

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND  
DEVELOPMENT TO THE CITY COUNCIL HOUSING AND BUILDINGS COMMITTEE  
ON THE 2014 HOUSING AND VACANCY SURVEY (HVS) AND THE CONTINUATION  
OF RENT CONTROL AND RENT STABILIZATION IN NEW YORK CITY – MONDAY,  
MARCH 2<sup>ND</sup> 2015 10:00 AM

Good morning, Chairman Williams and members of the Housing and Buildings Committee. I am Emma Wolfe, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs at the Mayor's Office.

I am joined by Elyzabeth Gaumer, Acting Assistant Commissioner of Research and Evaluation at the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

I would like to thank the Committee for welcoming me today. Given that HPD Commissioner Been had a scheduling conflict that required her to be outside of New York City, and the importance of this topic to both Mayor de Blasio and the Council, I wanted to personally come to discuss what Mayor de Blasio has made the number-one focus of our administration this year—affordable housing. There is a tremendous amount we can do and are doing at the local level to take on this crisis—and those are priorities we'll work on in close partnership with communities and the City Council. But some of the most consequential decisions that will affect our families and our neighborhoods will be made up in Albany—notably the fate of rent regulation.

Consideration of critically important State legislative items related to housing, including the future of rent regulation, subsidy programs, and others, will occur after the State budget is adopted. In accordance with this timeline, our specific positions on those items will be introduced in the coming weeks. But last week in his testimony to the Legislature, the Mayor made clear the importance of renewing and strengthening rental protections that expire this year. If they are not renewed and strengthened, many thousands of apartments will become unaffordable. And many thousands of people will lose their homes. Consistent with where he has stood on this issue for many years, the mayor also made clear his belief that we must end vacancy decontrol. It is a major contributing factor in the loss of rent-protected units in the City, and creates incentives for harassment and other predatory practices that are tearing through our neighborhoods.

We will need to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Council every step of the way; the cost of inaction is too great as more units exit rent regulation, and more families are burdened by the scarcity of truly affordable housing in New York City.

What's before us here today is an important precursor to the discussion of the State agenda. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to testify in support of Resolution Number 597 and Introduction Number 685. These two important measures represent local confirmation of the continued housing emergency in New York City. Simply put, they are what makes the extension of the Rent Control and Rent Stabilization Laws possible.

As you know, for the continuation of Rent Control, the City Council must pass a resolution 30 to 60 days after submission of findings of the Housing and Vacancy Survey. Similarly, for the

continuation of Rent Stabilization, the Council must enact legislation before April 1<sup>st</sup>. HPD submitted selected initial findings of the 2014 HVS to the Council on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Our testimony today will present initial findings of the 2014 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey.

This survey of the City's housing stock has been carried out every three years since 1965. Its methodology has remained consistent over time, with only minor changes to improve validity over time. It is conducted by the United States Census Bureau at the request of the City of New York. Interviews for the current survey were conducted between February and June 2014, making it the most up-to-date representative data on New York City currently available.

The survey is used to determine, among other things, the rental vacancy rate, the supply of housing, its condition and affordability, demographics of tenants, and the need for continuing rent regulation.

Before turning to Assistant Commissioner Gaumer, I'd like to reemphasize what an enormous priority this is for the Mayor and administration. I know that is a focus we all share.

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Today, we will share key statistics on the current state of housing as well as provide a more detailed portrait of the rent stabilized stock and tenants living in stabilized units. As with past waves of the HVS, more detailed analysis will be made available over the coming months and the Census Bureau plans to release the microdata later this Spring for analysis by the range of policymakers, policy researchers, and academics who utilize the HVS in their work.

The primary purpose of the HVS is to determine whether a housing emergency continues to exist in New York City and merit the need for rent stabilization and rent control. The 2014 Housing and Vacancy Survey reports the vacancy rate in rental apartments in New York City to be 3.45 percent, well below the 5 percent net rental vacancy rate threshold set forth in State and Local Laws as the condition determining that a housing emergency continues to exist.

Further examination of the 3.45 percent vacancy rate for available rental units shows that the vacancy rate for units with asking rents of \$800-999 was 3.73 percent; the rate for units with an asking rent level of \$2,500 or more was 7.32 percent.

It is important to note that the HVS estimated the total number of residential units at more than 3,400,000, citywide—the largest housing stock in the 49 years since the first survey was conducted in 1965. The low vacancy rate, despite the record-breaking housing stock numbers, indicates that although supply has continued to increase, it has failed to keep pace with the continuing demand for housing.

The HVS utilizes several measures of housing quality, including self-reported deficiencies and objective measures of physical conditions. In 2014, the HVS showed that the overall quality of housing in New York City continues to be good. However, there are areas where housing quality lags. This map shows the prevalence of rental units where the current occupant reported three or

more maintenance deficiencies. The HVS data underscore the need for continued commitment to improving living conditions for all New Yorkers.

The HVS collects detailed information on household incomes and rent levels that we use to assess the rent burden of residents and the need for affordable housing. In 2014, the median contract rent was \$1,200. The median gross rent, which accounts for utility costs and is therefore the best measure of housing cost, was \$1,325. A household would have to earn \$53,000 in order to afford the typical New York City apartment in 2014; however, the HVS shows that the median household income was \$50,400. It was \$41,500 for renter-occupied households.

In 2014, 56% of renter occupied households were rent burdened or paying more than 30% of monthly income toward housing costs. 33.5% were severely burdened or paying more than half of their income toward housing.

