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**Testimony: Historic House Trust of New York City
NYC Council Parks & Recreation Committee FY26 Executive Budget Hearing
Tuesday, May 13, 2025**

My name is Giulietta Fiore, and I'm testifying on behalf of the Historic House Trust of New York City. We are an organization that preserves and promotes 23 city-owned historic houses that operate as museums and community spaces in public parks across all five boroughs of NYC from the southern tip of Staten Island, to the eastern reaches of Queens. **These sites are unique, but also indicative of the cultural role that parks play in the lives of everyday New Yorkers.**

Our mission is not just to ensure that these places are open for New Yorkers to enjoy for the next five years. We're looking 50...100...200 years ahead. **The City must invest in our beloved community spaces today to ensure that they have a future tomorrow.** Our vision includes:

- A future for students to learn about NYC history in their own backyards;
- A future with well-maintained and vibrant community spaces citywide, **not just in Manhattan**;
- A future that includes creativity, art, authentic experiences, and connection;
- A future with **places made for the people who live here**;
- A future that New Yorkers are proud of.

In order to achieve this vision, we need investment now. So today, we are joining countless organizations and individuals across the city **advocating for full restoration of NYC Parks in the FY26 budget.** Too many parks need maintenance support, and there just simply are not enough NYC Parks staff to assist. The nuances of government and politics gets lost in the reality that many New Yorkers experience in their local parks daily of unusable bathrooms, overgrown lawns, and deteriorating conditions. This reality is unfair to Parkies who are in the field every day hearing from upset neighbors and park goers, and it's unfair to those who rely on these parks as critical city infrastructure.

We urge the City Council to support an increase in funding for NYC Parks for the benefit of *all* New Yorkers, past, present, *and* future. Thank you very much to Chair Krishnan for holding this hearing, and for advocating for our critical park infrastructure. We appreciate the opportunity to voice our needs, and for hearing our call to help sustain the places that help make New York City our home.