



March 28, 2016

Dear Mayor de Blasio and the Supportive Housing Task Force,

We are writing to urge you to include non-time-limited youth supportive housing as part of the new supportive housing creation initiative in New York City. Nationally and locally, non-time-limited supportive housing programs are demonstrating promising early results for some youth, by giving them the flexibility to move on when they are ready.

Early data from pilot programs suggests that fostering a culture of “moving on”, including making available tenant-based subsidies and the eligibility to transfer a young adult to a more appropriate setting after youth supportive housing, is likely to be more effective than age caps and other artificial limits on housing access in successfully transitioning youth to independent housing. It is for these reasons that both the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and United States Interagency Council on Housing have recognized the potential of this approach in ending youth homelessness.

As funders and providers of youth supportive housing, we know age caps are not effective in defining true adulthood and capability to live independently without support services. We also know the importance of having the flexibility to tailor our responses to youth-centered needs is vital to keeping them stably housed over the long term. True Colors Residence opened four years ago as the first truly non-time-limited model of youth supportive housing in the City, and over half of their original tenants have moved on to fully independent affordable housing.

We are writing to urge you to consider the outcome data and recommendations in CSH’s policy brief “No Strings Attached: Helping Vulnerable Youth with Non-Time-Limited Supportive Housing”. We support their recommendations that the City:

- 1) utilize Project-based Section 8 vouchers to finance youth supportive housing, capitalizing on the opportunity for tenant-based subsidies as a resource for moving on; and
- 2) allow youth to maintain eligibility to other supportive housing programs throughout their tenancy to permit transfers to more appropriate models as they age.

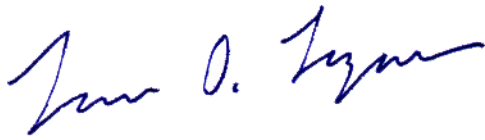
We also encourage the City to commit to properly evaluating models of housing support for youth, including non-time-limited youth supportive housing. In moving away from “one size fits

all” approaches such as age caps, this is a timely opportunity to invest in creating a strong evidence base about what works for different groups of young adults, and targeting interventions more effectively.

We know that with your support, all of us can better meet the needs of New York City’s most vulnerable young adults.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions.

Sincerely,



Laura Lazarus

Executive Director

Lantern Community Services