



**Office of Councilmember Alicka Ampry-Samuel**

**Hope is inside-41<sup>st</sup> Councilmatic District, Brooklyn NY**

**Chair, Public Housing Committee**

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***PUBLIC HOUSING CHAIR AND RESIDENTS TURN UP THE HEAT ON NYCHA***

**Brooklyn, February 20, 2018– NYC Councilwoman Alicka Ampry-Samuel-41<sup>st</sup> District**

*Today's press conference demonstrated a united front among NYCHA residents and those in power to demand and create change to ensure that all NYCHA residents have a home they are proud of. Our NYCHA residents represent a variety of New Yorkers who need to have their voices heard and concerns addressed. That's why I have proposed the creation of a much needed voice at the executive level in creating a Chief Residential Officer. This is not a mayoral appointment, thus relieving any concerns of bias. This would ideally be a person having roots in NYCHA as well as the ability to relate to and speak on behalf of residents. In echoing the mayor during his state of the city address- New Yorkers at every level must be heard.*

*Today I submitted proposed legislation requiring boiler replacement after its lifespan, as well as, regular and timely inspections of boilers and heating systems in preparation for the winter months. I also proposed two bills requiring NYCHA share data regarding HPD violations and court mandated remedies for said violations so that NYCHA can have a quantitative and qualitative assessment to draw from to create better practices resulting in best outcomes.*

*Living conditions must be at their very best in NYCHA; heat and hot water are just the beginning. We are creating real investments that will improve the quality of living for each NYCHA tenant not just for the immediate but also for the future. I will continue to lead the fight while working alongside colleagues as well as state and federal government.*

**HOPE IS INSIDE**

**OCEANHILL – BROWNSVILLE – CROWN HEIGHTS – BEDFORD STUYVESANT – EAST FLATBUSH**

***Statements were provided by members immediately following the press conference:***

***Majority Leader Laurie A. Cumbo***

*"The safety and well-being of our community members is essential to the health of our communities throughout this city. All NYCHA residents must have heat and hot water, the most basic necessities of life. During this winter season, our city has experienced frigid temperatures that were deemed unsafe for homeless individuals to remain on our streets and yet thousands of NYCHA residents - including seniors - were forced to brave extreme cold in their own homes. It is time to "turn up the heat" for the more than 400,000 New Yorkers who deserve a safe space to live and raise their families. As a Member of the Committee on Public Housing, I join NYCHA Committee Chair Alicka Ampry-Samuel in calling for transparency, accountability, better maintenance, and more investment."*

***Council Member Carlina Rivera- District 2, Manhattan***

*"It's disturbing that thousands of public housing residents in my district and across the city continue to face heat and hot water outages, even after weeks of intense public scrutiny, testimony from NYCHA officials on their efforts, and media focus on this crisis for so many New Yorkers. NYCHA must restore full heat and hot water services to these developments immediately, but it must also release a transparent response plan that accurately tracks outage complaints, resolves them in a timely manner, and holds officials accountable when they fail," said New York City Councilwoman Carlina Rivera. "Our city's public housing system should be at the center of our goal to make this the fairest big city in America, and NYCHA should work to shed its stigma of incompetence and mismanagement."*

***Council Member Ben Kallos- District 5, Manhattan***

*"It's sad that in 2018 New Yorkers are still fighting for such basic utilities like heat for their homes," said Council Member Ben Kallos. "NYCHA residents are not second-class citizens of the City of New York and if we are really working toward making our City more fairer and more just, making sure NYCHA residents have reliable heat is the logical place to start."*

***Council Member Helen Rosenthal- District 6, Manhattan***

*"It is beyond unacceptable that almost 80% of NYCHA residents have gone without heat and/or hot water at some point this winter. Residents in several of the NYCHA developments in my district have suffered terribly. There is no doubt that NYCHA has profound capital funding needs, but there are steps the Authority can take now to better manage heat issues and other physical plant problems. This includes tracking all of its building maintenance data in one system. Critical information -- such as boiler maintenance reports -- is kept in handwritten form at each NYCHA development, but is never entered into a centralized database so NYCHA management is immediately aware of a problem. This can and must be changed now,"*

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**Council Member Andy King- District 12, Bronx**

*"I stand with my colleagues and the residents of New York City public housing against the years of disinvestment and call for the administration to take swift action. We need more workers prepared to work on heating issues and more capital investment in boilers and other structural matters that should have been dealt with years ago. This is a fight for justice and equity, and we can't be a city of fairness if we continue to forget our NYCHA citizenry."*

**Council Member Mark Gjonaj- District 13, Bronx**

*"If a private landlord or management company was as negligent as NYCHA they would have their property seized from them. The lives of 400,000 New Yorkers hang in the balance, it is time that New York City holds itself to a higher standard."*

**Council Member Grodenchik- District 23, Queens**

*"I grew up in NYCHA, in Pomonok Houses in Queens, where my family lived for fifty years. The fact that over eighty percent of the residents of New York City Public Housing, the best public housing in the United States of America, could be without heat at some point this winter, during exceptionally cold weather, is just beyond my imagination. We can and must do better,"*

**Council Member Rory Lancman- District 24, Queens**

*"Too many NYCHA residents were left without heat or hot water this winter because of broken boilers and malfunctioning heating systems. We must take action to fix this injustice immediately, and that starts with investing resources into renovating and replacing NYCHA's crumbling infrastructure."*

**Council Member Adrienne Adams- District 28, Queens**

*"It is inexcusable that thousands of New Yorkers are living in substandard NYCHA housing," said Council Member Adrienne Adams. "These residents are rent paying citizens like every other tenant in the City of New York and they deserve to have heat, hot water, and to live free of dangerous lead paint. This is a serious situation - NYCHA buildings are in total crisis. Immediate renovations and a more profound investment are needed to make these urgent repairs."*

**Council Member Karen Kosolowitz- District 29, Queens**

*"The heat and hot water situation at NYCHA properties is intolerable. Just because these are public properties should not lower the standards of service to be expected. NYCHA needs the financial resources to put an end to these unacceptable living conditions."*

**Council Member Robert E. Cornegy Jr.- District 36, Brooklyn**

*“Addressing the dire situation facing thousands of NYCHA residents in my district, and hundreds of thousands more across this city, makes applying consistent pressure on our leaders to find an expeditious resolution to these matters critically important,” said Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr. “I look forward to working closely with my colleagues in government to increase investment in our public housing stock and to find a way to expedite the timeline on repairs necessary to resolving the ongoing crises facing the 400,000 New Yorkers who call NYCHA developments home.”*

**Council Member Carlos Menchaca- District 38, Brooklyn**

*“I stand in support of my colleagues, Council Members Ritchie Torres and Alicka Ampry-Samuel in their fight for NYCHA Residents. NYC’s low-income residents deserve to live with dignity. These are families with small children and senior citizens who pay their rent. They should have access to basic services, such as hot water and heating. NYCHA must be held accountable for failing our low-income residents. I will continue to ask for more accountability as well as for more funding and better maintenance of NYCHA facilities”*

**Council Member Mathieu Eugene- District 40, Brooklyn**

*“The hardworking men and women who reside in NYCHA apartments should not be subjected to its current subpar living conditions. I want to commend my colleagues for fighting for the interests of our residents, who deserve better treatment from the city. These dangerous buildings have created an unsafe living environment for residents who are already struggling to provide for their families. It is long overdue for the City of New York and NYCHA to take the necessary steps to remedy this unacceptable and shameful situation.”*