As one might expect, this burden is not evenly distributed across all income groups. When we look at the distribution of renter-occupied households by HUD Income Limits (this is a way of categorizing household income that adjusts for household size and it is the way that HPD classifies eligibility for affordable housing), we see that households in the lowest income groups are disproportionately burdened.

These are some of the critical measures that help to show the current state of housing in New York City. One of the great strength of the HVS is the detailed information it collects on rent stabilized units and it is the only source of complete information on rent stabilized tenants.

The HVS uses a variety of information, including registration records from the New York State Department of Homes and Community Renewal (HCR), information on the age and size of the building, and tenant characteristics such as rent level and first year of occupancy to identify if a unit is rent stabilized or rent controlled. These estimates are more accurate than other estimates that rely on only one source of information. In 2014, we further refined our method for identifying rent stabilized units.

In order to provide a picture of the current rent stabilized stock and tenant population, I would like to share some high level findings that compare stabilized units to private, non-regulated units—those frequently called “market” units. Please note that this is only a subset of the entire housing supply. It does not include public housing, rent controlled units, or other regulated units such as HUD regulated.

In 2014, the HVS estimates that 1,029,918 units or 47.2% of rental units were rent stabilized, citywide. This is statistically equivalent to the number of units that were rent stabilized in 2011, using the same methodology that we used in 2014 to identify rent stabilized units. In 2014, there are an estimated 848,721 private, non-regulated units or 38.9% of rental units .

Compared to private, non-regulated households, fewer rent stabilized households are headed by White, non-Hispanics and are more likely to have at least one senior living in the home.

In 2014, private, non-regulated units typically rented for more than rent-stabilized units. The median monthly gross rent for private, non-regulated units was \$1,625, as opposed to \$1,300 for rent-stabilized units.

A higher proportion of rent stabilized tenants were rent burdened and severely rent burdened than market tenants. 56% of rent stabilized tenants were rent burdened and 34% were severely burdened. This is compared to 50% and 28%, respectively, for private, non-regulated tenants.

The median household income of rent stabilized tenants is lower than that of private, non-regulated renters, and more rent stabilized tenants are considered Low Income as defined by HUD Income Limits.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We are happy to answer any questions.



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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

**Testimony of Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
On Extending Rent Stabilization Laws for New York City  
March 2, 2015**

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Good morning. My name is Gale A. Brewer and I am the Manhattan Borough President. Thank you to Chair Williams and the members of the Housing and Buildings Committee for the opportunity to testify today on the issue of the ongoing housing emergency in New York City and seeking renewal of the New York State Rent Stabilization Law.

On February 24, 2015, the U.S. Census Bureau released early findings from the latest Housing and Vacancy Survey that is expected to be published in June of this year. According to these preliminary statistics, an estimated 3.45% of New York City residential units are classified as vacant in 2014, after adjusting for inflation. While this is a slight increase from the 3.12% in figure from 2011, it is still well below the 5% vacancy threshold generally deemed necessary to declare a housing emergency requiring ongoing rent regulation.

Additionally, preliminary numbers show that the median rent in New York City has increased 3.4% in the three years between the two latest Housing and Vacancy Reports, rising to a median rent of \$1,200 a month for rent-regulated units. Yet the median household income in the City only increased 1.1% between 2010 and 2013. So clearly rents have risen at a much higher rate than the increase in household income. Most importantly, statistics show that in light of stagnant household income and steadily rising rents, at least half of the New York City households spend more than 30% of their annual income on housing expenses.

The need to extend Rent Stabilization for New York City is part of a larger conversation of rent regulation reform taking place this spring in Albany. To ensure more equitable and affordable housing, the larger conversation must address the following issues:

### **Eliminate Vacancy Deregulation**

The bullseye on the back of every rent regulated tenant is vacancy high rent deregulation. Virtually every vacancy that occurs in a regulated apartment can result in deregulation. The temptation that is dangled before owners in the event of a vacancy creates a predator-prey relationship between landlords and tenants. Currently, deregulation occurs where an owner can, during a vacancy, impose rent increases (legitimately or otherwise) that bring the rent to a \$2,500.00 level. These increases are taken through a combination of statutory vacancy bonuses (usually 20%) plus whatever Individual Apartment Increases are imposed, and then lease increases. While it is important that the vacancy bonus be repealed, and the Individual Apartment Increases system be reformed, eliminating the reward for deregulation is imperative.

Based on past experience, a compromise may be made by way of simply increasing the deregulation threshold. This will merely set the goalpost further out, and owners will continue to impose increases through vacancies or capital improvements to reach the deregulation threshold.

### **Eliminate Vacancy Increase**

Each time a regulated unit becomes vacant, landlords are entitled to increase the base rent by up to 20% of the amount that the previous tenant was paying. Eliminating this large bonus that is imposed with every vacancy would slow down one of the driving forces behind rapidly rising rents.

Mr. Walter M. of West Harlem understands first-hand the impact that vacancy deregulation has on the ability to afford a home. In May 2014, Walter, a Spanish-speaking constituent, sought help from my office to better understand why his landlord was charging him \$2,050 per month for a one-bedroom apartment he and his wife lived in when the previous tenant paid \$670 a month under Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) on the same unit with a legal rent of only \$875 per month. After my staff inquired of the NYS Homes and Community Renewal (HCR), we found out that due to a two-year vacancy and individual unit capital improvements (see “Reform the IAI Procedure” section below), the unit was legally deregulated to above the then-deregulation threshold of \$2,000 a month. As a result, Walter needed to pay \$6,000 in back rent for the time he was disputing his rent, and only then did he understand the impact of deregulation on him and his family.

