on a daily bases.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Now I want to
22 revisit my first set of questions right. You, you,
23 NYCHA, the state passes a budget on the 31st, NYCHA
24 submits a budget on April 10th. Now the governor's
25 office is, and then you never got a response from

1 the Governor's Office to your, the, the plan that
2 you submitted to DHCR. Now my understanding is that
3 the governor's office is claiming that it rejected
4 your plan because NYCHA was uncooperative with
5 DASNY, is that, is that true to your knowledge or..

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I'm not sure how we
8 can be uncooperative. We had no conversations after
9 the budget with DASNY. We, we, we did have a
10 conversation with them just days before, just days
11 before the budget but we had no conversations after
12 the budget was passed.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Right. So you've
14 gotten a response from either DHCR nor DASNY
15 regarding your capitalization plan, no formal
16 written response?

17 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. I do have a
19 few more questions but I want to give my colleagues
20 an opportunity... So Council Member Richards.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Thank you Mr.
22 Chairman for your boldness and for certainly
23 keeping all of NYCHA's issues in particular at the
24 forefront of the mind of everyone in government who
25 meets the hearing perhaps you know one of the

1 things that we should mandate is officials to spend
2 the night in particular at people's apartments who
3 live in these particular conditions. And, so they
4 can get a better understanding, more acquainted
5 with the conditions that many people have to
6 endure. I did have, so I noticed no... and, and
7 obviously I, I didn't see any submission for
8 Rockaway developments in particular. I wanted to
9 know how does FEMA, is FEMA fitting into the
10 equation for Rockaway Developments? And I say that
11 because we took, I remember when the chairwoman was
12 first appointed she came out to the Rockaways and
13 we visited few apartments with similar conditions
14 like that were up on the, on that particular scene.
15 So Carlton Manner in particular in the Rockaways
16 was one development where an elderly lady lived
17 with her young daughter and they lived in that
18 particular condition when it rained it rained in...
19 you know because they were right under the roof. So
20 I wanted to know what, how do you, how did you
21 prioritize how did this election process go? And
22 if, and let me know if I'm reading it wrong is, are
23 you thinking more in terms of using FEMA money to
24 replace roofs in the Rockaways?
25

1 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So, so as I, as I
2
3 testified right we, we, even given like the money
4 that we put in the capital plan in the bond right
5 there is not enough money for us to address every
6 roof that needs to be replaced. And therefore we
7 were very strategic when we selected the
8 developments that would, that were part of the
9 state plan and one of the, one of the criteria that
10 we looked at was could that roof replacement be
11 funded somewhere else or is it funded somewhere
12 else and yes the, the, the developments in the
13 rockaways because they sustained such a tremendous
14 impact spots Sandy we were successful in our
15 negotiations with FEMA and all of those roof
16 replacements will be part of the FEMA recovery
17 program.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And that's for
19 all of the developments in particular?

20 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yeah the... all of the,
21 yes all of the Rockaways.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay. And then
23 I certainly... So, so what is your plan? So now we
24 know the governor obviously is not going to use
25 this 100 million dollars of course to, to do what

13 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So, so again because
14 NYCHA's capital lead is, is so great there's a 17
15 billion dollar unmet capital need and, and we have
16 accelerated our, our capital delivery. The only
17 funding that is really there for us at this point
18 is the, the most recent hum, annual capital grant
19 which, which we literally just got. And that money
20 is...

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: In, somewhere in the...
24 Between 250 and 300 million dollars. I don't
25 remember the exact number.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Mm-hmm.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: And, and that money is also... with projects that are already designed and, and ready to go out to bid as part of our accelerated delivery. And so, so the... question is there is no, there is no magic pot of money. My, yeah my recommendation given the condition of these buildings and the condition of those roofs my recommendation would be you know thankfully as I, as I indicated the mayor has committed to this program and the mayor has not only committed the hundred million dollars this year but an additional hundred million dollars in the next two years. And so it would be my recommendation if these roofs do not get done under, under the state program that they be done under the upcoming city.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So we, you will be lobbying for more capital money from the city in particular on this issue?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Again I, I, the, the, the Mayor made it the initial hundred million dollar allocation and that work is already you know, designs already underway and, and we're beginning construction on the first one next month.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Mm-hmm.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So, so that money is accounted for. But yeah the addition of additional city capital funding in the, in the next two years I would say that would be a, a, should be a high priority for us.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And, and obviously you know so just my last, my last point or, or question is we're going to have to obviously be creative here because we just can't throw up our hands in particular and say because you know there's no funding that we should just allow people's roofs, apartments, or, or bathrooms to be rained on. Has any, been any thought around green infrastructure, green roofs, and I, and I say that because I chair the Environmental Protection Committee. And since you don't have necessarily the money to do an entire roof perhaps greening their roofs may be a way to slow down the, the water from leaking into people's basements until you can find a substantial amount of money to really fix the issue. But this may be one creative way unfortunately at this point to put a Band-Aid on it and slow down the water from leaking. And this is

1
2 sort of a strategy DEP uses with you know we see
3 little medians and communities with, with grass in
4 the middle of them but they serve as a dual purpose
5 to soak up that rain water so that it slows, so it
6 doesn't impede in the sewer system so is, is green
7 roofs part of your thinking?

8 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So, so yeah we have
9 looked at, we have looked at the concept of green
10 roofs. I, I, I should point out that the roofs that
11 I showed in the picture there that we, that we
12 install now, all of our roofs are sustainable
13 roofs, green energy efficient roofs right. The,
14 the, the fact that they're white roofs, cool roofs,
15 part of the cool roofs program. The issue with the,
16 the, the more traditional green roof like literally
17 planting grass or other vegetation on the roof is
18 they often, and, and this is what we have found
19 require structural enhancement of the, the, the
20 roof slab which is costly.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So would it be
22 less than asking for the, I mean if you're not
23 going to get the hundred million I would... [cross-
24 talk]

25 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No it's... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: ...fail to
believe... [cross-talk]

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: ...it makes, it makes
the roof, it makes the roof replacement more
costly.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: It actually
makes it more costly.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And you've
done actual analysis on that?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We've, we've, we've
looked at, yes we've looked at you know what you
would have to do to reinforce that roof slab and,
and yes the cost associated with the work become
much more expensive than a, than a standard..
[cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay. I would
love to see that breakdown on another day.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Thank you Mr.
Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member
Mendez.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEDEZ: Thank you Mr. Chair. Hi there Ray. What is your official title here? I'm sorry.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Executive Vice President.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Deputy Vice President.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Ray is fine.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: It's a pleasure to have you here. I'm just wondering because I'm looking at the list of the worst roofs. And in 2004 I sat in several different living rooms in people's apartment in Jacob Riis Houses and I saw water coming in through the walls. So some of it was roof related. Some of it was pointing. And when I got into office in 2006 I think I was told it was like four to six million dollars to fix the roofs which I don't get through my capital Reso A funding. So I'm just wondering now where is Jacob Riis in this list of worst roofs. And, and tacking on, we're in 2015 12 years later what condition are they in. Because I mean there were rooms that I walked into where people just closed the door because the sockets were full of water and sparking. And so I

1 just find it hard that Jacob Riis is not on this
2 list. So if Jacob Riis is not on this list I can't
3 even imagine what these other 18 worst roofs really
4 are you know.

