



## New York State Senate Westchester Delegation Budget Forum

Testimony by Jan Fisher, Executive Director, Nonprofit Westchester on the 2022/23 State Budget

It is with gratitude for our partnership with you, our esteemed members of the NY State Senate, that I testify here today. Thank you for this opportunity. My name is Jan Fisher, and I am the Executive Director of Nonprofit Westchester. More than 300 members strong and growing, NPW is the county's only membership organization solely dedicated to advocating for the needs of the nonprofit sector, the people we serve and the nonprofit workforce.

The nonprofit sector employs nearly 20% of New York State's workforce. During the pandemic, our agencies stayed open, our workforce showed up – often putting themselves in harm's way - and our organizations continued to partner with government to deliver State-mandated essential and other critical services.

Economic Relief Programs for Nonprofits like the PPP helped nonprofit agencies to operate – to turn on the lights, to answer calls, to purchase PPE, and to function. These opportunities are no longer available, but the need is still there. [Data derived from a recent survey](#) with NPW, Nonprofit New York and NYCON indicates that our agencies need operational support to address expenses that all businesses incur, that increased due to the pandemic and that have even greater impact for nonprofits due to systemic underfunding, what are often poverty wages and inequitable contracting.

We ask our elected officials to utilize American Rescue Plan Act Funding to provide a grant program - similar to that offered to small businesses - to compensate for increased nonprofit operational expenses resulting from the pandemic. The NY State Budget surplus includes \$24 Billion in American Rescue Plan Act funds, and the use of these funds for a nonprofit operational grant program would be consistent with the goals of the act to center racial equity and utilize funds for sustainable results.

There is two billion dollars in the governor's budget for pandemic relief programs, but we know that the needs is greater. With more dollars than ever before to address even greater need, the nonprofit sector is once again in a position to fight for limited resources. We hope the legislature can come up with creative solutions

to provide funding for a grant program to address increased operational needs, and the other critical needs discussed here today by members of the nonprofit sector.

There is a housing crisis in Westchester that disproportionately impacts those served by the nonprofit sector and the nonprofit workforce – which as you may be aware is 80% women and more than 50% people of color. A recent NPW study showed that while 40% of Westchester residents are housing burdened, 60% of the nonprofit workforce is burdened and that jumps to 70% for nonprofit direct support professionals

We join with Westchester County Association, , the Building and Realty Institute of Westchester and the Mid-Hudson Region (BRI), the Construction Industry Council of Westchester and Hudson Valley (CIC), and the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors to call upon you to pass legislation which expands housing supply and benefits our economy, our workforce, our communities, and advances racial equity goals. We specifically urge passage of: (1) the “Transit Oriented Development Act of 2022”, Part EE of the Education, Labor and Family Assistance Bill; and (2) the “Accessory Dwelling Unit Act of 2022”, Part AA of the Education, Labor and Family Assistance Bill.