### **Reform the IAI Procedure**

Individual Apartment Increases (IAIs) are the second step by which most rents rise to the level of deregulation. When an apartment is vacant, owners impose an increase representing 1/40<sup>th</sup> or 1/60<sup>th</sup> of the actual cost of so-called “improvements” completed during the vacancy. As advocates from the housing legal services sector can attest, there is a lack of oversight on the state level that allows landlords to remain unaccountable for their actual apartment capital improvements. There have been instances when landlords claimed IAIs for fictitious “improvements”; in other cases, work was performed but associated costs were exaggerated.

On the other hand, I recognize the importance of IAIs for improving housing conditions for rent-regulated tenants. But problems arise when owners impose increases for the performance of long needed repairs and maintenance without accountability. This is why it is imperative that

IAIs be granted *only* with 1) an oversight procedure that requires an owner to apply for the increase, and requires NYS HCR to grant approval only after an inspection to verify that the claimed work was performed; and 2) the elimination of the four-year challenge period that currently bars disputes over IAI rent increases once the period expires.

### **MCI Reform**

Major Capital Improvement (MCI) increases are incurred when an owner performs building-wide capital improvement to the building and then is permitted to pass the cost of such work on to the tenants. MCIs currently become part of a tenant's permanent base rent. The amount supposedly spent by the owner is never amortized. Serial, compounded MCIs are another means by which rents have been rapidly rising out of control. They must be separated from the base rent calculation and terminate when the cost of the improvement is recouped.

### **Rent Control Reform**

I am advocating for an end of the annual 7.5% increases and fuel pass-alongs that have been imposed on rent controlled tenancies over the last 20 years. Rent control increases should be calculated based on average Rent Guidelines Board rent increases.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to working with members of this committee and other advocates in working in Albany to see reauthorization and reform of the State's Rent Stabilization Law.





# Metropolitan Council on Housing

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**Hearing on “Int. No. 597- In relation to extending the rent stabilization laws. And Res. No. 685- Resolution determining that a public emergency requiring rent control in the City of New York continues to exist and will continue to exist on and after April 1, 2015.”**

**Committee on Housing and Buildings, New York City Council**

**Testimony of Ilana Maier  
Program Director, Met Council on Housing  
Presented on March 2, 2015**

Hello and thank you for providing me with this opportunity to speak about rent regulation in New York City. My name is Ilana Maier and I am here on behalf of Met Council on Housing, a nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting for stronger rent laws and providing on-the-ground support for New York City’s most vulnerable tenants. We believe that all New Yorkers have a right to safe, stable and affordable housing.

As the city and state both move to renew our city’s rent laws and act to address the worsening housing crisis, we are encouraged by the attention and support we have received from elected officials. Thank you Speaker Heastie for supporting New York tenants, we are heartened that you have made strengthening the rent laws your top priority. And thank you Mayor de Blasio for not only working to create more affordable housing, but also for vocally calling for the repeal of vacancy deregulation. Additionally, we are grateful for the support of the city Council Members who are working diligently to strengthen the city’s rent laws and support tenants, including the sponsors of city’s 2015 rent law renewal, Council Member Johnson and Council Member Williams.

New York City is facing a housing crisis that will continue to worsen unless we significantly reform and strengthen our rent laws. Each year, our city becomes less affordable as families are pushed out of their homes and communities to make room for luxury buildings. The rent laws directly affect over one million homes and two and half million New Yorkers.

The number of families now living in our homeless shelters has reached unacceptable levels. There are more than 60,000 people in our shelters each night, including over 25,000 children. It is no secret that the main cause of homelessness in New York City is the lack of affordable housing. Finding affordable housing is almost impossible. The 2015 Housing and Vacancy Survey revealed an extremely low overall vacancy rate of 3.45 percent. The vacancy rate for rent stabilized units is even lower, at only 2.29 percent. And the vacancy rate for low-rent apartments, which rent for 800 dollars or less a month, is a meager 1.8 percent.

Not only are families unable to find affordable housing, but our current rent laws encourage landlords to harass and evict families. The most problematic part of our rent laws – and the underlying reason for most of the housing crisis – is vacancy deregulation. Currently, an apartment can be removed from rent regulation when the monthly rent exceeds \$2,500 and the unit is vacant. Once a unit is vacant it is exceedingly easy for landlords to raise the rent through



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various loopholes, creating a significant financial incentive for landlords to push families out of their homes. This can occur in a variety of ways, which regularly depend on systemic negligence and harassment. Increasingly, this harassment is coming in dangerous forms, such as the use of building wide construction as intimidation. Vacancy deregulation has disastrous consequences for both tenants and communities and we cannot accept any rent laws that stop short of full repeal.

One of the most common ways that landlords increase an apartment's value is through the abuse of Major Capital Improvements (also known as MCIs), Individual Apartment Improvements (also known as IAIs) and preferential rents. Under our current laws, when landlords use MCIs to make improvements to entire buildings or IAIs to alter an individual unit, the rent is permanently increased. This increase remains in effect, at the tenants' expense, even after the upgrade has been entirely paid off, creating an incentive for landlords to make unnecessary improvements in order to raise the rent and get closer to the \$2,500 deregulation threshold. Preferential rents, the practice of offering tenants a lower rent than legally allowed, is often misunderstood as a generous favor to tenants, when in reality that rent is only offered because the legal rent is higher than market value. However, when a tenant renews their lease, landlords can increase the rent to the legal amount without warning, creating unforeseen and astronomical rent increases and contributing to rapid displacement, particularly in gentrifying neighborhoods.