5
6 RAYMOD RIBEIRO: Yeah so, so both Riis
7 one and two are, are on our list of I'll say the,
8 the top 90 or so worse developments. But as I...
9 [interpose]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: The, the top
11 what?

12 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: It is on, it is on,
13 it's in the top 90 of our worst developments...
14 [interpose]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Top 90?

16 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes. I don't have the
17 exact number but it's on our list. And I will
18 similar to, to the, the conversation I had with
19 Council Member Richards when we looked at which
20 projects got into the state plan we looked at if
21 there was perhaps an alternate funding source that
22 could fund the roof replacements at these
23 developments. And the, you know the similar
24 situation at Riis... Riis was one of the developments
25 that was impacted by Hurricane Sandy. Our, it is a

1
2 development that will be getting emergency power
3 generators on the roof. And as part of that work we
4 were successful in getting FEMA to fund the roof
5 replacements at both Riis and Riis two.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. So I
7 haven't gone through the governor's proposal of
8 what can be done. Baruch Houses in my district has
9 a bad sewer backup problem so that kind of plumbing
10 can't be done? Can't be done under this capital
11 funding?

12 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I'm not sure I
13 understand the question. I have not, I have not
14 seen the governor's memo regarding what can and
15 cannot be used. I have not, I have not got any
16 specific requests for projects to be funded with
17 the, with the hundred million dollars in state
18 money. So I, I'm, I'm not sure how to answer your,
19 your question.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Chair Torres
21 read a list of things that could be funded with
22 this 100 million capital funding that is being
23 distributed as two million for each as you know I'm
24 assuming assembly person, I'm not even sure. I'm
25 not even sure. I know my assemblyman called me to

1
2 try to be efficient and couple our funding together
3 but my list had already been submitted you know
4 like a month prior so that was impossible to do. So
5 you don't know whether plumbing for sewer backup
6 problems can be done with this money.

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I, I would say, I
8 would say that you know the suggestions that, that
9 the, the chair read were I think the governor's
10 suggestions in his memo. The type of work that
11 you're describing does sound like it would be work
12 that is capitally eligible if , if that's your
13 question. It, it does sound like work that is part
14 of a typical capital project. But again I, I, I
15 don't know you know specifically the, the... [cross-
16 talk]

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Actually want to,
18 if I can intervene for a moment. So that I have the
19 memo here, the project guidelines...

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Mm-hmm.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...the governor's
22 office must have formulated these guidelines
23 without consulting with the housing authority. But
24 it indicates...

25

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I've not seen that document so...

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And we'll show it to you. Projects related to basic infrastructure such as roofing or mechanical systems are not recommended as such improvements are expected to be financed... the existing NYCHA capital program. So a plumbing system upgrade or... that, that would be ineligible under the governor's plan.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Mm...

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: According to these guidelines...

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...from his office.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And I don't know maybe Mr. Chair you could shed some light on this windows. Does it sound like windows can be done?

RAY RIBEIRO: Again windows are a typical capital expenditure but I, I can't speak to the memo.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...the eligible projects according to these, it's lighting improvements... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: ...the eligible projects Mr. Chair? As per the memo?

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Not limited to, no.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So lighting improvements, landscaping, recreational equipment, common... improvements, security systems, and appliances stoves refrigerators.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Well I, I think that's rich because that means my tenants in Baruch can get landscaped while all the waste is coming up on top of it. And my tenants at LES group 5 can get lighting so that they can see all the water coming in through the windows they can't close. So I'm not... You know maybe the... No you can't make it up you know but maybe the governor should come and, and tour some of the developments with us so, and we could all sit there you know and the gentleman who opened up the roof, the umbrella maybe we'll set up a tent so that the, so that the governor doesn't get wet while we have this conversation in someone's apartment. So regarding DASNY right the dormitory authority I don't get it. And I see that we wouldn't get section 3 jobs out of it but what

other reason were to go through DASNY for and how would that affect... I mean you could get capital funding directly, is that correct?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I, I believe we could, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. So the governor chose to give it to the dormitory authority and put another layer of bureaucracy in there because...

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I...

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: ...they can...

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I would...

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: ...distribute it better or...

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I will say that...

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: ...take it longer to give it to you and then you take I don't know how long to get it done?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The, the state, the state would need to, to distribute the money to NYCHA through some state agency. I think in this particular case the allocation not only came through DASNY but the requirement was that DASNY do the work, manage the work. So, so NYCHA would not

1
2 have, not have any responsibility for delivering
3 the program and as a result none of the typical
4 NYCHA requirements for contracting would be, would
5 be part of that program so the section, the section
6 3 conversation that I had before is not something
7 that is in DASNY's contract language and therefore
8 would, that, that if they were to do the work it
9 would not be subject to Section 3.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Interesting.
11 Well that's fascinating. Okay well I don't have any
12 more questions. I just want to make a statement on
13 the record because there was some mention of de
14 Blasio's next generation plan which to me is
15 equivalent to Bloomberg's plan to preserve public
16 housing. So it's the same game different name and
17 I'm looking forward to having a hearing on that
18 one. Thank you Mr. Chair. And thank you Mr. Deputy
19 Vice President.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And, and we
21 certainly will have a hearing on next gen, a few
22 hearings on next gen NYCHA. IT's a, a massive plan.
23 But I want to just underscore a point that you were
24 making earlier. That's, that's... the governor's
25 argument is that NYCHA's incompetent, right, NYCHA

cannot be trusted to implement these capital programs. Even if that were true under the budget DASNY could directly replace these roofs.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Right so that's not an argument against roof replacement. That's not an excuse for turning it into a slush fund.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: It was our, it was our impression from the way the language read in the budget that the hundred million dollars was being allocated for night, improvements at NYCHA but the work with the roofing replacement would be done with DASNY and those are the conversations we had with DASNY about roof, then doing roof replacements at NYCHA developments.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Like theoretically we could have a roofing competition right, the Mayor de Blasio and NYCHA could repair one set of roofs and Governor Cuomo and DASNY could repair another set of roofs right?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Bring it on.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So, so that's the kind of competition I want to encourage. Council Member Mealy actually.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I just concur
3 with everything my colleague just said and some.
4 And one thing I must say on the record also our
5 governor should take a weekend and live in NYCHA
6 developments also just like the mayor did and now
7 he's putting a hundred, about 300 million in a
8 week. That sounds even better. I just have a couple
9 of statements. And the mayor recently announced
10 that city hall will invest the 300 million over
11 three years for roof replacements at NYCHA. The
12 first year 100 and then it'd go what buildings do
13 you think if he's still going to put, well he's
14 still going to put that money in... what buildings do
15 you think he's going to do first even if the
16 governor does not put his three million in or is
17 one million right now?

