



May 16, 2008

David Hansell, JD, Commissioner  
New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance  
40 North Pearl Street  
Albany, NY 12243

Dear Commissioner Hansell:

On behalf of the HIV Health and Human Services Planning Council of New York, I write to request that you implement the 30% cap on income paid toward shelter rule by PLWHAs through administrative action, as you discussed at the Albany AIDS Awareness Day in February 2007.

As you know, a substantial number of clients receiving HASA benefits also receive other forms of public assistance, including SSI, SSDI, or veterans' benefits. Regardless of the amount clients receive, they have to pay all but \$330 of their monthly income toward their rent. The 30% rule, since articulated in A5473 and S2890, both of which are currently pending in the New York State Legislature, would cap the share of rent paid by PLWHAs at 30%. Moreover, the tiny amount of monthly income that clients currently retain after paying rent -- \$330 -- translates into approximately \$11 per day. With a 30% cap on their rent, clients would have more money available to adhere to their treatments and attend to their nutritional requirements.

As you know, the Planning Council is comprised of service providers, doctors, advocates, and people living with HIV/AIDS, all of whom recognize the substantial burden on consumers of attempting to live on \$11 per day. Members of the Planning Council join me in requesting that you consider administrative action or support A5473/S2890 and advocate on behalf of a 30% cap on income paid toward shelter. Not having to pay such a sizeable portion of their already limited income for rent may enhance the quality of their lives and contribute to their general health and well-being.

Thank you for your steadfast and continued support of People Living with HIV/AIDS.

Sincerely yours,

Soraya Elcock  
Community Co-Chair