We strongly urge City Council Members to push their colleagues in Albany to not only renew the rent laws – but to strengthen them by repealing vacancy deregulation and imposing meaningful reforms. The rent laws affect not only the millions of tenants living in rent regulated housing; they affect our communities and they set the tone for the type of city we want to live in. If we don't strengthen the rent laws, New York will quickly become a city for millionaires and will lose in ingenuity and creativity that make it an amazing place to live.

We have the opportunity this year to reverse the housing crisis and create affordable communities. We cannot build or subsidize our way out of the housing crisis. We must create rent laws that encourage people to build their lives and raise their families in the city. Right now, we have laws that encourage landlords to push families into homeless shelters and force people to choose between homelessness and leaving the city every day. We believe that we can and must do better and it begins with strengthening our rent laws.



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**TESTIMONY OF JONATHAN FURLONG, BEFORE  
THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS**

March 2, 2015

Good afternoon--Thank you Chairman Williams and members of the council for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Jonathan Furlong and I am the Senior Tenant Organizer for the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD). ANHD is a membership organization of New York City neighborhood-based housing and economic development groups, CDCs, affordable housing developers, supportive housing providers, community organizers, and economic development service providers. Our mission is to ensure flourishing neighborhoods and decent, affordable housing for all New Yorkers. We have nearly 100 members throughout the five boroughs who have developed over 100,000 units of affordable housing in the past 25 years alone and directly operate over 30,000 units.

Given the importance of Rent Regulation for low- and moderate- income New Yorkers, we are happy to share our thoughts on this issue. Rent regulation is not only the greatest source of stable affordable housing in New York, it also provides tenants with critical legal protections. Moreover, the high value of land in the metropolitan region puts home-ownership out of reach for the majority of New York City residents. Rent-regulation provides stability to individuals, families, and entire communities, and is the primary reason why New York City remains a diverse, vibrant place that low- and moderate-income people can afford to continue living in.

Today, most New Yorkers would never be able to afford the market rents in their own neighborhoods. This is particularly true for lower-income tenants who live in areas that are experiencing gentrification. Many neighborhoods that used to be affordable to people of modest means have seen rents skyrocket, and the only reason why most long-time tenants are able to stay in the communities where they set roots is because of our rent-regulation laws. These laws protect the affordability of rental housing to over 2.5 million New Yorkers - more than all other affordable housing programs combined. The laws keep rent increases under control in privately-owned buildings and prevent landlords from imposing outrageous rent-hikes or evicting tenants without cause.

The rapid loss of regulated units has been an increasing concern for communities across the state as the lingering economic recession has exacerbated the affordable housing crisis. In the last 20 years, 300,000 to 400,000 units of affordable housing have left rent stabilization. Although High Rent/Vacancy Decontrol is by far the single greatest reason units exit the rent regulation system, systematic abuse of regulatory loopholes is also a major factor in the loss of rent regulated units. If we do not win repeal of the 1997 deregulation amendments and close other loopholes in the state rent laws, the city will lose far more affordable apartments over the next ten years than the 200,000 the mayor intends to build or preserve.



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Given the importance of rent stabilization and rent control for the million or so apartments left protected under this system, ANHD strongly urges both the council and the Mayor to renew the rent laws for New York city.



**Testimony of Tom Waters  
Housing Policy Analyst, Community Service Society**

**Hearing on Extending the Rent Stabilization Laws and Related Matters  
New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings**

**March 2, 2015**

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the vital importance of rent control and rent stabilization laws for low-income New Yorkers. The Community Service Society is an independent nonprofit organization that addresses some of the most urgent problems facing low-wage workers and their communities here in New York City, including the effects of the city's chronic housing shortage.

Rent control and rent stabilization are fundamentally a response to this chronic shortage, which creates a severe power imbalance between tenants and landlords. The primary purpose of the laws is to prevent landlords from exploiting this imbalance to impose exorbitant rent increases and arbitrary evictions. This is a matter of simple justice, even before we consider the effects of rent regulation on affordability. It alone should be a sufficient reason for this committee, the City Council, and the mayor to extend the laws as they are authorized to do under state law.

The rent laws are also an important complement to the city's economic development activities. When the public purse and public authority are used to promote economic development, all New Yorkers should benefit. But too often, economic development leads to rent increases, and only those who can pay the increased rent can share in the benefits. Those who cannot pay are harmed by the publicly supported development, because they are either displaced or subject to severe household budget pressures. While rent control and rent stabilization are not a complete solution to the negative side effects of economic development policy, they do ameliorate displacement pressures, and this provides another important reason for the city to extend the rent laws in the interest of justice.

The Community Service Society is particularly interested in the effects of rent control and rent stabilization on housing affordability for low-income people. The rent laws are not a true affordability program, and in fact most rent-regulated tenants pay unaffordable rents, defined as

rents of more than 30 percent of household income. This is confirmed in the city Department of Housing Preservation and Developments' preliminary findings from the 2014 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey, which show a median rent burden of 33.1 percent for rent-stabilized tenants and 35.5 percent for rent-controlled tenants.

