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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**The New York State Council of Churches Unanimously Elects Rashida Tyler as Executive Director**

Albany, NY — The Executive Committee of the New York State Council of Churches (NYSCOC) is pleased to announce the unanimous election of Rashida Tyler as Executive Director. Ms. Tyler also makes history as the first African American woman elected to serve as Executive Director of the Council.

Ms. Tyler served as Deputy Executive Director of the New York State Council of Churches from 2023 until December 8, 2025, when she became Acting Executive Director. She also serves as Project Manager for the Interfaith Affordable Housing Collaborative. In these roles, Tyler has helped expand statewide outreach, strengthen partnerships with congregations and community organizations, and advance the Council's work around affordable housing and community development.

Ms. Tyler brings deep experience in community organizing, housing and tenants' rights advocacy, public administration, nonprofit management, and community outreach and engagement. She earned Bachelor of Arts degrees in Political Science and History from Marist College, a Master of Arts degree in Africana Studies from SUNY Albany, and a Master of Public Administration from Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy. Her education reflects a strong foundation in history, public policy, government, civic engagement, and the study of race, justice, and social movements.

Tyler previously served as Associate Executive Director of Community Outreach and Program Development for the YMCA of Kingston and Ulster County and as Director of Research and Operational Programming for the Ulster County Attorney's Office. Tyler is also a 2016 Women in Government and Civil Society Fellow, a 2017 graduate of the Women's Campaign School at Yale, and a 2018 graduate of the New Leaders Council Fellowship.

Founded as the New York Sunday School Association in 1899, the Council has long stood for human dignity and justice, including advocacy for workers' rights, civil rights, economic and social rights, opposition to the death penalty, criminal justice reform, and the protection of vulnerable communities.

"On behalf of the Executive Committee, I am delighted to congratulate Rashida Tyler on her unanimous election as Executive Director of the New York State Council of Churches," said Gary VanKennen, President of the Executive Committee. "Rashida brings deep faith, strong organizational leadership, and a lifelong commitment to justice to this role. We are confident that Rashida's leadership will build on the Council's historic legacy while charting a new path for its future."

“I am honored to continue building on the Council’s historic legacy,” said Tyler. “I am committed to congregational vitality, the Council’s core principles, deepening relationships with clergy and denominations, strengthening statewide public witness, expanding outreach to underrepresented communities, and continuing to strengthen the Council as a resource hub for congregations across New York State.”



(Photo: Rashida Tyler, Executive Director, New York State Council of Churches)