



**NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY**

**ASSEMBLYMEMBER YUH-LINE NIOU**

**ASSEMBLYMEMBER RICHARD GOTTFRIED**

February 16, 2017

Hon. Carl Heastie, Speaker  
New York State Assembly  
Legislative Office Building, Room 932  
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Speaker Heastie:

We write to seek your support to include an additional \$5.95 million in the FY 2017-2018 budget for Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC) and Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NNORC), which provide comprehensive services for older adults in New York. Specifically, we request that \$700,000 be restored from the FY 2016-2017 level, and an additional \$5.25 million be allocated for the preservation and expansion of NORCs across the state.

NORCs are age-integrated housing developments in neighborhoods not originally established for seniors, but are now home to a significant number of older individuals. In 2016, legislation was updated to allow for the expansion of the NORC program. The FY 2016-2017 Budget augmented the NORC-Supportive Service Program (NORC-SSP) to allow NORCs to request and receive up to \$200,000 for programming, a \$50,000 increase from the previous limit. However, the State currently plans to fund less NORCs as compared to the previous year, 12 classic NORCs and 12 neighborhood NORCs, meaning that, although each NORC would get more funding, current NORCs could be forced to close.

The current New York State Office for the Aging's (NYSOFA) plan fails to account for the NORCs currently supported by NYSOFA. The current Executive Budget eliminates the additional \$700,000 included in the FY 2016-2017 budget split evenly between NORCs and NNORCs. These cuts would result in the closure of five existing NORC programs. The discontinuation of these NORC programs would have major damaging effects on communities across the State. Senior citizens would lose vital health, housing, and human services programming.

The commitment of \$5.95m in the Fiscal 2017-2018 budget would effectively restore the \$700,000 from FY 2016-2017 in addition to investing \$5.25 million in the NORC program to supplement and prevent closures of existing NORCs. Moreover, the increased funding would provide the necessary resources to create new NORCs with the same high-quality programming throughout the State. Based on the high interest displayed by organizations to apply for this year's NYSOFA, we believe the demand to create additional NORCs across the State exists; with the approximate creation of 20 new NORCs should the funding requested here be made available.

We have a rapidly growing aging population across our State. We need to continue allocating funds towards NORCs and foster their growth if we are to support successful health outcomes for our aging population. Additionally, investing in keeping our seniors healthy, active, and social now could potentially result in our state saving funds in healthcare and assisted living costs down the road. Moreover, there are existing quality programs for older adults that are thriving that could be added to the overall NORC pool, and who need increased funding as social services face cuts.

These health and human services are vital to communities and we urge you to support New York State's aging population by preserving and expanding NORC programs.

Sincerely,



Yuh-Line Niou  
Assemblymember



Richard N. Gottfried  
Assemblymember

The following Assemblymembers signed on to this letter:

Brian Barnwell  
Michael Blake  
Edward Braunstein  
Maritza Davila  
Carmen De La Rosa  
Michael DenDekker  
Anthony D'Urso  
Patricia Fahy  
Ellen Jaffee  
Brian Kavanagh  
Charles Lavine  
Felix W. Ortiz  
Andrew P. Raia  
José Rivera  
Nily Rozic  
Luis Sepúlveda  
Aravella Simotas  
Phillip Steck  
Monica Wallace  
Tremaine Wright

CC: Assemblymember Herman Farrell  
Louann Ciccone  
Blake Washington  
Rebecca Mudie