Nevertheless, the rent laws do improve affordability for regulated tenants to an extent that is quite important for low-income households, even though it falls far short of the affordability of public or subsidized housing. Because the preliminary findings from 2014 do not treat affordability separately for different income levels, we must use the 2011 HVS, but unfortunately there is no reason to doubt that the pattern from four years ago still holds.

In 2011, the median rent burden for low-income rent-regulated tenants, defined as those with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty line, was 47 percent, compared to 51 percent for unregulated tenants. These tenants would clearly have more affordable rents if they lived in public housing or in subsidized housing subject to the "Brooke Amendment" rent cap of 30 percent, but the 4 percent difference in rent burden remains acutely important. In 2011, the per capita residual income for regulated tenants, that is the amount of money per household member left over after paying rent, was \$378, compared to \$333 for unregulated tenants. That is \$12.60 a day versus \$11.10 a day - a 14 percent difference.

This is in fact a tremendously important policy effect on affordability, especially when you consider that there are more than 400,000 low-income rent-regulated tenant households in this city. That is 40 percent of the city's low-income population. This analysis comes from CSS's 2012 publication, "Making the Rent: Before and After the Recession," which is available at our web site, [www.cssny.org](http://www.cssny.org).

The message is that rent regulation is an important piece of the city's housing affordability picture, but the affordability it provides still falls short of what the city needs. This is only partly because rent regulation is a system of rent and eviction protections, conceptually distinct from a true affordability program. The problem is also partly caused by more specific defects in the details of the laws, which often stem from pro-landlord amendments that have been made to the laws as they have been renewed over the years.

Unfortunately, as you know, state law precludes the city from making changes to address these defects. But I hope that many of you will join the tenants, neighborhood activists, and advocates who will be seeking solutions to these problems at the state level this year, and I urge you to pass the resolutions before you today that contribute to this cause.

Several of the resolutions before you today would significantly improve the affordability effects of the rent laws by limiting excessive rent increases upon the vacancy of an apartment. At present, landlords have a very free hand to raise rents during vacancy through the statutory vacancy bonus of about 20 percent and by spending money, or by claiming to spend money, on individual apartment improvements. These increases go far beyond what is necessary to ensure that needed improvements are made, and they are the major engine of deteriorating affordability in many neighborhoods. I commend you for focusing attention on this issue through resolutions.

You also have worthy resolutions before you that address excessive rent increases during tenancies through reform of the major capital improvement and preferential rent provisions of the rent stabilization laws, as well as resolutions supporting relief for rent-controlled tenants and those in former Mitchell-Lama buildings. Your resolution on vacancy decontrol addresses the major threat to the survival of the city's system of rent regulation as a whole. We must not allow rent regulation to erode until it becomes a socially stigmatized residual program for a handful of people. As a broad-based program focusing on fairness rather than subsidy, rent regulation has an important place in our city's housing policy system. I urge you to pass all of the resolutions on today's agenda.



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### **TESTIMONY OF THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY**

IN SUPPORT OF INT. 0685-15, A LOCAL LAW TO AMEND THE ADMINISTRATIVE  
CODE OF NEW YORK, IN RELATION TO EXTENDING THE RENT  
STABILIZATION LAWS AND RES. 0597-2015 RESOLUTION DETERMINING THAT  
A PUBLIC EMERGENCY REQUIRING RENT CONTROL IN THE CITY OF NEW  
YORK CONTINUES TO EXIST AND WILL CONTINUE TO EXIST ON AND AFTER  
APRIL 1, 2015.

New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings

March 2, 2015

Thank you to Chair Williams, Council member Johnson and the New York City  
Council Committee on Housing and Buildings for the opportunity to speak at this very  
important hearing.

#### **The Legal Aid Society**

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Legal Aid Society. The Society is the  
oldest and largest program in the nation providing direct legal services to low-income  
families and individuals. The mission of the Society's Civil Practice is to improve the lives  
of low-income New Yorkers by providing legal representation to vulnerable families and



individuals to assist them in obtaining and maintaining the basic necessities of life — housing, health care, food and subsistence-level income or self-sufficiency. The Society’s legal assistance focuses on enhancing individual, family and community stability by resolving a full range of legal problems in the areas of housing and public benefits, foreclosure prevention, immigration, domestic violence and family law, employment, elder law, tax law, community economic development, health law and consumer law

The Legal Aid Society welcomes this opportunity to testify before the New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings concerning the continuing housing emergency and the importance of extending the rent laws.

### **Introduction**

The primary purpose of rent regulation in New York City has been to eliminate abnormal rents in an overheated market. Indeed, the Rent Stabilization Law’s stated goal is to protect “public health, safety, and welfare...and to prevent exactions of unjust, unreasonable, and oppressive rents and rental agreements.” Rent Stabilization can only exist during a housing emergency which is defined by law as a market where the vacancy rate has fallen below 5 percent. New York City first declared an emergency in 1974. This emergency has endured throughout the years but the crisis which had been chronic has become acute. Because the vacancy rate is so low, tenants cannot move and exercise market power. The Rent Stabilization Law was meant to – and has acted to – approximate the workings of a market where both parties have the power to negotiate contracts.

This purpose of this committee hearing is to consider whether that housing emergency continues to exist and thus whether Rent Stabilization and Rent Control should be extended. Our answer to these questions is yes. The Selected Findings of the Housing Vacancy Survey demonstrates that for renters in New York City the vacancy rate is 3.45% -

well under the 5% threshold. Thus, the emergency continues to exist and these essential laws must be extended. If the City does not act, millions of New Yorkers will be at risk of “unjust, unreasonable and oppressive rents” and will face “uncertainty, hardship and dislocation.” Without rent regulation, programs that have been created to protect our elderly residents and residents with disabilities, such as SCRIE (the rent increase exemption law for senior citizens) and DRIE (the rent increase exemption law for persons with disabilities), will become meaningless, and elderly New Yorkers and New Yorkers with disabilities will be threatened with eviction and homelessness.

