

2025

COMMUNITY
VOICES
HEARD POWER

STATE POLICY PLATFORM

We are the largest Black & brown-led membership organization in New York fighting for financial security, civic engagement, and truly affordable housing.



Across our state and nation, Black families and communities of color face constant disinvestment and neglect. CVH's platform is a bold vision that centers Black women, Black families, and all families of color in the fight for real economic, racial, and social justice.

STATEWIDE RIGHT TO COUNSEL (A1493/S2721)

The Problem

Every year, landlords try to evict hundreds of thousands of tenants across New York. Even more landlords count on the threat of eviction to intimidate tenants from standing up for their rights. A Statewide Right to Counsel law would ensure that ANY tenant in ANY form of housing – including public housing – ANYWHERE in New York would be entitled to a free attorney to defend themselves. Almost all landlords have attorneys representing them in housing court. This bill would rebalance the power dynamic between tenants and landlords and keep people in their homes.

The Solution

- ✓ Pass **Statewide Right to Counsel (S2721 / A1493)** to strengthen Right to Counsel in New York City and guarantee the right to a free lawyer to ALL tenants facing eviction across New York State.
- ✓ Fund its implementation fully with **\$260 million in the fiscal year 2025 budget**, and funding scaled up over time.

CLEAN HANDS ACT (A1621)

The Problem

Thousands of tenants across the state face unlivable conditions in their homes, but landlords are slow to make repairs and threaten tenants who stand up for themselves. This bill would prohibit landlords from suing a tenant for eviction if there are ANY state, city, or local building or housing code violations in the tenant's apartment or common areas of the building. It would mean that only landlords with "clean hands" could sue – drastically curtailing landlords' ability to sue tenants for eviction and giving tenants leverage to fight for repairs and exercise their right to withhold rent.

The Solution

- ✓ Pass the **Clean Hands Act (A1621)**, to curtail landlords' ability to sue tenants for eviction if the landlord has any violations and give tenants leverage to fight for repairs.





INVEST IN OUR NEW YORK

The Problem

The New York State budget must put the needs of middle and working class, low-income New Yorkers first. New York has one of the largest economies in the world. The ultra-wealthy profit from living and doing business here, but they don't pay taxes on most of their wealth. It's time that the ultra-rich pay their fair share of taxes, just like the rest of us.

The Solution

New York must make corporations and the ultra-rich pay their fair share of taxes by:

- ✓ Enacting a progressive tax system (**S.1622-Jackson/A.1281-Meeks**)
- ✓ Strengthening corporate tax laws (**S.953-Hoylman/A.1971-Kelles, Shrestha**)
- ✓ Closing loopholes and ensuring billionaires pay taxes on stock investments (**S.1439-Rivera/A.676-Kim and S.165-Ramos/A.TBD-Kelles**)
- ✓ Taxing large inheritances (**S.914-Brisport/A.2094-Solages**)



GUARANTEED INCOME / CASH ASSISTANCE

The Problem

The philosophy behind guaranteed income is simple: the current economy is failing most people. The most direct and transformative way to address this issue is to provide cash directly to low-income people, and trust that we know how to spend it.

Currently, there are more than 100 pilot programs operating across 25 states, with nearly 60,000 people receiving unconditional cash. The overwhelming evidence from guaranteed income demonstrations across the U.S., including New York, show that unconditional cash helps people work, advance economically, plan for the future, and strengthens community ties.

We must create a path to Universal Basic Income in New York State by expanding current programs and creating more of them.

The Solution

New York State can take bold leadership to expand unconditional cash support by including several promising pieces of legislation in the FY2025-26 budget. Specifically:

- ✔ **Baby Bucks Allowance Bill (S.2132/A.1597):** provides direct cash assistance to income-eligible parents, for the last three months of pregnancy and first 18 months of a child's life.
- ✔ **Reentry Assistance Bill (A.193):** increases the amount of money some receive coming home from incarceration.
- ✔ **Transition Age Youth Bill (S.3102):** establishes an unconditional cash assistance program for youth leaving foster care as young adults.
- ✔ **Child and Family Wellbeing Act Bill (A.63):** establishes a fund for communities to use to support the needs of children and families, including cash assistance.
- ✔ **The Working Families Tax Credit (S.2082/A.3474):** improves and expands tax credits provided to families quarterly on a sliding scale based on income.
- ✔ **Cash Assistance Reform Package:** a package of bills relating to reforming current cash assistance programs, including increasing the benefit amount (**A.106/S.1127**), establishing parity for homeless recipients (**A.108/S.113**) and helping working recipients to save more (**S.182**).



PUBLIC HOUSING INVESTMENT & REFORMS

The Problem

Public housing residents across New York State and the nation have to live with deteriorating buildings with little say in improvements or conversions. New York State must step up to preserve this crucial source of affordable housing, keep families safely in their homes, and give public housing residents a voice.

The Solution

- ✓ Commit **\$5 billion for public housing capital repairs** to preserve public housing.
 - ✓ **\$1 billion** to cover the entire backlog of repairs in upstate housing authorities, and **\$4 billion** to repair over 15,000 units in NYC.
- ✓ Pass **Universal RAD Vote (A2208)**, which will increase RAD notice and information requirements, require a vote for every RAD conversion or demolition, and require housing agencies to submit information on how many demolitions and RAD conversions they performed.
- ✓ Pass **New York Green New Deal 4 Public Housing (A2076)**, which responds to two big problems: Ensuring faster replacement and upgrades for appliances in public housing units, and saving the planet from a climate catastrophe. This bill would:
 - ✓ Work with Public Housing Authorities and RAD partners to create a standardized list of energy-efficient appliances, construction materials, and mechanical system components that the state will purchase and provide to Public Housing Authorities for renovations
 - ✓ Issue requests for proposals for the production of the equipment in New York State to make New York an innovator in construction again and ensure that new, energy-efficient appliances are available for public housing residents who need them.

