



May 5, 2025

Dear members of the Kingston Common Council,

Thank you for your thoughtful engagement and the pertinent questions raised during our recent presentation to the Community Development and Housing Committee on the House the Future campaign to create a statewide Social Housing Development Authority (SHDA). We wanted to provide further clarity on the questions raised:

**1. Does the SHDA preclude non-union shops from bidding for contracts?**

No. Non-union contractors are welcome and encouraged to bid on SHDA projects. In accordance with New York State Labor Law, all public works projects require prevailing wages. Project labor agreements will be required on projects with an estimated cost of \$10 million or more. This ensures fair compensation for all workers and supports the creation of quality jobs within our community.

**2. Would affordable units get hoarded by wealthy people?**

No. Residents will undergo a thorough income certification process when applying through the lottery system. While a resident's base rent won't be impacted by increases in income, residents will be required to recertify their income every 3 years for portfolio balancing purposes. As residents move out or new units are created, the authority will be required to maintain a balanced income mix across the portfolio. Our goal is to create and maintain abundant affordable housing, ensuring that residents can set long-term roots in their community and fostering community stability without penalizing residents for financial progress.

**3. Will this housing exclude sex offenders and other individuals with criminal records?**

Existing laws impose strict restrictions on where registered sex offenders can live, and those laws would apply to the SHDA as well. Beyond these legal requirements, we recognize the importance of providing opportunities for individuals with past convictions to reintegrate into society. Stable housing is a critical component of successful reentry, and we aim to support inclusive communities that offer second chances.

**4. Would the right of first refusal preempt the city land bank?**

In theory yes, but in practice the authority would have no incentive to compete with the city's land bank over a property. The SHDA operates with statewide considerations and limited resources, making it unlikely to exercise this right where local land banks, like Kingston's, are already actively working to convert distressed properties to affordable housing. We envision a collaborative relationship, where the SHDA can support and enhance the valuable work already being done at the local level in Kingston.

**5. Would the unit be required to be the tenant's primary residence?**

The income certification system described in the law would make it unlikely that a unit wouldn't be the tenant's primary residence, but we agree that language in the bill should be more explicit here, and will work with the bill authors to do that next year. Thanks to Alderman Mickens for flagging.

**6. How does SHDA interact with the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program and Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP)?**

The SHDA will not interact with LIHTC and has no implications for the QAP.

We are committed to transparency and collaboration as we work together to address housing needs in our community. Please feel free to reach out with any further questions or for additional information.

Sincerely,

Andrew Hiller

House the Future campaign organizer, Mid-Hudson Valley