### **Who Lives in Rent Regulated Housing?**

- Rent stabilization primarily serves low-income people, people of color, and immigrants.<sup>1</sup>
- The median household income for rent-stabilized households is \$40,600 a year and the median income for rent controlled households is \$29,000. The median income of households in private non-regulated rent units is \$58,000. The median income for homeowners is \$80,000.<sup>2</sup>
- 47 percent of renter households live in rent-stabilized units.<sup>3</sup>
- 40 percent of low income households live in rent-regulated housing<sup>4</sup>. Overall, 445,000 low-income families live in rent-regulated housing.<sup>5</sup>
- 41% percent rent-stabilized tenants are low income (with incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty line).

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<sup>1</sup> Email from Tom Waters, Community Service Society to Ellen Davidson.

<sup>2</sup> Selected Initial Findings of the 2014 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey, prepared by Elyzabeth Gumer, Assistance Commissioner and Sheree West, PhD, Sr. Housing Analyst, Housing Policy Analysis and Statistical Research, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, February 9, 2015, available at <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdf/2014-HVS-initial-Findings.pdf> Accessed February 26, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Id.

<sup>4</sup> Testimony of Tom Waters, Community Service Society. Rent Guidelines Board, May 1, 2014..

<sup>5</sup> Victor Bach & Tom Waters, Community Service Society, *Making the Rent, Before and After the Recession*, June 2012 (revised September 2013) at 5.

- 53 percent of rent-stabilized tenants have household incomes below the New York City median.
- 65 percent of rent stabilized tenants are people of color.
- 13.4 percent of households living in stabilized housing make less than \$10,000 a year. 7.9 percent of households living in stabilized housing make from \$10,000 to \$14,999 a year.
- 80 percent of poor renters in rent-regulated apartments pay rent that is more than 50 percent of their income, a drastic increase from 64 percent in 2005<sup>6</sup>

(Except where noted, all of these figures are taken from analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2011 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey.)

### **Declining Affordability of Housing**

According to the Selected Initial Findings of the 2014 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey, the rise in rents has outpaced inflation and outpaced the rise in tenants' incomes. The median rent for rent-stabilized apartments rose from \$1,073 in 2011 to \$1,200 in 2014; an increase of 11.9 percent, or 6.3 percent above inflation. Rents in rent-controlled apartments rose just as fast: from \$802 to \$900, or 6.6 percent above inflation. The median income for rent-stabilized tenants rose slightly less than the rate of inflation: from \$38,100 in 2011 to \$40,000 in 2014, a loss of 0.3 percent after inflation. Incomes for rent-controlled tenants lost more ground: from \$28,150 to \$29,000, a loss of 3.6 percent after inflation. As a result of rising rents and stagnant incomes, rent burdens (the share of income devoted to rent) for rent-stabilized tenants rose from 31.9 percent in 2011 to 33.1 percent in 2014. Rent burdens for rent-controlled tenants rose sharply, from 27.6 percent to 30.7 percent. Rent burdens for unregulated tenants dropped from 30.6 percent to 30.0 percent.

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<sup>6</sup> Victor Bach & Tom Waters, Community Service Society, *Making the Rent, Before and After the Recession*, June 2012, (revised September 2013) 7.

Tenants struggle to pay rent and obtain the necessities of life. One fifth of New York City households made less than \$15,000 in 2011.<sup>7</sup> The poverty rate in New York City has grown during each of the past four years to 21.2 percent in 2012, compared to a nationwide poverty rate of 15.7 percent.<sup>8</sup> The number of families receiving cash assistance in New York City has increased each of the past five years.<sup>9</sup> The number of food stamps recipients increased 1.4 percent in 2012 to an average of 1.86 million recipients, nearly twice the level of 2003.<sup>10</sup> There are increasing numbers of tenants facing the potential loss of their homes. Filings for eviction proceedings for non-payment of rent continue to rise. Non-payment proceedings that resulted in eviction or legal possession increased to 23.6 percent of cases calendared in 2013.<sup>11</sup> Landlords are suing tenants more often for money that they do not have; increasing rents will only lead to more evictions and homelessness.

In this climate of economic uncertainty, 20.9 percent of all households residing in rent-stabilized housing pay more than 50 percent of their income in rent (the standard of affordability for housing is 30 percent of income for rent).<sup>12</sup> In 2011, 80 percent of poor households faced a rent burden of more than 50 percent of income and a 16 percent reduction in real income.<sup>13</sup> An individual would have to work an astonishing 138 hours per week at minimum wage, 52 weeks a year, in order to afford an average two-bedroom apartment in New York City.<sup>14</sup> Alternatively, the individual would need a wage increase to

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<sup>7</sup> Thomas P. DiNapoli, New York State Comptroller, *The Continued Decline in Affordable Housing in New York City*, 2013, 2.

<sup>8</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Income and Affordability Study*, 7.

<sup>9</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Income and Affordability Study*, 12.

<sup>10</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Income and Affordability Study*, 12.

<sup>11</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Income and Affordability Study*, 15.

<sup>12</sup> Dr. Moon Wha Lee, City of New York Department of Housing Preservation and Development, *New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (HVS)*, 2011, 44.

