



DIGNITY, COMMUNITY, AND POWER:

2023 NEW YORK CITY BUDGET AND POLICY PLATFORM



INTRODUCTION

As the largest community-based membership organization representing immigrants and working-class people of color in New York State, Make the Road New York (MRNY) is uniquely positioned to identify and address pressing community needs. In New York City (NYC), where the largest concentration of our 25,000 members reside, we operate community centers in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. We employ a multi-faceted approach to supporting immigrants, communities of color, and working-class New Yorkers, providing a full range of legal, educational, and survival services. The communities we serve have been utterly devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with staggering loss of life and calamitous economic consequences. **They need bold City action to reverse inequities and expand opportunities for all New Yorkers.**

(Note: ➤ indicates budget-focused items.)

PROTECT IMMIGRANT NEW YORKERS AGAINST DEPORTATION

➤ **INVEST AN ADDITIONAL \$50M IN FUNDING FOR IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES**

Legal service providers work around the clock to assist NYC's newest migrants, often with little to no additional funding and while maintaining representation of thousands of existing clients. The City must substantially increase funding for immigration legal representation to better protect immigrant communities now and in the future.

➤ **PROVIDE AT LEAST \$1M IN FUNDING FOR THE RAPID RESPONSE LEGAL COLLABORATIVE (RRLC)**

The RRLC provides access to counsel to community members who are detained and on the verge of being deported, or who have orders of removal and are at risk of ICE detention. The RRLC also monitors ICE activity and trends and works with organizers to provide real-time information to community members. The City must baseline at least \$1M to fund this program for the long-term.

➤ **MAINTAIN AT LEAST \$16.6M IN FUNDING FOR THE NEW YORK IMMIGRANT FAMILY UNITY PROJECT (NYIFUP)**

NYIFUP providers ensure that vulnerable immigrants who are detained by ICE have access to expert counsel. The City must continue to invest in this critical service.

REFORM CIVIL IMMIGRATION DETAINER LAWS

The City must pass Intro's 158, 184, and 185 to prevent conspiring or collusion between ICE and local law enforcement. Intro 158 grants individuals the right to take legal action against the City if they are wrongfully detained by the New York Police Department (NYPD), the Department of Corrections (DOC), or the Department of Probation (DOP). Intro 184 prevents the NYPD from holding individuals past their release date without a warrant signed by a judge. Intro 185 ensures that DOC does not disclose information about the individuals in their custody to federal immigration authorities.

ENSURE ALL NEW YORKERS HAVE A RIGHT TO A ROOF

➤ **EXTEND CITYFHEPS TO SHELTER RESIDENTS REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS**

A record number of people are experiencing homelessness, and shelter stays are inordinately long. CityFHEPS, a voucher that helps New Yorkers move from homeless shelters to apartments, is limited to a very small number of people. To help more people obtain stable housing, the City must improve CityFHEPS by eliminating unnecessary rules and expanding eligibility to more households, including families where everyone is undocumented.

ENSURE ALL NEW YORKERS HAVE SAFE AND HEALTHY HOUSING

A chaotic enforcement system and lack of interagency coordination means too many landlords still neglect repair needs and get away with harassment. Black and Latinx New Yorkers are more than twice as likely to report deferred maintenance in their homes, yet NYC's enforcement regime fails to collect civil penalties when landlords refuse to make repairs. The City must ensure that landlords are held accountable by increasing penalties and collecting them. (Visit our full list of affordable housing recommendations at righttoaroom.org)



INVEST IN EDUCATION EQUITY

➤ **REJECT AND REVERSE ANY CUTS TO PUBLIC EDUCATION, CUNY FUNDING, AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

