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Statement from NYSACHO President Dr. Indu Gupta

“NYSACHO applauds Governor Hochul for recognizing the outstanding effort played by local health departments during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her perspective on the roles of state and local government is refreshing and most welcome.

“Long before this pandemic, thousands of local public health workers in every area of the state were hard at work protecting their communities from innumerable public health threats. The onset of the pandemic added even more responsibility, significantly stressing our local public health system. But through it all, our local public health staff and leadership maintained their commitment and met their mission.

“As a former local official, Governor Hochul understands better than most the value of New York’s 58 local health departments (LHDs), and it was clear in her press conference today that she has full faith and confidence in our ability to continue to play a central role in fighting COVID-19 and protecting our communities. Our LHDs are ready to answer her call. We will work hand in hand with our community partners to not only respond to the Delta variant, but also to be ready for any other variants that may evolve.

“The provision of \$65 million to local governments for COVID response is also most refreshing and welcome. Funding for public health has diminished for more than a decade. This initial infusion provides hope that state and local governments, and all of our partners, can work collaboratively to properly and effectively resource local public health infrastructure in the coming state budget.”

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