<sup>13</sup> Victor Back & Tom Waters, Community Service Society, *Making the Rent: Before and After the Recession*, June 2012, (revised September 2013) 3.

<sup>14</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Income and Affordability Study*, 11.

at least \$27.69 per hour, or \$57,600 a year, in order to afford the same apartment.<sup>15</sup> Raising rents in such a situation is unconscionable, yet median contract rent increased 25 percent in rent stabilized units when controlling for inflation from 2005 to 2011.<sup>16</sup>

### **Declining Availability of Housing**

Unfortunately for New York renters, declining affordability is coupled with declining availability. The net vacancy rate of rent-stabilized units was 2.12 percent in 2014 compared to a City-wide vacancy rate of 3.45 percent, significantly below the 5.0 percent threshold that legally defines a housing emergency.<sup>17</sup> The number of vacant units affordable to low-income New Yorkers is even more meager. In 2014, the vacancy rate for all units with rents less than \$800 was only 1.8 percent.<sup>18</sup>

The decrease in availability of affordable vacant units is exacerbated by the loss of at least 104,155 rent-stabilized housing units in the last 20 years, primarily due to high-rent vacancy deregulation.<sup>19</sup> Units that remain available are increasingly out of the range of low-income New Yorkers. Between 2000 and 2012, the number of units in New York City renting for less than \$1000 declined by over 400,000.<sup>20</sup> Overall, from 2002 to 2011, there has been a 39 percent loss in rental apartments that low-income households can afford.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Income and Affordability Study*, 11

<sup>16</sup> Victor Back & Tom Waters, Community Service Society, *Making the Rent: Before and After the Recession*, June 2012, (revised September 2013) 3.

<sup>17</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Housing Supply Report*, 3.

<sup>18</sup> Selected Initial Findings of the 2014 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey, prepared by Elyzabeth Gumer, Assistance Commissioner and Sheree West, PhD, Sr. Housing Analyst, Housing Policy Analysis and Statistical Research, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, February 9, 2015, available at <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdf/2014-HVS-initial-Findings.pdf> Accessed February 26, 2015.

<sup>19</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *Changes to the Rent Stabilized Housing Stock in New York City in 2013*. 9. 13. (As noted in the report, these numbers are a floor or a minimum count of units loss as registration of deregulated units with DHCR is voluntary).

<sup>20</sup> Scott M. Stringer, New York City Comptroller, *The Growing Gap: New York City's Housing Affordability Challenge*, 2014, 6.

<sup>21</sup> Coalition for the Homeless. *State of the Homeless 2014: Turning Point: Amidst Unprecedented Homelessness – A New Focus on Housing Can Turn the Tide*, 14

Raising rents would only accelerate the loss of increasingly scarce housing affordable to low-income New Yorkers.

The scarcity of available rent-stabilized housing is a part of an overall decline in the availability of affordable housing. Expiration of 421-a benefits removed 757 formerly-stabilized units in 2013.<sup>22</sup> The development of additional, publicly-funded housing by HPD and HDC continues to decline, with 9.7 percent fewer new starts in 2013 than 2012.<sup>23</sup> In the first three quarters of the current fiscal year, there were 21.7 fewer new starts than in the corresponding period of fiscal year 2013.<sup>24</sup> Construction financed by the 421-a Affordable housing Program decreased dramatically in 2013, down 27.3 percent from 2012.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, the steady decrease in Mitchell-Lama units has accelerated over the past several years, with at least 43,000 lost to buyouts since 1985.<sup>26</sup> There remain only 47,000 such rental units left in the city today.<sup>27</sup>

Applicants for public housing face similar shortages: 247,262 families are on the waitlist for conventional public housing, with 121,000 applicants are on the waiting list for Section 8 housing vouchers in New York City, though no new additions have been made to the wait list since 2007.<sup>28</sup>

This combination of market forces and governmental decisions has worked together to have a devastating effect on low and moderate income New Yorkers. The declining number of vacant units available for rent, the fact that housing expansion has not kept pace

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<sup>22</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Housing Supply Report*, 8.

<sup>23</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Housing Supply Report*, 7.

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Housing Supply Report*, 8.

<sup>26</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Housing Supply Report*, 8.

<sup>27</sup> Dr. Moon Wha Lee, City of New York Department of Housing Preservation and Development. *New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (HVS)*, 98.

<sup>28</sup> New York City Housing Authority, "Section 8 Assistance," *available at* <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycha/html/section8/section8.shtml>. Data accessed February 2015.

with population growth, and the ongoing public housing crisis have all contributed to the scarcity of available affordable housing.

### **Housing-related Hardships and Related Social Costs on the Rise**

The rate of housing-related hardships<sup>29</sup> among low-income renters has been increasing in recent years.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, for 80 percent of poor New Yorkers who pay over half of their income towards rent, residual income per household member is \$4.40 daily. Those poor New Yorkers have \$4.40 a day per household member to pay for all other needs including food, transportation, and medical, school related costs.<sup>31</sup> Additionally, overall, 12.2 percent of rent-stabilized units are overcrowded (averaging more than one person per room) and 4.7 percent are severely overcrowded (averaging more than 1.5 people per room).<sup>32</sup> High housing cost burdens and concentrated poverty also cause a range of more serious social harms, including higher crime rates, poorer nutrition and health, higher financial burdens for local governments, greater educational failure, higher teenage pregnancy rates, more costly basic consumer goods, and greater difficulty maintaining steady jobs.<sup>33</sup> In addition, those suffering from high housing cost burdens are more likely to be evicted and more likely to experience homelessness.<sup>34</sup> According to the Rent

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<sup>29</sup> These hardships include the “lesser” hardships of rent/mortgage arrears and utility cut-offs and the “severe” hardships of doubling up and using shelters.

