

MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT **S.8672 (Fahy)/A.10457 (Santabarbara)**

An Act to amend the private housing finance law, in relation to enacting the
Employer-Assisted Housing Matching Grant Act

The Arc New York strongly supports S.8672/A.10457, the Employer-Assisted Housing Matching Grant Act, which would establish a state matching grant program to supplement employer-provided housing assistance for the nonprofit care workforce.

The workforce that sustains New York's community-based disability, mental health, and addiction services system is in crisis. In partnership with the New York Disability Advocates (NYDA) coalition, our statewide survey data documents the scale of the problem: a 13.9% staff vacancy rate, 32.2% annual turnover, and average starting wages of just \$18.80 per hour. These figures represent not merely a staffing challenge but a systemic threat to the state's ability to deliver on its obligations to some of its most vulnerable residents. Behind every unfilled position is a group home operating short-staffed, a day program at reduced capacity, or a person with a disability waiting longer for the services they need.

Housing instability is a central driver of this crisis. At \$18.80 per hour for many Direct Support Professionals (DSP), the upfront costs of securing stable housing—a security deposit and first month's rent on even a modest apartment—can represent a full month's take-home pay. For workers already living paycheck to paycheck, these transactional barriers are often the difference between staying in a community where they are needed and leaving the field entirely. Some forward-thinking provider agencies have recognized this dynamic and begun offering employer-assisted housing benefits out of their own operating budgets. But these programs are limited in

scope, and asking Medicaid-funded nonprofits to absorb the full cost of workforce housing assistance is not a sustainable model.

S.8672/A.10457 offers a targeted, fiscally disciplined solution. When a qualifying nonprofit provider agency contributes cash housing assistance to an eligible care worker, the State matches 50% of the employer contribution, up to \$3,000 per employee in a rolling twelve-month period. Eligible uses are tightly defined to address the most immediate barriers care workers face: security deposits, first month's rent, emergency rental arrears, and down payment and closing costs for a primary residence. The bill requires documentation of payment to a landlord, property manager, or settlement agent before state funds are disbursed—ensuring that public dollars are tied to verified housing costs, not speculative commitments.

The Arc New York urges the New York State Senate and Assembly to pass S.8672/A.10457 and the Governor to sign it into law. The Employer-Assisted Housing Matching Grant Act is a practical, fiscally responsible tool that leverages employer commitment, targets real barriers, and strengthens the workforce pipeline for the nonprofit agencies on which hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers with disabilities depend.

For more information, contact Philip Aydinian, Director of Governmental Affairs, philip.aydinian@thearcnyc.org

About The Arc New York

The Arc New York is a family-led organization that advocates and provides supports and services to people with intellectual, developmental, and other disabilities (IDD), emphasizing choice and community engagement. With 35 Chapters across New York state representing every county, our organization supports more than 60,000 people and families and employs more than 30,000 people statewide.