18 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So as I said you know
19 NYCHA immediately began progressing roof
20 replacements on the hundred million that the, that
21 the, that the mayor has committed to for this year.
22 That work is well underway in terms of some of it
23 needs to be designed. Some of it is currently out
24 to bid. And some, some contract work at Queensridge
25 is about, is about to start... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: ...which developments would this 300 million go to right now?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Again the, the only main... [cross-talk] developments, the only developments that have been selected to this point are related to the first 100 million dollars. And those developments were Queensridge North, Queensridge South, Parkside, Albany, and Sheepshead Bay.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: And Sheepshead Bay? So what happens to the, all the other ones?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Which ones?

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Well the next two years you're, get to the other ones?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So, so... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: ...mayor's...

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: This election has not been made for those particular developments. As, as Council Member Richards alluded to if the state were to not fund the roofs that we identified as a priority for the state plan I would imagine that those would remain a priority for, for subsequent funding allocations.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Alright could you go to the Harlem River Houses?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: No not the, the rangled.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Oh Rangel... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: ...that money come from or just because it was the congressman... did he put any money in these developments?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No he did not. That particular, that particular roof replacement initiative is part of NYCHA's Bond B initiative in which we, in which we issued a bond to make roof replacements and brick repairs at over 300 buildings in NYCHA's portfolio.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So we can't do a couple of more bond.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The, we, we had to get HUD's approve, authorization to do... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Who would you need authorization from?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We need authorization from HUD.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So have that been explored? Because if this is, if this is working why not try that? We should be doing that like yesterday.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Current, the current bond started last year and upon its completion yes I guess in theory we could go back to HUD if it proves to be a successful program.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: It's successful look at it.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We're not done with it yet.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: What could we need?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I, I, HUD would want to see us successfully complete the program before they approve another.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Chair I hope we can send a letter and...

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: But also I think, my understanding is that NYCHA's finances is a factor right? That, my understanding is, so next gen NYCHA and we'll, we will get into the details and obviously... but I think the premise of next gen

1
2 NYCHA is that we have to stabilize the finances of
3 NYCHA so that it can bond, secure more, do more
4 bond programs in the future to address the, the 17
5 billion dollar physical need of the public housing...

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: But this is the
7 first one?

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah but it...

9 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: This is actually the
10 second bond initiative that NYCHA's undertaken.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: That you grow in
12 strength now. You're showing that you can do it.

13 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: And I have one
15 more question. Of the, it has, the governor has
16 decided to move forward with his state
17 revitalization plan to opt out. Now he's giving the
18 two million to... do you know if they given it to the
19 senate or the assembly members, the two million?

20 [cross-talk]

21 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: ...formally notified of
22 that grant but from what I understand... [cross-talk]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I can't...
24
25

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: ...it's two million dollars to 50 different elected officials. I believe assembly... [cross-talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Or assembly members or senate?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I believe it's both.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Both?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I believe it's both.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Do you, have you heard from any of the elected officials on what they going to do with it?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We have gotten... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Just in case.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We have gotten requests from elected officials on what the needs in the various developments are and for the, you know conceptual cost of different, different items that they are thinking about funding.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So if the elected council members want to put some their capital money in one of these projects to help with this two million that could be done right? To make sure

our roofs get done. I have two of them that needs done.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: It depends on...

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Depends...

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: ...how the, how the, the governor's program is actually delivered. If this money never comes to NYCHA and goes directly to DASNY and DASNY is delivering projects somebody would have to figure out how to take city council dollars and add them to the state so that they could do the project. Again I, I want to reiterate the way the budget was passed, it, it says that NYCHA specifically is not doing this work, DASNY is.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: This is a sad, sad, sad state. Is there any duplication anywhere in roof replacement currently covered by the capital plan, state roof and replacement proposal?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No we... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: And the city replacement, roof re...

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We took that into consideration when we developed both the state plan and the city plan. What was in, what was in our

regular five year program? What was in the bond?
You know what was included in Hurricane... [cross-
talk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: No duplications.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: ...Sandy recovery so
there was no... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Nowhere we could
find extra money?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct. No
duplication.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I just still
state that we should ask the governor to live in
one of these developments that you do have to put
an umbrella up and see exactly how far he would
get... I see you looking, to see how far he would
get. Because this is employable conditions that
people are living in every day, and not just every
day, for years now. And for him to now just... I
think about it myself. I, I think I see Lisa Kenna
[phonetic]. We go head to head sometimes but it's
still my job to serve so therefore I think the
Mayor and the Governor have to sit down and come
together because only one will be heard is our
constituents. And that's a sad day on New York and,

1
2 and Albany. So I thank you chair for doing all that
3 you, you have been a advocate on this; emailing me
4 different things. I thank you. And I hope that
5 NYCHA know that this chairman is doing a excellent
6 job doing more than he possibly could to make sure
7 that you stand in good affordable housing. Thank
8 you.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And, and actually
10 we should write a letter to the governor inviting
11 him to Brownsville Brooklynn and he should tour it.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: ...should live in
13 it for a week, or a weekend. Mayor de Blasio did it
14 and now he, he realized that they need repairs. And
15 he's putting his money where his mouth is. Three
16 million dollars for the next...