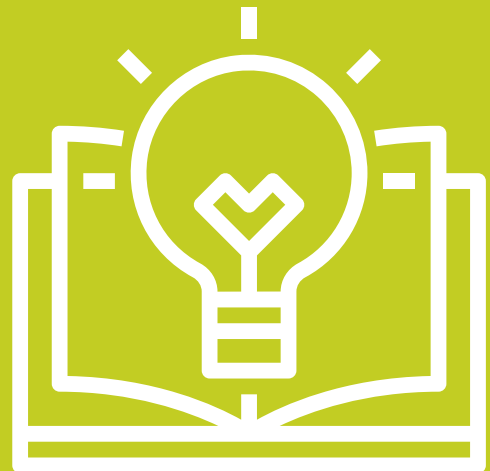
The Adams administration has already cut more than \$500 million from public school funding, in addition to cutting other vital services. This funding must be restored and the new budget must not include any additional cuts.

➤ **FULLY FUND ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS**

Restore and baseline \$20.4M for DYCD RFP-contracted adult literacy programs (\$5.7M in established baseline funding, \$8M in expansion funding baselined in FY22, and \$6.7M added for additional expansion in FY23.) The city should renew the \$4M City Council Discretionary Adult Literacy Initiative which added flexibility to program rates, and renew and expand the City Council Discretionary Adult Literacy Pilot Project to \$5M under the new title “Adult Literacy Program Enhancement.”

➤ **FUND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

Restore \$9.16 million in funding to the 52 community schools bracing for significant budget cuts so they can continue to provide wraparound services to students and their families. While community schools have a proven track record of boosting graduation rates, attendance, and on-time grade progression, budget cuts are threatening these services at a time when they are needed most.



REIN IN THE NYPD AND FUND REAL SAFETY

➤ **SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE THE NYPD'S BLOATED ANNUAL \$11B BUDGET, INCLUDING RUNAWAY OVERTIME SPENDING, AND ENSURE TRANSPARENCY**

The NYPD budget continues to balloon and the agency's impunity and power grows unchecked, with no transparency. Funding to this bloated agency should be substantially cut, with resources redirected to community based safety solutions and infrastructure including housing, mental health, education, and youth services. NYPD must be held accountable to budgets and annual spending like other agencies, and the City must stop the NYPD from overspending its budget every year by hundreds of millions of dollars without any meaningful consequences.

➤ **POLICE-FREE SCHOOLS**

The City should completely dismantle school policing infrastructure, culture, and practices in NYC schools and devote those funds to supporting youth. The more than \$450M spent on the NYPD's School Policing division should be redirected to fund the resources, staff and restorative practices that support every young person to learn and grow. The city must immediately:

- Implement a hiring freeze on school police that does not allow to fill for attrition;
- Eliminate funding for the 600 vacant school police positions;
- Eliminate the \$47.5M dedicated to "enhanced security measures", including surveillance;
- Disband the Youth Coordination Officers (\$106.2M); and
- Reinvest this funding towards restorative justice, mental health support and other staff and practices that help students learn and thrive.

➤ **DISMANTLE THE VICE UNIT AND OTHER ABUSIVE UNITS, REMOVE POLICE FROM SOCIAL SERVICES ROLES, & INVEST IN COMMUNITY BASED SAFETY SOLUTIONS AND PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

The notorious VICE unit must be eliminated (\$25M), with city funding instead used to support people in the sex trades, including through the COIN Clinic and increased access to health and wellness services, competent legal representation, and educational opportunities. The NYPD's Mental Health Co-Response Teams (\$5.7 million) and the Homeless Police Force within the Department of Homelessness (\$30.1 million) should also be eliminated. And the City should eliminate the NYPD's Strategic Response Group (133.7M) and its public relations budget (\$5 million). Those resources should fund non-police community safety solutions, including closing serious service gaps in mental health and harm reduction, homelessness and housing, and education and youth services.

