

Offered by Councilor Andrea Campbell, Bok, Arroyo, Baker, Breadon, Edwards, Essabi-George, Flynn, Flaherty, Mejia, O'Malley and Wu



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING EMERGENCY HOUSING TRANSFERS FOR THOSE FACING COMMUNITY-BASED VIOLENCE

WHEREAS: Victims of community-based violence such as shootings or stabbings include the individual victims as well as their family members and it is often difficult for these members of our community to continue to feel safe in their home after a violent incident takes place; *and*

WHEREAS: The emergency housing process is often long and bureaucratic, and reimagining the application and approval approach could go a long way in supporting residents in need of emergency housing due to community-based violence; *and*

WHEREAS: A process to reimagine the application and approval process for emergency housing could include a review of the amount of 'proof' of trauma required and a reduction to the number of officials currently required to read and approve each application; *and*

WHEREAS: The Department of Housing and Urban Development provides a Public Housing Occupancy Guidebook to assist public housing agencies (PHAs) and outlines that a transfer may be used to: Alleviate a verified medical condition of a life-threatening nature; Alleviate a threat assessed by a law enforcement professional; or Protect members of the household from criminal activity at the property or in the neighborhood; *and*

WHEREAS: There is a large disparity in resources provided to residents experiencing displacement resulting from community violence or a broader definition of violence and transitional resources available to homeless or recovering populations are extensive, with most resources for violence centering on domestic violence survivors; *and*

WHEREAS: The City of Boston recently dedicated \$200,000 from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) for the purpose of "providing housing solutions for families impacted by violence" and relevant departments have been engaging with stakeholders about a permanent and sustainable infrastructure and source of funding; *and*

WHEREAS: Currently our city's service providers working to support victims of violence and their families, including our hospitals and community-based organizations like the Peace Institute, work urgently to secure emergency housing on a case-by-case basis with the City's Department of Neighborhood Development and housing service providers; *and*

WHEREAS: In addition to the challenge of funding the city is facing the challenge of low to non-existent housing inventory particularly because we do not set aside housing or have community-based violence qualify for prioritization; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss the challenges and opportunities as it relates to emergency housing transfers for victims of community-based violence and that representatives from social service organizations, healthcare institutions and the public be invited to testify.

Filed on: October 1, 2021