



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Statement From Midtown Elected Officials On Decision By City Hall To Displace Residents Of Harmonia Homeless Shelter

LIZ KRUEGER September 11, 2020



New York City - State Senator Liz Krueger, Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, Assembly Member Dick Gottfried, and City Council Member Keith Powers released the following statement today in response to the decision by City Hall and the Department of Homeless Services to displace the residents of the Harmonia shelter on 31st Street to accommodate homeless individuals currently sheltered in the Lucerne Hotel on 79th Street:

“Every community in New York City must be part of the fight against homelessness. We

proudly support housing the homeless in our communities, and we will welcome these new constituents. However, we are deeply disturbed that the Mayor is caving to political pressure to move homeless New Yorkers out of temporary pandemic shelter at the Lucerne Hotel in a way that will displace one hundred fifty adult families sheltered at the Harmonia, none of whom deserve to get caught up in this politicized process.

"The Harmonia is a uniquely specialized facility serving a vulnerable population that includes many people with disabilities, including physical and mental health challenges. The service provider at the Harmonia, Services for the Underserved, spent many months renovating the building and hiring staff to meet the specific needs of their residents, and have built a program that is a model for the City.

"We have always stood up for our homeless neighbors and have welcomed shelters into our communities. The residents of the Harmonia are our constituents for as long as they are living there, and we cannot accept them being scattered to the four winds with barely any notice, losing the connections, relationships, and services they have come to rely on at the Harmonia.

"The Harmonia has been part of this community for more than two years, and has been excellently run and embraced by the neighborhood. Now the provider, the residents, and the surrounding community have been blindsided by the decision to evict these families with only a few days' notice, which may also result in dozens of dedicated staff members losing their jobs. There is absolutely no guarantee that residents will be placed in locations that provide comparable services, and there has been no outreach from DHS to individual residents to assess their needs.

“We stand ready to welcome homeless individuals into our communities and find them a high-quality shelter that does not disadvantage fellow New Yorkers who are just as vulnerable.”

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