STRENGTHEN WORKER PROTECTIONS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND ENFORCEMENT

PASS THE SECURE JOBS ACT INTRO 837 AND EXTEND JUST CAUSE PROTECTIONS TO ALL WORKERS

The City must pass the Secure Jobs Act and extend protections from being fired without “just cause” to all workers in low-wage industries and invest in enforcing this critical protection. Under the current “at-will” employment scheme, employers enjoy free rein to fire a worker for any reason or no reason at all. With few safeguards from arbitrary dismissal, workers are hesitant to speak up about workplace violations.

> RENEW AND EXPAND THE LOW-WAGE WORKER SUPPORT (LWWS) INITIATIVE TO \$3M, INCLUDING \$1.4M FOR THE CITY-WIDE IMMIGRANT LEGAL EMPOWERMENT COLLABORATIVE (CILEC) COALITION OF LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBOS)

The LWWS initiative enables legal service providers and CBOs to represent hundreds of workers on wage theft, discrimination, and other claims. Groups also conduct comprehensive, multilingual worker outreach and education programs.

> FULLY FUND THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION (DCWP) AT \$2.4M AND THE LAW ENFORCEMENT BUREAU AT THE NEW YORK CITY COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (NYCCHR) AT \$3M

Worker protection agencies need the staff and resources to meaningfully enforce basic protections, especially for the most vulnerable workers. Staffing cuts have hindered DCWP’s ability to effectively enforce critical municipal laws such as protections for third-party food delivery service workers, the right to paid sick leave, scheduling and “just cause” protections for fast food workers. Cuts to NYCCHR’s Law Enforcement Bureau have led to discrimination and harassment cases languishing for several years before they are adjudicated, with discriminatory employers benefitting from delays. Staffing cuts to DCWP and NYCCHR must be reversed.

> RENEW FUNDING FOR THE JOB TRAINING AND PLACEMENT INITIATIVE

This program supports classes for members of unions, CBOs, and providers serving immigrants. Funding must include \$5.255M for the Consortium for Worker Education “Jobs to Build On” program and \$2.375M for Worker Service Centers.

EXPAND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

➤ INVEST IN ADDRESSING HEALTHCARE DISPARITIES

The City must expand funding for the Access Health Initiative to \$4M and allocate \$2.3M in funding for the Managed Care Consumer Assistance Program (MCCAP). Additionally, the City must maintain funding for Ending the Epidemic at \$7.7M and the Immigrant Health Initiative at \$2M. These programs enable CBOs to provide immigrant families with information about their rights and available health resources.

➤ EXPAND FUNDING FOR THE NYC CARE PROGRAM

Operated by NYC Health + Hospitals, NYC Care guarantees low-cost and no-cost services to New Yorkers who do not qualify for, or cannot afford, health insurance. NYC Care must receive \$100M per year to continue to implement the program and fund CBOs to conduct outreach, education and direct enrollment. They should also receive additional funding to be able to expand the program to Federally Qualified Health Centers, which was approved under Local law 107.

➤ CREATE, FUND AND SUSTAIN A COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER PROJECT

NYC should create this program to fund CBOs to hire Community Health Workers (CHWs). These CHWs would partner closely with clinical facilities, and provide 1-1 assistance helping residents navigate the health system and access care.



JUST PAY FOR HUMAN SERVICES

➤ **PAY US WHAT WE ARE WORTH**

NYC must ensure human services nonprofits and its workforce receive the Just Pay they deserve. This begins by providing a 6.5 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), estimated at \$200M, for all contracted human services workers in the FY24 budget, and announce a multi-year agreement that matches that of DC 37, the City's municipal union, that just achieved a 5-year deal.

➤ **PAY US IN FULL**

Change the Indirect Cost Rate manual to make indirect funding a fixed budget cost that is fully funded and not taken away from program budgets.

➤ **PAY US ON TIME**

Permanently erase delays in contractual payments by eliminating barriers to cash flow, ensure on-time registrations of FY24 contracts, and commit to legislative mandates for contract time frames with penalties for late pay and registration.



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF DIGNITY, COMMUNITY, AND POWER.

Learn more at: maketheroadny.org