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: 300 million.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: 300 million for
19 the next three years I believe. So not all comes by
20 him stand, living in NYCHA for a weekend, was it in
21 Harlem? Yeah it was in Harlem he stayed in so...
22 Lincoln Houses so... [cross-talk]

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay thank you.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: ...need to come in
25 Brooklyn.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...thank you. Council Member Menchaca.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you Chair Torres and thank you for, for the testimony today. What, what I want to do is just underscore a couple, a couple pieces here that are just so worth re-mentioning. And one of the pieces here that this council really with the direction of this incredible Chair Torres and the committee for transparency and process that allows for community engagement and when the roofs get to a, a you know a feverish pitch of needs that coming not just from analysis that you presented. That's coming from the consistent call for repair that's epic in changing the lives of our community members that are living in our resident, in NYCHA. And so, so I just want to make sure that, that this is not just an analysis that you're bringing. This is coming from the lives of the people that we represent every day in our community. Second we are separating our, our legal mandates around Section 3. That is, that is a critical component of what's happening here. And I think we all need to look at that because the economic improvement of peoples' lives is at stake

1 here with DASNY as I understand being the conduit.
2 And that's something that we are moving forward on
3 all the Sandy money that's coming in and making
4 sure that we have economic empowerment
5 possibilities for our community members. And then
6 finally I, back to process I, I'm just, I continue
7 to be surprised by, by the direction of, of our, of
8 our governor. And now that it rests in our assembly
9 members that I want us to as a council take our
10 leadership and our relationships with our assembly
11 members and make sure that we get a sense of what
12 is happening and that this does not happen the way
13 that as we talked about or as our chair alluded to
14 as a slush fund purpose period. And so I want to
15 work with you. I want to work with the chair and
16 the committee members to make sure that we keep
17 every part of this accountable as much as possible.
18 And that's going to require our conversations with
19 you all. And that's going to require our
20 conversations with our board members. And I see Ms.
21 Byrd [sp?] here. Thank you so much for being here
22 from Red Hook. Huge advocate on, on her part. And
23 to make sure that we look at our resident
24 associations to make sure that we bring as much
25

1
2 sunlight to this whole process because we might not
3 be able to move this train. We might not be able to
4 do that and I think that the chair's doing an
5 incredible job of putting this at the forefront of
6 everyone. And I'm glad to see the press here that's
7 covering this. But there is so much sunlight we
8 need to bring to this process so that when I hear
9 from residents that are saying I'm getting promised
10 stoves, new stoves and new cabinets what am I to do
11 with that. I have nothing right now to be able to
12 do anything with that right now. And that's what's
13 the scariest part of all of this. And so thank you
14 so much for, for your leadership at NYCHA revealing
15 all this with us, standing with us in many ways
16 and, and really just the biggest props to our chair
17 here, Chair Torres who's taking the leadership and
18 we all need to stand with him as he takes this very
19 very challenging moment for us in our city, very
20 challenging moment for us in our city. Thank you
21 Chair.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you Council
23 Member Menchaca. Thank you for the kind words. So I
24 want to, I want to close, just to underscore the
25 gap between NYCHA's need and the funding that NYCHA

1 will receive. So it, it appears to me that there
2 are about 1,638 roofs that are either extremely
3 poor condition, poor condition, or bad condition
4 right. So that's the need; 1,638 roofs. Is that, am
5 I reading the numbers correctly?
6

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. And so I want
9 to just explore the available funding sources to
10 address that 1,638 need. So you have the federal
11 government's role through the FEMA grant. Do you
12 have a sense of the number of roofs that would be
13 funded under the FEMA grant?

14 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Maybe 150 or so
15 buildings.

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: 150 buildings.

17 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: 150 to 200 buildings
18 maybe.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

20 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Somewhere in that
21 range.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And then we have
23 the city's role right? The city in the first
24 allocation of a hundred million... [cross-talk]

25 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: 60, 66 buildings.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: 66 buildings? Okay and that's, and that's next gen NYCHA. And then NYCHA's bond B program?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: 319 roofs.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: 319?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yep.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. And the state?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The state proposal was 123.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: No what is the state contributing toward roof replacement?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The state... I'm sorry... question again?

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: What is the state contributing toward roof replacement?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Based on this plan nothing.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay nothing. So I just want to... So the federal government is funding the replacement of 150 roofs. The city is funding the replacement of 66 roofs in the first year not to mention what will come subsequently. The Bond B program is funding the replacement of 319 of the

worst roofs. And the state is contributing zero.

The five year capital plan, what percentage of the five year capital plan comes from the federal government?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: About, about 97 percent of our capital plan comes from the federal government.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: 97 percent. How much comes from the city?

RAYMOND RIBIERO: two and a half three percent.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Two and a half. How much comes from the state?

RAYMOND RIBIERO: A fraction of a percent.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So essentially
nothing?

RAYMOND RIBIERO: Essentially nothing.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Alright so the state under Governor Cuomo continues to be a leader in disinvestment from public housing. So that's, that's a point that I felt needed to be driven home. If there are... Council Member Rosenthal do you have questions? Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Good to see you.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: You too.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And thank you Chair for your work on this committee. It's extraordinary as I've tweeted. So a couple of quick questions. Are Brownstones included in, were they included in your survey of all the roofs... we have a, a number of brownstones in our district.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The, the survey... so, so... really we're two surveys. We do the physical needs assessment which is done on a regular basis. In, in that case yes every building is surveyed. And then when we did the survey for the, for this proposed state program we took a small, a smaller portion of that of what were identified in that original assessment as being the worst and we assessed those. I, I don't know off the top of my head whether or not they were specifically brownstones in any of those.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I'd be curious to know if you could provide us with the list. And Chair maybe you already have this so excuse me if I'm asking again. But could you give

us the list of properties that received a, a ranking in the three, threes, fours, and fives?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Sure. We could provide that.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I mean I'm specifically curious about mine and, and I'm sure the threes could be moving toward fours.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: ...likely yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So would be very curious to know how big that category is and exactly which properties are in there. I know my brownstones have real roof problems so I'm surprised not to see them in the fours so..

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I, I think the magnitude of the, you know the roof issue is, is you know something that, that needs to be, to be recognized. We could use, NYCHA could take our entire five year capital program and entire federal education and we could devote it to all roofs and we would still not get to every single roof that we believe that needs to be replaced and that would be assuming we don't replace any boilers, and we don't do any elevator work, and we don't do any apartment work. We don't use, buy any appliances alright.

1
2 Obviously we can't do that. And that I think is an
3 indication of just how, just how big of an issue
4 roof replacement is for us.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And when you
6 talk about roof replacement or, or when you think
7 of, I'm trying to get to the difference between
8 when you're going to do roof maintenance and when
9 that moves up to roof repair is that a difference
10 between the categories, threes and fours?

11 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yeah you're generally
12 you know generally roof repairs are done by NYCHA
13 staff. You know minor repairs to, to cut out a
14 section of roof that is damaged is something that
15 we can do. But is, at a certain point once you
16 start putting too many patches in a roof it
17 becomes, it becomes ineffective right. It's very
18 similar to, to a road. When you get a certain
19 number of pot holes it's just more cost effective
20 to, to repave the entire road. So that is, that is
21 something that we do now as part of our regular,
22 our regular maintenance is roof repairs.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: With the
24 regular NYCHA staff?

