



A2760: Streamlining Affordable Housing and Assistance Applications

Good morning Chairperson Lopez and members of Assembly Housing Committee. My name is Matthew Hersh, director of policy and advocacy at the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey. I am proud to represent nearly 300 community development corporations, individuals and other organizations that support the creation of affordable homes, economic opportunities, and strong communities. The Network is also the state's largest, funded HUD-certified housing counseling intermediary serving NJ exclusively.

The Network enthusiastically supports A2760. This bill would direct the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency to create a single, common application that would be available on the New Jersey Housing Resource Center website.

The lack of a centralized application for prospective renters to apply for affordable and senior housing results in a byzantine and often confusing process where applicants must keep track of multiple pre-application waitlists. The same confusing process applies to each subsidy a renter seeks.

The Network and its membership support this legislation because renters often have to be their own best advocate when it comes to navigating the difficult process of applying to assistance applications. The Network, as a HUD-certified housing counseling intermediary, understands the need to streamline this process to help New Jerseyans get the correct assistance they need, as well as to make efficient, effective use of the state's assistance programs.

Thank you.