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Dear Neighbors,

Last Night Mayor Bill de Blasio held a Town Hall on the Upper West Side about Senior Housing. I want to thank the Mayor for taking the time to come to our neighborhood and speak to seniors. It was a pleasure to moderate the event with Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, and I'm grateful to Goddard Riverside and the Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center for hosting the nearly 300 seniors who attended. I was particularly impressed that the Mayor stayed for over two hours to answer every last question.



Mayor Bill de Blasio, Helen, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, and residents at the Mayor's Town Hall on Senior Housing, held at the Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center (January 27, 2016). Credit: Demetrius Freeman/Mayoral Photography Office.

The Mayor discussed several issues, including his plan to build and preserve 200,000 units of affordable housing over the next ten years, 10,000 of which are dedicated to seniors and 2,700 of which have already been built or refinanced. The questions from the audience ranged from financial support for seniors offered by the City, free legal services available to seniors, NYCHA infrastructure and maintenance repairs, and geriatric mental health. There are a few points in particular that deserve repeating:

- The Mayor's 2016-2017 budget has **no cuts to senior programs**
- **No rent-stabilized apartment can go out of rent-stabilization while the tenant still lives there.** If you live in a rent-stabilized apartment and your landlord tries to charge you market rate or tells you the apartment is going out of rent stabilization, report it to 311 and contact my office with your 311 complaint number.
- **You cannot be denied access to affordable housing or senior housing based on your credit score**
- If you are in urgent need of **emergency financial assistance** (you're about to get evicted, lose your utilities, are a victim of domestic violence, etc.), you can receive aid through the City's One Shot Deal program. You can learn more [here](#), and feel free to come into my office for help with your application
- Too few **mental health** providers accept Medicare, so it's hard for seniors to find care they can afford. The City is working to expand access to geriatric mental health care through its new Thrive NYC program, but in the mean time be sure to look at [these resources](#) from the Department of the Aging (DFTA)
- The City's Anti-Eviction Legal Services and Anti-Harassment Tenant Protection Program have seen a tenfold increase in funding over the last two years to expand legal services and ensure that tenants rights are protected. **If you are facing eviction or being harassed by your landlord**, call 311 to be connected to a lawyer.
- The City recently **ended chronic veteran homelessness**, and it is committed to finding *permanent* housing for all of our veterans. The Mayor asked for your help: if you have an apartment to rent to a veteran or a job to offer to a veteran, please call 311.

It was a jam-packed event, and as always, it is an honor to serve such an engaged group of New Yorkers.

Warmly,

Helen.



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