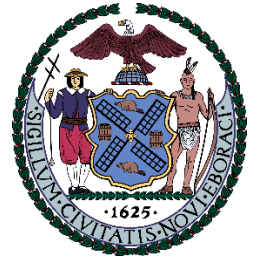


**SENATOR MICHAEL GIANARIS
COUNCIL MEMBER COSTA CONSTANTINIDES**



May 9, 2019

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City Hall
New York, New York 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

We write with serious concerns about a recently announced executive budget plan to close more than a dozen senior centers serving NYCHA residents throughout the City of New York. Of particular concern is the senior center at Astoria Houses, located at 4-05 Astoria Boulevard in Queens. This proposal is not only of detrimental impact to seniors in our community but indicative of a larger disinvestment from NYCHA at a time when New York's public housing requires more, not fewer, resources.

The Astoria Houses senior center has recently undergone renovation, funded by a capital grant from the New York City Council. Work is expected to wrap up next month, and seniors were elated to leave the cramped space they occupied for too long. To require them to operate in a small area during construction and then claim the center must close because of low turnout is a mischaracterization. This was a major project the resources of which would be wasted if this plan is realized. Additionally, program participants would be relocated to a senior center at the Queensbridge Houses in Long Island City. While that site does excellent work, busing these seniors nearly two miles each way will disrupt their lives and waste their time. It is also baffling that the city can pay for buses, which pollute our air, but cannot find the money to keep this center afloat.

What is most distressing about this closure, beyond the obvious impact to seniors in our community, is the ongoing divestment of services from NYCHA communities. We cannot let these individuals feel abandoned by their government. NYCHA residents deserve more, not fewer, services than they currently receive.

We urge you to preserve this center and the others currently slated for closure. Their services are critical to the communities they serve. We stand ready to support this effort however necessary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Gianaris".

Michael Gianaris
New York State Senate

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Costa Constantinides".

Costa Constantinides
New York City Council