25

1
2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: With regular, we have
3 NYCHA roofers yes that, that do roof repairs.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay. And
5 then included in your cost projections did you
6 include in those cost productions the other
7 components of roof replacement like the scaffolding
8 and...

9 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes. So there would be
10 you know asbestos abatement is typically required.
11 Scaffolding is typically required. Usually you have
12 to do some amount of work on the parapet wall or
13 the bulk head walls. So yes all of that work was
14 included in our estimates.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And then once
16 the repairs happen what's the life of the, of a
17 roof? How many years?

18 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: A roof could typically
19 last 30 years.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And so in
21 your assessment when you hand those over to us for
22 the... well I'm interested in the threes, fours, and
23 fives, you might ask for all of them. Do you have
24 in there how many years that roof has already been
25

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2 in existence? So obviously the ones would be zero
3 to five years or...

4 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We in that, in the, in
5 the plan that we submitted to the state we do not
6 have the age of the roof but we have that data, the
7 age of our... [cross-talk]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay.

9 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: ...various roofs yeah.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And there's a
11 way to combine that?

12 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Sure.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay great.
14 Thank you very much. Thank you chair again.

15 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Well I do want to
16 follow up on your questioning. So the useful life
17 of a roof is 30 years?

18 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: It, it varies
19 depending on the, on the product right? There are
20 different types of roofs from spray foam to three
21 ply or four ply but, but generally 30, 30 years is
22 a good, is a good number to use for a roof.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Are, are there
24 roofs... and I'm not expecting you to know off hand.

25

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2 Are there roofs five years beyond their useful
3 life?

4 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Absolutely.

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: 10 years?

6 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Absolutely.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: 15 years?

8 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Probably.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So you probably
10 have roofs that are 15 years beyond their expected
11 life?

12 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Probably. There are
13 some NYCHA developments that still have their
14 original roofs.

15 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And how old are
16 those developments.

17 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Some of those
18 developments could be 50 years old.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: That could be 20
20 years beyond their useful life?

21 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. And I just
23 want to underscore that NYCHA has again 1,638 roofs
24 that are either in extremely poor, poor, or bad
25 condition. And the federal government is

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2 contributing toward roof replacement. The city's
3 contributing toward roof replacement. Bond B is
4 contributing toward roof replacement. The state is
5 contributing nothing. So with that said I thank you
6 for your testimony.

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Okay. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So I want to call
9 up more residents; Mary Williams from 185 Nevins
10 Street, is she here? Is Ms. Williams here? Okay.
11 Cherry Shiver. Beverly Corban. Roxanne Reeds. Okay.
12 Okay so we're going to, we're going to start from
13 left to right. A time limit of three minutes. Ms.
14 Corban.

15 BEVERLY CORBAN: No. Good afternoon. My
16 name is Beverly Corban. I live in Wyckoff Gardens.
17 I'm a member of FURY, Families United for Racial
18 and Economic Equality. Our base is basically
19 downtown Brooklyn... Hill for... and Farragut. With the
20 problems with the roof... I'm also a resident watch
21 supervisor and I see a lot of people on the ground.
22 When you talk about the roof leaking a lot of
23 senior citizens come into the resident watch room
24 complaining about the water that floods their
25 apartments, the mold issue from the water, some, or

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2 some... the way that development is built you can
3 literally put your hand through the walls because
4 the paint peels from the way it comes down, the
5 water, depending on how hard it rains. Maybe the
6 governor and maybe NYCHA should build a basketball
7 team on top of the roofs and then we can get
8 funding to repair our roofs in the proper ways.
9 Maybe we should be a baseball team and he'll send
10 money down for that. I think the governor's rude.
11 He doesn't care about what's going on in New York
12 City housing. We are the last venue for low income
13 housing, real low income housing, real affordable
14 housing in New York City. And that needs to be
15 taken into consideration as to the people that live
16 there. People that live in housing developments pay
17 taxes and pay rents. So they're not living for
18 free. And they should be treated with that respect
19 as you give any other resident in New York City.
20 Also I think when you, the governor should hear and
21 should know that people in NYCHA even though a lot,
22 big popular belief is that they don't vote, people
23 in NYCHA vote. We pay attention to our elective
24 officials. And I think now in the last couple of
25 years NYCHA residents are going to start to pay

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2 attention to who supports us and who doesn't
3 support us. Because when you sit downstairs in the
4 morning after a rain storm or a snow storm and hear
5 residents can't cook because they got water coming
6 down from the roof. The pipes are not good. The
7 pipes are old and breaking out. We had a leak in my
8 building where it started from the 15th floor that
9 ran all the way downstairs to the 9th floor within
10 the wall. Sometimes the leaks are not just coming
11 down to the floor. You have to see water just
12 trickling into your apartment in a slow stream. The
13 governor needs to see that. Maybe he can come help
14 mop some of that water up to see how hard it is to
15 be a senior citizen to have to wring out a mop to
16 do water every day. It's a sad situation that he
17 does not respect the people that live in New York
18 City housing and some of the people that voted for
19 him. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you for your
21 testimony.

22 CHERRY SHIVERS: My name is Cherry
23 Shivers and I'm from Wyckoff Garden. I represent
24 NYCHA and FURY and I have the same problem as Mrs.
25 Corban have. She lives in 130. I live in 272. I

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2 have been in housing for 50 years and I've never
3 seen such a site in the last 10 years... gotten
4 worse. And they ignore us and just like she said
5 with the mayor that promised us we help him get in,
6 get him in office and now he is flying the coop and
7 going another direction. Does he know that he has
8 to be the mayor for the next term or is he waiting
9 for the voters to vote for him? Senior citizen I
10 am. I'm speaking of the senior citizen... community
11 service is going to be cut. They won't even have a
12 place that have hot lunches. And some of the senior
13 citizens in my age is impellent and they cannot
14 cook for themselves. They're going to miss those
15 breakfast and lunch meals. And I want to understand
16 one thing; how can they live in an apartment that's
17 unfit for anybody to live? It's not fair. Please I
18 want him to know that Wyckoff Garden loves to vote...
19 care about their voters and there's one thing about
20 our city councilman Mr. Steve Levins he stands up
21 for us and he loves us and he shows appreciation of
22 what we do for him and we want him to get to be
23 Mayor sooner than you think. Thank you.

