



September 22, 2023

RE: Federal Aid for NY for Asylum Crisis in Wake of Mayor's Call for 15% Budget Cuts to City Agencies

Dear Members of the New York Congressional Delegation,

American Institute of Architects New York (AIANY), New York Building Congress (NYBC), Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP), and Subcontractors Trade Association (STA) strongly urge the New York Congressional Delegation to take immediate action to assist New York with federal aid to address the current asylum seeker crisis. The financial burden on the City to support the unprecedented increase in migrants has led Mayor Adams to call for agency budget cuts of 15 percent by fiscal year 2025. These cuts will further exacerbate the challenges felt by agencies due to existing staffing shortages.

The combination of looming budget gaps due to the loss of emergency Covid-19 federal aid and the overwhelming cost of the migrant crisis puts the economic future of New York City in peril. City agencies, already struggling from tremendous staffing shortages, are now being asked to cut their budgets by five percent for each of the financial plans in November, January, and April. City agencies had expressed concerns prior to these budget cuts about further degradation of services due to staffing shortages. Additional budget cuts to agencies such as DOB, DOT, DDC, HPD, etc. will severely impact work in the city done by the architecture, construction, and design communities and have long lasting repercussions on the built environment and public realm.

Even with every agency cutting their budget by 15%, the cuts would not generate sufficient savings to cover the city's budget gaps, and additional federal aid would still be necessary. While the budget gaps are not solely due to the migrant crisis, \$6.1 billion of the \$13.8 billion budget gap is attributable to the migrant crisis for FY2025. The \$104.6 million from FEMA already provided to New York is nowhere near enough to support New York City given the billions of dollars the crisis is projected to cost.

Federal aid is critical for the economic well-being of New York City and to prevent other services from suffering as a result of the costly asylum crisis. AIANY, NYBC, CHIP, and STA ask you all to interpret this action by the Adams Administration as sign of the severity of the situation and the dire need for assistance, and to push the Biden Administration and your colleagues in Congress to provide financial assistance to New York to relieve the burden of this national crisis.

Sincerely,

Matthew Bremer, 2023 President, AIA New York; Founder, Architecture in Formation
Carlo Scissura, Esp., President & CEO, New York Building Congress
Jay Martin, Executive Director, Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP)
Felice Farber, Executive Director, Subcontractors Trade Association (STA)