

# ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

**BARBARA MILLER-WILLIAMS**

*Legislator - 1st District*

**MEMBER:**

Government Affairs Committee  
Finance & Management Committee  
Health & Human Services Committee



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July 10, 2014

Erie County Legislature  
Attn: Mr. Scott Kroll, Clerk  
92 Franklin Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Mr. Kroll:

Attached for Clock-In to the public record of the Erie County Legislature, please find a letter from Reverend Reginald E. Kerr, Chief Executive Officer of My Place Home for Homeless Women and Children to City of Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown regarding Erie County Department of Social Services decision to remove clients from the facility.

Also, please send to the Health and Human Services Committee for review.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Barbara Miller-Williams  
Erie County Legislator  
District 1

***“We are here to serve the Community”***



**MY PLACE HOME FOR HOMELESS WOMEN & CHILDREN**  
1230 GENESEE STREET, BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14211  
OFFICE - 1-716-895-1353 FAX -1-716-895-0288  
E-MAIL [pastorkerr@myplacehome.org](mailto:pastorkerr@myplacehome.org)

July 9, 2014

Hon. Mayor Byron Brown  
201 City Hall  
Buffalo, NY 14202

**M.P.H Board Members**

**Elder Reginald E. Kerr – Chief Executive Officer**

**Honorable Judge James A. W. McLeod – Chairman  
City Court Judge of Buffalo**

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Shadow Director**

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**Elder Reginald E. Kerr –Pastor/CEO**

**Sheryl Chambers  
Church Secretary**

**Nicole Estava  
T.O.C Bookkeeper**

**Deacon Wayne Short– Trustee**

**Umblee Drayton - Church Mother**

**Reginald E. Kerr—Music Director  
London, England**

**Roland L. Kerr - Musician**

Dear Mayor Brown,

I am writing this letter to ask for your support with the problem that I am having with The Department of Social Services. Let me begin by giving you a brief history of my organization. My name is Rev. Reginald E. Kerr and I am the Founder & CEO of My Place Home for Homeless Women and Children. My Place Home is an emergency shelter for homeless women and children. We have been in operation since February of 2008 when ECDSS came to me and asked if we would open a shelter. After careful thought we felt the need was great so we got the place ready and opened up the shelter only after ECDSS asked us to do so. The original plan for the space was undecided until we were approached by ECDSS.

Recently, I've learned that a new emergency shelter has opened right down the street from ours. The shelter is operated by Matt Urban. After several client came to me telling me that they were moved from My Place Home and sent to The Hope Center's shelter, I decided to take my concerns to ECDSS. I was I baffled to hear their response to me for moving client out of My Place Home and sending them to this new shelter. It was stated to me by Don Van Every Director of Temporary & Emergency Services for ECDSS that they were told by their administration to use the new shelter instead of ours because it is a more family orientated shelter, because they offer partitions to divide families and we only offer private rooms for families. Which one do you think is more private and secure for families? No explanation was offered as to why the single women were being taken from MPH and sent to the new shelter.

A couple of months ago Don Van Every and Barbara Farr came out to our shelter for a impromptu visit. At that time they requested that we make a few changes to enhance the clients stay. They requested that we add a playroom and increase the size of the dining area. We did those things immediately. We are committed to working with ECDSS to provide excellent services to the women and children sent to our shelter. However, we feel there should be some loyalty to our organization as once again this shelter would not have been opened if we were not asked to do so by ECDSS. We have a staff of fourteen people several of which were homeless and placed in our shelter; I gave them jobs and a permanent place to call home. We have utilities, insurance and many other business expenses which we will not be able to pay if ECDSS does not continue to send us clients. We may be forced to shut our doors and that would be devastating to many people. So please support us in this unfair decision to take clients from My Place Home and send them to Matt Urban.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

  
Rev. Reginald E. Kerr - CEO

CC: Hon. Barbara Miller-Williams  
Hon Crystal People-Stokes  
Hon. Demone Smith



Comm. 15E-23

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