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SURVEY FINDS SOUTH BRONX RESIDENTS GIVE NYCHA FAILING GRADES, WANT MORE GREEN JOBS, CLEANER ENVIRONMENT

New Report From Urban Justice Center and Mothers on the Move Shows Need for NYCHA and City To Do More To Help Green Borough, Modernize Economy

Bronx, NY- A new report released today by the Urban Justice Center and Mothers on the Move urges the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and the City to do more to help green the South Bronx and to take a more active role in creating green jobs to help diversify the local economy. The recommendations come in response to research conducted by Mothers on the Move and the Community Development Project at the Urban Justice Center, including three separate surveys and focus groups with South Bronx residents. The report urges the City to use green jobs to help create new employment opportunities in the Bronx while also helping to improve the environment and the health of South Bronx residents. While NYCHA has proposed some greening initiatives already, the programs have been limited in scale or not implemented in a manner that has had an impact for residents.

“This report confirms what many in the Bronx have known for years. There is a need for more diverse economic opportunities, better housing conditions and a cleaner environment” said Alexa Kasdan, Director of Research and Policy at the Urban Justice Center’s Community Development Project. “By creating more green jobs and training for residents of public housing in the South Bronx, we will be able to solve three of the Bronx’s biggest problems at once- creating good jobs, improving housing conditions and promoting a sustainable environment.”

“Green jobs are a win-win for the South Bronx and for NYCHA,” said Nova Strachan, Housing Organizer from Mothers on the Move. “People that live in public housing need jobs, our public housing developments need repairs and green jobs would not only put people to work but would also help people live better in the Bronx.”

“Our community wants to work,” said Margaret Glover, a member of Mother’s on the Move and a Bronx Resident. “Some people live in really terrible conditions so putting people to work fixing our homes would help everyone. NYCHA needs to do more than just create green committees; they need to create green jobs.”

The study found:

- 76% of survey respondents believe that environmental factors in the South Bronx play a role in contributing to their health problems;
- 92% of respondents cite air quality as a contributing factor to poor health;
- Half of respondents rated overall conditions in public housing with an F;
- 97% of respondents were “very interested” in a green jobs program being implemented in the South Bronx;

- 69% of respondents said they were interested in a green jobs program aimed at improving housing conditions in the neighborhood.

In order to improve housing and environmental conditions in the Bronx while also creating much needed work opportunities, the report proposes a green jobs program to train public housing residents to retrofit public housing developments in the Bronx. This includes a wide range of ‘greening techniques’ that aim to enhance existing structures, improve energy efficiency and increase building sustainability.

In addition, the report calls for the creation of “The South Bronx Institute for Green Careers.” Under the plan, NYCHA would create a green job-training program for residents to complete the aforementioned improvements to NYCHA properties. A full-time, 10-week, comprehensive, paid program would teach current greening techniques. While this program would require some up-front investment, it will also save money for NYCHA in the long term. The money that NYCHA would save on electric bills from retrofitting buildings could be invested in a fund to pay for the jobs program in the coming years. This is a similar financing model that has been successful in retrofitting private homes through the Green Jobs, Green New York program.

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