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HUMAN SERVICES COUNCIL APPLAUDS HOCHUL'S PLEDGE TO BOOST WAGES FOR NONPROFIT WORKERS

***COLA would be first pay increase in more than a decade, marks sharp departure from
prior administration***

NEW YORK – The Human Services Council (HSC) today applauded Governor Kathy Hochul for pledging \$500 million in funding for human services cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) in her first State of the State address. This investment will help upwards of 800,000 workers across the state along with the thousands of nonprofit human services providers that are critical to New York's post-pandemic recovery.

Importantly, this investment signals a major departure from the prior administration. For every year of his tenure, former Governor Cuomo robbed state-contracted human services workers of their mandated statutory COLA, depriving these workers of over \$700 million in raises, and balancing the budget on the backs of low-wage workers and nonprofit community organizations.

The nonprofit human services workforce delivers critical services on behalf of the government, including operating homeless and domestic violence shelters, caring for foster children, running food pantries and performing other essential services. The human services workforce is always essential, but never was that more clear than during the pandemic, when millions of New Yorkers were in need of lifesaving services, provided by these workers.

Despite the clear importance of the services they provide, these are some of the lowest paid workers in the state due to underfunded government contracts. This is a key issue of equity as the workforce is overwhelmingly female (66%), over two-thirds are full-time workers of color (68%), and nearly half (46%) are women of color. They are paid on average 70% of what their government counterparts make, and are long overdue for equitable wages.

HSC and the Strong Nonprofits campaign are pushing for equitable wages for all human services workers as part of the #JustPay Campaign. This cost-of-living adjustment is one of three key initiatives the campaign is advocating for in order to turn the tide on government sanctioned poverty wages.

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About HSC

The Human Services Council of New York, a leading advocate for nonprofits providing human services, works to strengthen the ability of nonprofit agencies to maximize human potential in communities across New York. Nearly 200 nonprofit organizations throughout New York City and State are HSC members. Visit HSC at www.HumanServicesCouncil.org.