

Media Advisory: March on HRA To Protest HIV/AIDS Housing Policies; Demand Commissioner Doar Take Drug Test

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HIV-Positive New Yorkers & Allies Plan March On HRA To Protest Housing Policies, Will Demand Commissioner Robert Doar Take Drug Test In Response to New Screening Policy

HRA Commissioner Under Fire For Saying He Would Get “Tough” On Homeless and Unstably Housed People Living With HIV/AIDS & Proposing More Housing Cuts

WHEN: Friday, February 17th at 12:30pm. March arrives at HRA at 1pm.

WHERE: March begins at the lighthouse in South Street Seaport (corner of Fulton St. and Water St.) and arrives at HRA’s main offices at 180 Water Street (corner of John St.).

WHAT: About 100 clients of the HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) and their allies will march to the Human Resources Administration (HRA), which oversees HASA, to protest budget cuts and new policies that will increase homelessness among New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS. Once they arrive at HRA, they will demand that Commissioner Doar take a drug test in order to highlight a new drug screening policy.

WHO: Members of VOCAL-NY and ally organizations.

BACKGROUND: The City Council General Welfare Committee held a hearing last week on recent policy changes at HASA that will increase homelessness among people living with HIV/AIDS. One of the policies was announced by HRA Commissioner Doar in a World AIDS Day op-ed for the Huffington Post, where he pledged to get “tough” on drug use among HASA clients by denying housing assistance to those who refuse the limited drug treatment programs they mandate enrollment into.

Activists will demand an end to the new drug screening policy, restoration of \$10 million in HIV/AIDS housing and nutrition programs that Mayor Bloomberg would eliminate in next year’s budget, and a 30% rent cap affordable housing protection that would prevent homelessness for more than 10,000 HASA clients with a severe rent share burden and enable an additional 1,000 clients to move out of the shelter system.