24 MARY WILLIAMS: Marry Williams from
25 Wyckoff Garden. We've been having so many problem

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there. First I'm going to give you a little bit of, just about the background... I came from... Street. I was on the first floor apartment 1-0 exactly. I had a two, a two year old and the, the sewage began to come up into the apartment I didn't know from the bathtub, from the toilet itself out of the bathroom down the hallway into both of the bedrooms into the kitchen, under the sink, and then into the sink itself. That was sewage that came all up in there and I'm screaming trying to get out of there. Then I had to grab my children out, take them out in the hall. And the neighbors heard me. They was so wonderful. They pulled me out, helped me get my things out of there which got, so many have gotten messed up. Now living into sewage apartments and they know that's the first floor they know that's where the trouble is why in the world that they would turn around and put another tenant after I've gone to court, I fought, and they got me out of there, put me in Wyckoff Garden. Two months after that they put another tenant with a two month old baby then a four year old child touching the floor again the sewage came up all over again. They repeat themselves putting tenants into that

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2 apartment. They know what's happening. It's not a
3 thing they do not know. They gone to court. They
4 just took her out, put her into 72. Now they find
5 that her apartment back up into Wyckoff Garden. The
6 next point, now they got another tenant with
7 children again. Put them in that same apartment.
8 They don't care. You can kill that tenant, kill
9 those children, destroy them. But they don't care
10 about the, but they want you to pay your rent. Rent
11 is fine. I don't mind doing that because that's the
12 place to live. That's the place to take care of me.
13 I cannot afford to go outside of New York City
14 housing at this point because the rent is so high.
15 But for them to turn around and, and ignore the
16 tenant themselves knowing this is happing..
17 apartment, that one apartment on that first floor
18 each time you take a tenant out you put another
19 with the same identical problem. That is a problem
20 to me. We must take care of that. We look to you in
21 order to help us take care of that. Because if you
22 had your family there and your baby pick up.. that
23 floor what would you do? You would go out of your
24 mind. So we as the parent, we as the tenants feel
25 the same way you guys up here would feel if that

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2 happened to your family. And that's not fair to us.
3 That is not acceptable. I will not accept it. I
4 will turn and I will walk the rest of my life and
5 fight for the next tenant they keep putting on that
6 one floor. And that does not make sense at all.
7 It's coming from the sewage coming up. I'm not
8 talking about the piping, that's another problem.
9 We've talked about that. But the sewers
10 underground. This is where they must go in order to
11 find out why we're having that kind of problem.
12 That's not acceptable, never will be acceptable.
13 The next point is they have cameras on the ground
14 but they're only protecting the building. December
15 of last year 2014 there was like four tenants in
16 the... [cross-talk]

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Please conclude.

18 MARY WILLIAMS: ...week one, week two,
19 week three. They got robbed. But... to the police
20 department they couldn't see it... said your building
21 is the only thing that's protecting are the walls
22 of the building, not the grounds. They cannot see
23 nothing on the ground when something go wrong
24 there. Someone is robbing you... my grandson got
25 robbed. They beat him up, carried him to the

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2 hospital, but still nothing has been done but we
3 don't see anything on the ground.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

5 MARY WILLIAMS: Because the cameras are
6 protecting the building.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay I want to
8 give... Thank you for your testimony. Thank you.

9 ROXANNE REED: Good afternoon. My name
10 is Roxanne Reed. I'm a member and a leader of
11 community voices heard and a longtime resident of
12 the Castle Hill Houses in the Bronx. As a leader in
13 the community I have knocked on council... doors and,
14 and documented 325 cases of water leaks and mold
15 just at castle hill houses. The reason why we have
16 say that black, black, black live matters to has to
17 do with things that the politicians plays games
18 with our lives. And that ain't right. And our home,
19 and many homes when you open the door you're
20 immediately hit in the face with the smell of toxic
21 mold in our neighborhood. Homes, four out of five
22 families members suffer from asthma as I'm one. The
23 young girl, young daughter had asthma so bad where
24 she had suffer, where she had to stay out of
25 school. She got... back from missing school for so

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2 many days. And my neighbors and I have suffered
3 from this den of funding of NYCHA. It is
4 politicians like the, that would have to leave to a
5 public health and asthma. Crisis, the black
6 communities we have now, opportunities to... to undue
7 the, the pattern of this families living in NYCHA.
8 But the days of, of putting a Band-Aid on a gunshot
9 wound has been over. We must address the roots and
10 the cause of toxic mold and water leaks from our
11 roofs. And broken air vents and all pipes,
12 etcetera, etcetera. And... one thing about the vent,
13 about the vents, the vents that we have in our
14 bathroom haven't been cleaned in 35 years. And I am
15 one that can tell you about it because I used to
16 clean them. So that's the last time the vents has
17 been cleaned and they really backed up. So we are
18 fighting more fundings from the level of the
19 government we must use the funds that's available
20 now to include these statements, the state funds to
21 kick off a serious attack, attacking the mold and
22 start with the roofs that we have most damage in
23 roofs.

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I thank you all for
25 your testimony. Thank you. I'm going to call up the

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2 next panel of residents. We have Ms. Byrd from Red
3 Hook west houses. Okay. We have Karrie Gardens
4 [phonetic] from Gowanus. We have Ray Lewis from 230
5 West 131st Street. And Nancy Ortiz from Vladeck
6 Houses. Identify yourself. Yes you are one of the
7 people I called, yes. And Ms. Nesbit... Housing. Ms.
8 Nimmons Wyckoff Gardens. Actually we're going to
9 call two more. Ms. Goodridge from the Urban Justice
10 Center. And Reginald Bowman, the President of CCOP.
11 So we'll start from left to right and then... or
12 right, we'll start with yeah... go...

13 LEAH GOODRIDGE: Good afternoon. My name
14 is Leah Goodridge. I'm a Housing Staff Attorney at
15 the Urban Justice Center. The safety net project at
16 the Urban Justice Center is New York City's
17 advocate for economic justice combining direct
18 legal services, litigation, research and policy
19 making to achieve economic justice for all low
20 income New Yorkers. In 2012 S&P launched its NYCHA
21 dignity campaign whereby S&P represents NYCHA
22 residents who live in deplorable conditions. In the
23 last two years a safety net project has commenced
24 numerous group housing part, those are HP actions
25 to force NYCHA to adjust deplorable conditions on

