

Dear Elected Officials, and Task Force Members,

First, I want to emphasize the urgent need for expanded housing opportunities for residents living in the Red Hook East and West Development and other working poor, who sit on housing waitlists for decades, never getting any relief from overcrowding.

As a resident of NYCHA, I have personally experienced and witnessed the barriers that prevent families from accessing stable and affordable housing.

Gentrification and opposition to new housing developments have made it increasingly difficult for long-standing residents to secure permanent housing solutions.

There are also NYCHA residents who aspire to homeownership but face systemic obstacles, including limited financing and resources, and restrictive policies.

Simultaneously, overcrowding continues to be a pressing issue, with families forced into unsafe and inadequate living conditions due to a lack of available housing options.

I strongly urge your office to take action by:

- Expanding and promoting first-time homebuyer programs specifically designed for low-income residents.
- Increasing the development of mixed-income housing with a priority for NYCHA residents.
- Supporting ground leases and other innovative models that create long-term affordable homeownership opportunities.
- Allocating more funding toward affordable housing development and preservation in historically marginalized neighborhoods like ours.
- Partnering with NYCHA resident leaders to develop solutions tailored to community needs.
- Creating a sustainable workforce program that prepares NYCHA residents and youth as young as 13 to start imagining careers focused on innovations like "The Blue Highway," Marine Biology, and Coastal Resiliency.

Access to affordable and stable housing is fundamental to the well-being of our communities.

I look forward to your response and the possibility of working together to make housing more accessible for all.

Furthermore, I am advocating for the Red Hook Container Terminal to be given priority on this site as the only working port between New Jersey and Hunts Point that can and does serve the five boroughs with all types of goods from perishables to bulk. As we continue to

face climate related disasters, it is in the interest of this City to have a utility port in case our food supply chain gets challenged. If Hunts Point were to face a real disaster, our City would face a food crisis within 3 days. This is why I support the BMT proposal, which offers modernization and upgrades to the container terminal that will add another layer of preparedness for New York City.

Lastly, I support the creation of the Blue Highway as a means to keep trucks off our streets as well as to help New York City meet its energy reduction goals for 2030 and 2050.

Sincerely,

Karen Blondel
Red Hook West Resident Association
President