



## Joint Statement in Response to the Parker Administration's H.O.M.E. Proposal

*On behalf of Councilmember Jamie Gauthier, the Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable Communities, and the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations*

As a group of stakeholders united in the goal of ensuring that Philadelphia's most vulnerable populations receive the care they need, we believe Mayor Parker's proposed H.O.M.E. initiative is a promising step toward a more equitable Philadelphia. We support its goal to expand access to safe, stable, and affordable housing—and we urge the City to prioritize investments that directly serve those most burdened by the housing crisis.

### **The need is urgent.**

Over 244,000 Philadelphia households are rent- or mortgage-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing, while 130,000 pay more than 50%. Half of renters and a third of homeowners are choosing between housing and food, medicine, or clothing. That is unacceptable and this staggering inequality makes our entire City suffer. If we are serious about change, we must start with the Philadelphians most in need.

### **Philadelphia has effective and innovative programs—let's scale them.**

Many affordable housing programs are underfunded leading to years-long waitlists, keeping those in need from accessing these critical life-changing programs.

- **Basic Systems Repair:** A \$50M per year investment would eliminate current waitlists and help low-income homeowners stay housed. If expanded to serve moderate-income residents, funding must scale accordingly.
- **Adaptive Modifications:** With 1,700+ residents on the waitlist, a \$15M per year budget would meet existing demand for aging and disabled homeowners.
- **Shallow Rent Program:** At an average of less than \$4,700 per household per year, this cost-effective resource supports Philadelphians earning on average less than \$20,000 per year. A \$10M per year investment would ensure housing stability for deeply cost-burdened renters who are at high risk of eviction. This investment makes affordability real in subsidized housing.
- **Eviction Diversion via Targeted Financial Assistance:** Increasing the investment to \$25M per year would build on Philadelphia's success of reducing eviction filings by nearly 40% since the pandemic.
- **Production & Preservation of Affordable Housing:** At least \$100M per year is needed to build and preserve long-term affordability. For as little as \$50,000 per home, a huge and critical investment is necessary for producing and extending the shelf life of permanently affordable housing. This is how we prevent the next University City Townhomes or Brith Sholom crisis.

These investments are truly meaningful—they impact real people – real Philadelphians. Angelita was displaced from her South Philly neighborhood her family called home for generations because she could no longer afford the increased rent being charged. Lorraine, a retiree, is struggling to keep her West Philly home livable because she cannot pay for the needed repairs. Domonique, a disabled mother who has fought for her disabled neighbors, just spent a year in a shelter with her daughter before she could find an affordable accessible rental home. Their stories are just a glimpse and reflect the 200,000+ households teetering on the edge. These residents earn less than \$30,000 a year and are one unexpected maintenance issue or rent increase from slipping into homelessness.

**As we move forward, we must also proceed wisely on some points that require further consideration. *WE DON'T WANT TO:***

- **Inflate the market.** Expanding the Shallow Rent Program to subsidize luxury apartment vacancies risks driving up rents across the board and encouraging artificially high rental prices beyond what the market supports while diverting resources from those most in need.
- **Miss opportunities.** Restoring the 10-year tax abatement with no affordability requirements misses an opportunity to incentivize the private market to generate genuinely affordable housing.
- **Spread too thin.** Spending \$800M in four years has transformative potential for affordable housing, but making the most of this opportunity will require increased staffing and capacity in our already-stretched nonprofit and community-based partners to deliver results that last.
- **Bank on uncertain federal dollars.** Budget planning must account for uncertainties we face from the Trump Administration – gutting of funding and federal departments, shifting policies, tariff cost increases, etc. It is important to make sure we are budgeting correctly for the critical need of deeply affordable housing and that we are able to preserve and maintain current efforts in the face of harmful federal action. We want to be mindful that planning too heavily around funding that may not ever materialize is a risky strategy.

We are grateful to Mayor Parker's vision and commitment to housing for all. This is a defining moment and opportunity. Let's use it to build a Philadelphia where no one is priced out of safety and dignity. We are ready to work together to make that vision real.