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2 its premises. In our HP case the primary repairs
3 comprise of toxic black mold, crumbling walls and
4 ceilings, and failed plumbing systems with brown
5 water and exposure to raw sewage. Residents from
6 two of the developments that would benefit from
7 capital fund expenditures that's Lincoln Houses and
8 Clinton Houses were represented by S&P. In those
9 cases tenants receive court orders against NYCHA
10 due to the disintegrating walls and persistent
11 mold. After receiving a court order NYCHA made
12 repairs to the buildings. However in several units
13 the repairs were only temporary as the underlying
14 issues were not addressed. Many NYCHA developments
15 have serious infrastructure deterioration that
16 cannot be ameliorated with simple plaster and
17 paint. We advocate for the capital funds to be used
18 to repair the infrastructure of NYCHA's residential
19 buildings. Roof replacements are a cost effective
20 capital investment because they substantially
21 reduce maintenance cost and repair work orders at
22 developments where such projects were previously
23 undertaken. For example NYCHA decrease work orders
24 in... houses by 50 percent over approximately 1.5
25 years by focusing on roof repairs. Despite these

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2 proven results HCR disapproved NYCHA's recent roof
3 replacement proposal siting that projects related
4 to basic infrastructure such as roofing or
5 mechanical systems are not recommended as such
6 improvements are expected to be financed through
7 the existing NYCHA capital program. HCR's
8 disapproval of the use of funds for roof repair is
9 problematic. The purported reason for the
10 disapproval that NYCHA can use its existing capital
11 to complete these endeavors is unrealistic. NYCHA
12 currently has 18 billion dollars in unfunded
13 capital needs. This... NYCHA's existing capital
14 program is inadequate to finance long overdue
15 infrastructure improvements across its portfolio of
16 2,596 residential buildings, 75 of which are more
17 than 40 years old, 75 percent of which are more
18 than 40 years old. The safety net project urges HCR
19 to talk with NYCHA residents who live in NYCHA
20 developments... [cross-talk]

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Please conclude.

22 LEAH GOODRIDGE: ...that are being denied
23 roof repair. Many of our clients have had leaks in
24 their apartments patched time and again, abated
25 mold frequently returns because NYCHA is unable to

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2 address the underlying issue. How much longer will
3 residents continue to face the same challenges in
4 their homes. An unprecedented number of NYCHA
5 residents came together to demand that they no
6 longer be treated as second class citizens
7 relegated to slum housing.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: We're going to, I'm
9 going to... If you can end there because the three
10 minutes is up so I will...

11 LEAH GOODRIDGE: Sure. Sorry.

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you. Thank
13 you for your testimony.

14 DIBRELLA NESMIT: Hi, my name is
15 Dibrella Nesbit [sp?]. And I'm a new TA president
16 although I've been a community leader for over 30
17 years. Usually I come to these hearings just to
18 learn. But the things that was said here today
19 including from yourself Chairperson I, made me want
20 to speak. I didn't feel we were on subject. I
21 thought we was coming here to talk about oversight
22 of 100 million dollars. I'm in agreement with the
23 governor that the money should be evenly
24 distributed because I, I was in Albany when we went
25 for the rally and as much as we asked for money for

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2 NYCHA we asked for oversight. So I'm thinking that
3 he took this opportunity to use this as oversight.
4 And this also makes the tenants more involved when
5 they talk to they elected officials. So I, I think
6 it does accomplish two things with the money being
7 down that way. I do not feel that the apples should
8 be mixed with the oranges. It is NYCHA's
9 responsibility to, to repair the roofs. How they
10 brainwashed everybody to think it's Cuomo's fault
11 is beyond me. NYCHA has a responsibility and
12 instead of saying it, Cuomo didn't do it, people
13 need to be looking to NYCHA and, and demanding that
14 they fix the roofs. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Although for the
16 record repairing roofs requires money but...
17 Repairing roofs requires money and... so... Next.

18 KARRIE: I'm Karrie... I live in Gowanus.
19 While I... see I have a problem. I have mold in my
20 apartment as a result of no heat. I've submitted
21 over 150 complaints to NYCHA telling them that I
22 have no heat. NYCHA has a pattern of turning off
23 the heat to the line in my apartment. Anytime
24 someone calls and says they have too much instead
25 of building radiators which they can do, radiator

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covers which they can do with the help, you know with the help of the woods program or the initiative through the board of ed, through the building department, through their building with the high school students or insulating the pipes they turn the heat off. And as a result I have no heat the majority of the winter. Now listening to what was said today that Gowanus was affected by Sandy. As a result NYCHA says that they want to install generators on top of the roofs but first they have to fix the roof. That, but according to your figures, figure you only have 150 roofs that are going to be repaired. And looking own the list I did not see Gowanus on there therefore they don't fix the roof they're not going to be able to allocate the money for FEMA. Now that means that I will have another year of no heat. Besides that in Gowanus we've had the tank, the water tank that supplies water to the whole development, both tanks the, the pipes burst during the winter due to the cold. So all that water came down within these buildings. We had gas leaked. We had, we have mold. We... as, as other development the, the pointing where the water's coming into the building. Now

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2 just logically if the roofs are not, are not
3 repaired you cannot put a generator on top of the
4 roof unless the building is structurally sound.
5 With the water and everything else that coming
6 within that means we will not, according to what I
7 heard we will not get...

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: That's not, I just
9 want to... that's not accurate. So the FEMA funding
10 would both pay for the roof replacement and the
11 generator instillation so...

12 KARRIE: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So yeah that's...

14 KARRIE: But, okay but still that...

15 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So if, if Gowanus
16 was affected by Hurricane Sandy or...

17 KARRIE: I...

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...Superstorm Sandy
19 then it should be receiving a share of the three
20 billion dollars in FEMA funding which...

21 KARRIE: I...

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...would go toward a
23 whole set of improvements including generator
24 instillation.

25

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2 KARRIE: Okay but I... the mold has
3 affected my, and I, I'm having a problem. But one
4 thing I do not want to go another year without
5 heat. NYCHA I have documented, I have documented
6 proof that NYCHA turns the heat off. They, if
7 someone, and then I will have to wait a whole
8 weekend... it's, it's emergency services that does
9 it. They cut it off I would have to wait for, if
10 it's Friday 5:00 I will not get heat until Monday.
11 If it's a holiday, especially like Christmas I will
12 not get heat until Tuesday and then it will be on
13 for a short time period and then it's off. NYCHA
14 needs to change that policy of cutting off the heat
15 whenever they say there's too much. Insulate the
16 pipes in the apartment. Build a radiator cover for
17 those people who do not have no heat but to turn it
18 off on other people and create more problems like
19 mold and stuff. And we are, we are, NYCHA residents
20 are disabled vets, people who pay taxes, people
21 after fighting for our country we need to be
22 treated as first class citizen. Especially I have...
23 [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: If you can... [cross-
25 talk]

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2 KARRIE: ...signed off on a... [cross-talk]

3 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: ...conclude...

