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COUNCILWOMAN ALICKA AMPRY-SAMUEL'S REACTION TO  
MAYOR DE BLASIO'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS AND SUPPORT TO NYCHA

**February 14, 2018– NYC Councilwoman Alicka Ampry-Samuel, 41<sup>st</sup> District-Brooklyn**

Yesterday evening Mayor de Blasio gave the 2018 State of the City address and opened on the premise that the voices of all New Yorkers must be heard. Our mayor further went on to place intentional emphasis on the need to address the major issues affecting the 400,000 NYCHA residents and the current state of the developments. As Chair of the Public Housing Committee I could not agree more. I am also glad to hear the rollout of more than \$1 billion in capital needs.

Currently missing at NYCHA is the voice of New Yorkers who can speak first hand to its current state and their vision for its future – NYCHA's residents. One way to address NYCHA concerns and have NYCHA residents heard is by establishing and adding the role of a Chief Resident Officer to the executive team of NYCHA. There are a variety of important titles and roles on the current executive team ranging from Chief Technology Officer, Chief Administrative Officer, VP of External Affairs, to Supply Management VP. These various roles oversee areas that are extremely important to the efficiency of NYCHA. However, blatantly missing and extremely important to NYCHA's effectiveness is the voice of the residents.

In this role, the Chief Resident Officer could be tasked with overseeing and sharing residents' daily demand for fairness and more importantly the role would provide a conduit for resident representation at the executive level. Who best able to give the narrative of the conditions created by lack of gas to their apartment then the parent who cannot make dinner for their family? Who is more affected by the slow response to a mold complaint than the grandmother with asthma who has been coughing and wheezing incessantly? Who best to convey the bitter cold and extreme discomfort felt during the most recent arctic blast this winter than the thousands of residents actually affected? By creating the role of Chief Resident Officer, NYCHA would bring to light the human story and real life experiences not translatable via statistics and white papers.

As stated by Mayor de Blasio during the State of the City address, "Fundamental change comes from the bottom up." NYCHA residents are on the ground daily living with the inequities created by failure to be heard. Bridging the communication gap between those who have remained voiceless for so long and top level executives who have the decision making power when deciding on the lives of thousands of New Yorkers will be a step in the right direction.

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