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**Testimony from Selfhelp Community Services
Queens Delegation
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Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Katie Foley, and I'm a Managing Director at Selfhelp Community Services.

We believe that everyone deserves care that's compassionate, trustworthy, and innovative – care that allows them to age with dignity and independence. Every year, we serve 25,000 people, with the majority living right here in Queens, through programs like affordable housing, home care, and community-based services.

Selfhelp isn't just part of the Queens community; we're woven into its fabric. For almost 90 years, we've been there for Holocaust survivors with specialized care. We welcome older adults into five friendly Older Adult Centers while supporting neighborhoods through four NORCs and services like Queens North Case Management, we have affordable senior housing residences, and home care for those who need that extra support. We're there for Queens older adults.

Today, I want to highlight four key areas where we see pressing needs within the Selfhelp community:

First, **transportation**. Many older New Yorkers tell us that it's difficult to have reliable, safe transportation to their medical appointments. Our transportation program offers free round-trip rides for adults 60+ to get to those appointments. We've seen the demand increase in recent years. Thanks to the generosity of this Delegation and Councilmembers Holden, Paladino, Ariola, Ung, Schulman, Lee, and the Speaker, we've been able to meet a lot of that need, providing thousands of rides across Queens. We're requesting \$100,000 this year to help us provide the rides that adults 60+ all over Queens are asking for.

Second, the **Elie Wiesel Holocaust Survivor Initiative** provides vital support to organizations, like ours, serving Holocaust survivors. Selfhelp runs the largest and oldest program in North America providing comprehensive services. The need is immense – the majority are of survivors we serve live at or below the poverty line and their needs are growing more complex as they age. This funding will allow us to hire additional staff to serve the hundreds of survivors, often Russian speakers, who are waiting for a social work assessment. These individuals need so much more than a one-time assistance package—they need true wrap-around services that are Person Centered and Trauma Informed.

Third, our **Selfhelp Alzheimer's Resource Program** in Bayside, supported by funding from the **Social Adult Day Care initiative**. For more than 30 years, this program has been a steady anchor



for Queens adults with dementia and their caregivers and it relies on this initiative funding for operational support. It's a safe, nurturing place for participants and gives caregivers the much-needed respite they deserve.

Lastly, is support for LiveOn NY's **Age Strong** campaign which asks for significant investment in programs that serve older adults including food and nutrition, affordable housing with services, and community-based programs.

We welcome you to come see Selfhelp in action this spring – in affordable housing, at an OAC event, or even a newly trained home care aide going to work. Across every program we run, whether it's housing, home care, or a community programs, our commitment is the same: helping people age with dignity and independence.

Thank you for your tireless advocacy on behalf of older adults and your support that makes it possible for us to continue this work.