4 KARRIE: ...hundred... Okay I've signed off
5 on a hundred billion dollar, hundreds of millions
6 of dollars of money for developments. And now I'm
7 sitting and I have enforce housing codes. Now I'm
8 sitting in an apartment where the codes that
9 enforce working for the city are not applying to
10 me. And that is a disgrace.

11 CHARLENE NIMMONS: Hi. My name is
12 Charlene Nimmons. I'm the Resident Association
13 President at Wyckoff Gardens. I want to thank you
14 Council Member Torres and the rest of your
15 colleagues who had to go and take care of business.
16 I'm here because I believe that this was a moment
17 where we were pitted against each other. When I
18 received a phone call from my assembly person
19 asking me what were our needs based on this hundred
20 million dollars not thinking just you know
21 responding quickly our roof was done but we have
22 issues with plumbing. We have issues with our gas
23 lines. We have people complaining of smelling gas.
24 We smell gas in our community centers. I know that
25 I called the gas company and to check up on the,

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2 the, the smell of gas. And they checked and they
3 said that the pipes have some erosion around it. So
4 my thought is we need to service and get our
5 plumbing done because we do still have leaks. Even
6 though the, the, the roof work is done internally
7 there is still some issues. So we already know that
8 we have some issues with plumbing and our gas line.
9 Second for the governor to make a decision to
10 divert this money from our neighbors though some
11 may be in Manhattan, wherever they live they're
12 still our neighbors. I think it's unfair. What he
13 needed to do was add more money to the budget. If
14 you felt that there was something else that needed
15 to be taken care of don't take from, like somebody
16 said earlier, Peter to pay Paul. I think that
17 there's more than enough funding in the budget to
18 take care of the people who have been serving in
19 this city for years. We generate revenue. We're an
20 economic engine. We have jobs and all types of, of,
21 we bring a lot to the city. Federal funding come
22 in, comes in every year to the city and to the
23 state. And for there to be this type of, of
24 discussion. I mean we should not be having this
25 type of discussion. We have federal dollars that

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2 come in because of HUD subsidies into the city and
3 to the state and for us to have to sit before our
4 council members who actually have been working hard
5 for us and so we, you know we appreciate your help
6 we should not have to come and beg and plead for
7 people to have their homes repaired. If you have a
8 home the first thing you want to do is get your
9 roof done. Because even NYCHA said in order for and
10 is weird that we on the same page, I said that to
11 them, we on the same page, NYCH and the residents,
12 in order for their to be a success we need to...
13 [cross-talk] loss.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I just want to
15 add... I actually think it's much worse than robbing
16 Peter to pay Paul right. It's not as if the
17 governor is diverting funds away from roof
18 replacement to pay for plumbing upgrades and
19 electrical system upgrades... no he's taking money
20 from roof replacement to give stoves and to pay for
21 landscaping and recreational equipment. This is
22 based on the memo that his office issued. So I
23 think it's even worse than just... it's not just
24 simply a redistribution of resource. It's an
25

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2 outright disinvestment from the court
3 infrastructure of NYCHA so...

4 REGINALD BOWMAN: Good afternoon

5 everybody. My name is Reginald Bowman. I'm the
6 president of the citywide council of presidents of
7 the New York City Housing Authority's Resident
8 Associations. And thank you Chairman Torres and
9 those who put this together. I'm just going to be
10 brief because everything that I might have thought
11 about saying has been said. The fact that the
12 governor and others continue to not do a
13 collaborative effort to deal with the capital needs
14 of public housing in this city is just my opinion
15 just another example of the indifference that
16 certain people have towards their own
17 constituencies. And the thing that I'd like to just
18 put on the record is that people remember these
19 things when it comes time to elections. There are
20 287,240 NYCHA resident voters in this city. And I
21 think that many of the things that influence the
22 state government in particular and government in
23 general is what's going to happen on election days
24 when it comes time to support people. Now I
25 certainly am in support of making sure that the

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2 capital plan for NYCHA that was proposed for this
3 100 million dollars is put into effect. It makes
4 common sense that when you're managing property
5 you're supposed to make sure that you invest in the
6 infrastructure of property in order to make it
7 sound. The fact that so many of our residents have
8 been testifying over the years and we just heard
9 another story about illegal action or illegal
10 organization that's representing residents for many
11 years that have been subjected to these kinds of
12 conditions is just, I call it political
13 indifference. I certainly believe that at this
14 point yes we do need to take action and make sure
15 that the governor gets the word. However the fact
16 that the governor did this should be evidence to a
17 lot of people that after we took so many people up
18 to Albany the, the governor's not listening. I
19 think that it, the time has come for residents to
20 join forces and to do some other things and take
21 legal action and perhaps put together a class
22 action suite so that we begin the process of
23 legally making sure that our rights are enforced.
24 Again I support the position that there needs to be
25 money put into the capital projects. I mean I'm on

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2 the record for years talking about infrastructure.
3 I've been doing that since 2009, eight, seven, six,
4 five. But it's time for us to really take a
5 different course and I believe that it's time for
6 us to start talking class action suite around the
7 city not against the people who are, been our
8 supporters but we certainly I believe at this point
9 should not continue to subject ourselves to the
10 indifference of elected officials who thing that we
11 should continue to live and suffer in these kind of
12 conditions. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you for your
14 testimony. We have no further testimony. So I'll
15 close simply by noting that when, when something
16 goes wrong in public housing the first instinct is
17 to direct our outrage toward NYCHA. And, and that
18 is obviously legitimate but we should remember that
19 NYCHA's a creature of the government right. It's a
20 creature of state law. It's a creature of the
21 federal government. And so you know if there's...
22 the, the city and the federal government, the state
23 and the federal government should be seen as
24 slumlords for underfunding public housing and for
25 allowing residents to live in increasingly

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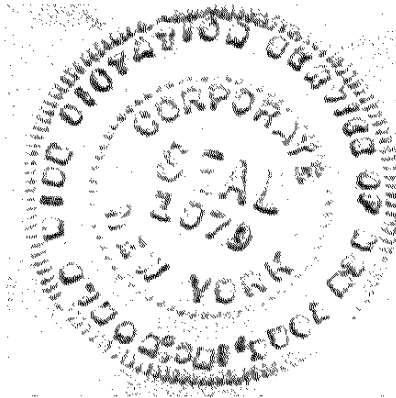
2 unlivable conditions. And so I hope that we direct
3 as much outrage toward the state and federal
4 government as we do toward the housing authority. I
5 want to acknowledge a few testimonies submitted for
6 the record from the legal aid society, from the
7 independent democratic conference, from Council
8 Member Inez Dickens, and from GOLES, the Good Old
9 Lower East Side. With that said this hearing is
10 adjourned. Thank you.

11 [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date May 31, 2015