



INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA-UAW

DENNIS WILLIAMS, President



JULIE KUSHNER
DIRECTOR
REGION 9A UAW
111 SOUTH ROAD
FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06032-2560
PHONE: (860) 674-0143
FAX: (860) 674-1164
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GARY CASTEEL, Secretary-Treasurer

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Dear Councilmember:

We just learned late yesterday that a decision was made by HRA as it relates to the IOI (Immigrant Opportunities Initiative) funding. Many organizations, including Legal Services NYC, MFY Legal Services, and Housing Conservation Coordinators (HCC), where UAW members work to serve the needs of your constituents, that have historically been reliant on this funding from the City were de-funded for FY 2017.

Our members work at the following organizations which lost the following amounts of funding:

Table with 2 columns: Organization Name and Amount. Rows include LSNYC-Bronx (\$100,000), Brooklyn Legal Services (\$121,000), Manhattan Legal Services (\$ 51,000), Queens Legal Services (\$ 61,000), Staten Island Legal Services (\$ 92,000), Legal Services NYC Total (\$425,000), MFY Legal Services (\$125,000), and HCC (\$ 50,000).

This funding provides critical support for LSNYC, MFY, and HCC to help communities of color and ethnic communities in all five boroughs. To provide just a few examples, our immigration advocates at Brooklyn Legal Services conduct intake every week at community-based organizations in Brighton Beach, where there are many Russian and Eastern European immigrants who traditionally struggle to access services because of mobility and communication challenges, and in Sunset Park, where we serve many Asian and Latino residents. Our members working as immigration advocates at LSNYC-Bronx operate eight intake sites throughout the borough, including in Mott Haven, at Casa Boriqua Senior Center, and Bronx Housing Court. Without the long-standing services these organizations have been providing, vulnerable communities will be less able to access the services that they and their families need.

UAW members at these affected programs also handle extremely complex immigration cases. Among other things, our advocates are playing a significant role in assisting Central Americans being targeted for removal by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), assisting survivors of gender-based violence stabilize and re-build their lives, and advising and representing low-wage workers who have been exploited by their employers.

We are asking that the City Council put back into the budget the funding for Legal Services NYC, MFY, and Housing Conservation Coordinators that was not awarded through HRA, in order to make these organizations whole and allow them to continue providing the high-level services to low-income immigrant communities in New York City. We note that the UAW also represents the non-management employees of the Legal Aid Society and Urban Justice Center. We do not wish to see those organizations lose funding, but instead request that the City Council allocate the additional money needed to make whole the other unionized providers: Legal Services NYC, MFY, and Housing Conservation Coordinators.

The needs of the immigrant population is great, we trust you will find a way ensure that all service providers for your constituents remain staffed and available.

Yours truly,

Julie Kushner
Julie Kushner
Director
UAW Region 9A

Scott M. Sommer
Scott M. Sommer
NY Area Subregional Director
UAW Region 9A