

**TESTIMONY FROM NYCHA'S VICE PRESIDENT OF PUBLIC HOUSING OPERATIONS
CAROLYN JASPER
SAFETY AND SECURITY IN NYCHA
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING WITH THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY
THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2019 – 10:00 AM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, NEW YORK, NY**

Chairs Alicka Ampry-Samuel and Donovan Richards, members of the Committees on Public Housing and Public Safety, and other distinguished members of the City Council: good morning. I am Carolyn Jasper, NYCHA's Vice President of Public Housing Operations. I am pleased to be joined by Raymond Rodriguez, Director of the Office of Safety and Security, and other members of NYCHA's team. We also appreciate having our partners from the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) and the NYPD with us today.

In my role, I advise on the overall management of NYCHA's properties and directly oversee property management at approximately half of the Authority's portfolio. As a landlord, we know that good maintenance of our buildings and other infrastructure correlates to crime deterrence. Mr. Rodriguez's team at the Office of Safety and Security is responsible for protecting the Authority's properties, employees, and residents.

Thank you for convening a hearing on this very important topic, and for the opportunity to provide you with an overview of our efforts to enhance the safety and security of NYCHA developments. As a landlord, our top priority is ensuring safe and secure homes for the nearly 400,000 New Yorkers we serve. That aim is at the forefront of our mission, and the focus of many elements of our work. Our approach to fostering safe communities is centered on:

- Investing in infrastructure that enhances building security, such as cameras, exterior lighting, and layered access controls;
- Collaborating with the nation's premier law enforcement agency – the NYPD – as well as MOCJ and other organizations; and
- Partnering with residents and connecting them to opportunity.

Physical Security Enhancements at Our Buildings

Recognizing the important role of security cameras and other security enhancements in making residents feel safe, we have been working hard to put these measures in place, and obtain the funding to do so. Over the past two decades, NYCHA has installed nearly 16,600 security cameras at over 200 developments, benefitting more than 310,000 residents. Since 2014, we've invested approximately 200 million dollars in cameras and other security enhancements – funding that's generously provided by City Council members and other elected officials as well as through programs like the Mayor's Action Plan for Neighborhood Safety and the Manhattan District Attorney.

Since 2014, we've installed nearly 8,000 exterior lights at 78 developments – a 101 million-dollar investment in total. Our partners at the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York also installed more than 6 million dollars of lighting at 13 locations in the past two years. In addition, we've put up 586 light towers to disrupt criminal activity at targeted locations and improve residents' quality of life.

In the past six years, we've also installed layered access controls – new intercoms and front-door key fobs and hardware – at 425 buildings across 76 developments.

I'd like to thank the Council for funding many of these security enhancements, which improve the quality of life for residents across the city.

Collaborating with Safety and Security Experts

Ensuring safety is everyone's responsibility, and that is why we collaborate with our stakeholders to address safety and security issues. Our partners at the NYPD are crime-fighting experts, and we work with them on the placement of security cameras and exterior lighting, relocating cameras as needed. To help the NYPD solve crimes, we share security camera footage with them – in the middle of the

night, if necessary. Since the beginning of the year, we've provided the NYPD with over 6,500 video recordings, and provided other law enforcement agencies with nearly 2,000 video recordings.

We are in constant communication with the NYPD; they regularly provide us with crime reports and valuable intel and statistics. For instance, we coordinate with the NYPD on all our summer Family Days at our developments – they provide police presence as well as any information that's relevant to ensuring the community's safety. And the NYPD's Neighborhood Coordination Officers work closely on the ground with NYCHA property managers, as well as residents – it's truly a productive relationship.

Led by the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, the 140 million-dollar Mayor's Action Plan for Neighborhood Safety (MAP) brings together residents and a range of City agencies to reduce crime at 15 NYCHA sites with historically high crime rates. Its holistic approach of physical improvements (such as exterior lighting), expanded programming (including job training), and strengthened police/resident engagement is making a difference for residents. For example, the "NeighborhoodStat" initiative brings together City government and resident leaders, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders for periodic meetings to address public safety issues specific to each MAP development. We continue to meet regularly with our partners at MOCJ to build upon the progress we're making through the Mayor's Action Plan.

Partnering with Residents to Foster Safe Communities

Of course, residents are a key partner in our work to make our developments safer. For about half a century, thousands of residents have volunteered their time as Resident Watch members, patrolling their developments and fostering safety, security, and community pride in collaboration with property management staff.

To give our youth a safe, productive place to go, we are working with MOCJ and the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) to keep 119 community centers at NYCHA developments open until at least 11 p.m. this summer. Over the last several summers, an average of about 250 participants per site benefitted from these extended hours.

As part of our work to support the community, I'm proud to say that NYCHA has facilitated more than 15,000 job placements since 2014. That's being accomplished through a variety of workforce development programs, from Jobs Plus to the NYCHA Resident Training Academy. Our Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability will continue to help residents launch and advance their careers and open doors to additional opportunities for themselves and their families.

Conclusion

Through NYCHA 2.0, our long-term strategic plan, we are working hard to improve our residents' quality of life, from completing repairs faster through skilled trades and maintenance work order blitzes to implementing seven-days-a-week janitorial services at our developments with Alternative Work Schedules. The latter means more boots on the ground and eyes on the street – earlier in the day, later in the evening, and on weekends. A family's sense of safety is integral to their quality of life, and that basic tenet drives so much of the work that we do.

We appreciate the support of our partners, including the NYPD, MOCJ, DYCD, and the City Council, as we work with our residents to foster safe communities at NYCHA. We are especially thankful for funding from Council Members for security enhancements such as cameras and exterior lights, and hope that you will continue to partner with us on these efforts. We need funding to not only install this infrastructure, but also to continue to maintain it.

Although we commit all available resources and work with our partners to ensure the safety of NYCHA communities, there is always more that can and must be done. Thank you for your support as we continue to make progress for our residents. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.