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PRESS RELEASE

Housing First! Plan Is Endorsed by Joe Lhota, Candidate for Mayor

Joe Lhota Joins a Growing List of Supporters of an Initiative to Develop and Preserve 150,000 Units of Affordable Housing in New York City

New York, NY- Housing First! commends Joe Lhota for endorsing its *Building Stronger 2014-2021*, an 8-year, \$8 billion plan to increase affordability, reduce homelessness and expand economic opportunity through capital investment in affordable housing. The coalition thanks the mayoral candidate for his support and for making affordable housing an issue of importance in his bid for New York City mayor.

“We spent more than an hour talking to Joe Lhota about affordable housing policy but it was clear in the first five minutes that this is a topic Mr. Lhota knows a great deal about. Joe understands that next mayor must be ready to implement a comprehensive, large-scale housing plan that addresses all aspects of New York’s affordability crisis on day one of his/her administration,” said Co-Chair Todd A. Gomez, Senior Vice President, Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

Mr. Lhota is the fourth candidate to endorse the affordable housing plan which is supported by more than 100 New York City organizations, including many community-based nonprofits, tenant associations, developers, banks, advocates and other stakeholders. The Housing First! platform offers achievable policy recommendations in a 7-point plan to build 60,000 new construction units and preserve another 90,000 existing affordable units in jeopardy of expiring regulatory use restrictions and/or in need of repair. Housing First! offers candidates ideas on how to pay for the plan, which requires a \$356 million annual increase over current City capital spending projections. The coalition also provides regulatory reform strategies to create more than 10,000 subsidy-free affordable housing units through tax and zoning incentives. The group supports measures to create a regulatory environment to boost private market housing production as well.

“With over 50,000 New Yorkers homeless each night, daunting challenges at the New York City Housing Authority, and hundreds of thousands of city households facing severe rent burdens, the next mayor will need to address housing affordability head-on. The Housing First! plan proposes to improve coordination of municipal housing agencies and City resources to achieve solutions to these longstanding challenges. Joe Lhota talked about restructuring city government, not only to bring about new efficiencies, but also to link affordable housing and community development in a comprehensive way. These are the kinds of strategies we will need to make the most out of the substantial investment in affordable housing called for in the Housing First! plan,” said Ted

Houghton, Housing First! Co-Chair and Executive Director of the Supportive Housing Network of New York.

“Joe Lhota’s knowledge of city government and the mechanics of public investment shine through when he talks about affordable housing. During our meeting, he emphasized his commitment to increasing community input in the planning process, especially around the current administration’s NYCHA infill proposals. I think it is important for mayoral candidates to want to engage the community on these issues and to establish a transparent process for outreach when in office,” said Rachel Fee, Coordinator of the Housing First! campaign.

Housing First! has met with 8 mayoral candidate to date to discuss affordable housing in a series of policy meetings, where experts outlined the Housing First! report *Building Stronger 2014-2021: What the Next Mayor Can Do to Address New York City’s Housing Crisis*. The broad plan represents an informed consensus of affordable housing leaders and knowledgeable stakeholders. Candidate Lhota joins George McDonald, Sal Albanese and John Catsimatidis in endorsing the Housing First! plan. Five other candidates have offered affordable housing plans of their own that propose to build and preserve anywhere from 80,000 to 190,000 affordable housing units.

Housing First! is a broad and diverse affordable housing coalition, unlike any other in New York. Founded in 2001, disparate community, business, labor, civic and religious organizations of that time successfully created a consensus plan that influenced Mayor Bloomberg to commit to the celebrated New Housing Marketplace Plan.

“Housing First! is offering all mayoral candidates support in thinking through the sometimes complicated issues of affordable housing policy. We have expertise and are eager to share it. We are pleased that Joe Lhota and most of the other candidates have proposed plans that set clear numerical goals for the City’s future affordable housing development. We look forward to working closely with New York City’s next mayor to find a way to achieve these goals,” said Daniel E. Martin, Housing First Executive Committee member and President and CEO of the Housing Partnership Development Corporation.