<sup>30</sup> Victor Back & Tom Waters, Community Service Society, *Making the Rent: Before and After the Recession*, June 2012

<sup>31</sup> *Id.*

<sup>32</sup> Selected Initial Findings of the 2014 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey, prepared by Elyzabeth Gumer, Assistance Commissioner and Sheree West, PhD, Sr. Housing Analyst, Housing Policy Analysis and Statistical Research, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, February 9, 2015, available at <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdf/2014-HVS-initial-Findings.pdf> Accessed February 26, 2015.

<sup>33</sup> Margery Austin Turner, *Current Rental Housing Market Challenges and the Need for a New Federal Policy Response: Statement before the Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Transportation, HUD, and Related Agencies, US House of Representatives*, 5; Douglas Rice and Barbara Sard, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, *The Effects of the Federal Budget Squeeze on Low-Income Housing Assistance*, 2.

<sup>34</sup> Douglas Rice and Barbara Sard, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, February 1, 2007. *The Effects of the Federal Budget Squeeze on Low-Income Housing Assistance*, 2.

Guidelines Board's Income and Affordability Study, non-payment proceedings that resulted in an eviction/legal possession increased to 23.6 percent of cases calendared in 2013.<sup>35</sup>

### **Effect of Stagnant Low-Income Wages and Increasing Prices on Residents**

Wages have not kept up with living costs, creating enormous pressure on households to somehow meet the cost of necessities other than rent. Additionally, the proportion of "low wage" jobs in New York City, those that pay less than \$12.89 per hour, rose from 31 percent in 2007 to 35 percent in 2012.<sup>36</sup> Further, rises in utilities costs additionally compound increases in rental expenses: the average renter's bill increased 5.1 percent in 2013 and 1.3 percent in 2012.<sup>37</sup> Transportation costs are also rising. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has increased transit rates 38 percent since 2008, with another hike planned for 2015.<sup>38</sup> These price hikes in the midst of a recession signal continued economic difficulty for the residents of New York City, especially low-income New Yorkers who are already struggling to survive.

Increases in the cost of basic necessities have a particularly severe impact on poor New Yorkers, who already have very limited residual income remaining after paying a high percentage of their income for rent. From 2005 to 2011, low-income renters suffered a 10% decrease in residual income, with poor renters facing an even more acute 16% decrease.<sup>39</sup> Poor families have only a little over \$4 per day per household member to cover all non-rent expenses, including food, transportation, and medical costs.<sup>40</sup> The proposed rent increase will only exacerbate the crisis that poor households experience, leading to

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<sup>35</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Income and Affordability Study*, 15.

<sup>36</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board *2013 Income and Affordability Study*, 12.

<sup>37</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Income and Affordability Study*, 10.

<sup>38</sup> "Derail the Fare Hike," *The NY Daily News*, Sept. 28, 2013.

<sup>39</sup> Victor Bach & Tom Waters, Community Service Society, *Making the Rent: Before and After the Recession, 2005 to 2011*, June 2012, (revised September 2013) 3.

<sup>40</sup> *Id.*



increased costs for society as a whole. Further, in November 2013, the Federal Government cut the budgets of food stamp recipients \$29 a month for an average family of three.<sup>41</sup>

### **Growing Problem of Homeless Families**

The scarcity of affordable housing, rising rents, and the increasing cost of living have contributed to record use of the City's shelters in 2014. In the last decade, the number of homeless New Yorkers sleeping in municipal shelters has risen an astonishing 64 percent.<sup>42</sup> The period for which those families remain in temporary housing grew by 46 days in 2013 to an average of 403 days, the longest average recorded.<sup>43</sup> Even more distressing is the 12.8 percent increase in 2013 in the number of homeless families with children in the shelters each night.<sup>44</sup> This increase has been caused by an upsurge in the number of new homeless families entering the shelters. The number of individuals entering the shelter system increased for the fifth consecutive year, rising 14.1 percent from 2012.<sup>45</sup> More than 53,615 people, including 22,712 children, sleep in New York City shelters each night.<sup>46</sup> Additionally, homeless individuals placed in permanent housing are returning to the system in greater numbers, with 11.3 percent of families with children returning to DHS within one year<sup>47</sup>. Rent increases will only push more families from their homes onto the streets. In addition to the human cost, increased human costs will result in increased

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<sup>41</sup> Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, *November 1 SNAP Cuts Will Affect Millions of Children, Seniors and People with Disabilities*. . October 24, 2013.

<sup>42</sup> Coalition for the Homeless, New York City Homelessness, The Basic Facts. <http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/pages/basic-facts-about-homelessness-new-york-city> Accessed on February 27, 2015.

<sup>43</sup> Coalition for the Homeless, *State of the Homeless 2014: Turning Point: Amidst Unprecedented Homelessness, A New Focus on Housing Can Turn the Tide*, 2.

<sup>44</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Income and Affordability Study*, 13.

<sup>45</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board, *2014 Income and Affordability Study*, 13.

<sup>46</sup> Coalition for the Homeless, *State of the Homeless 2014: Turning Point: Amidst Unprecedented Homelessness, A New Focus on Housing Can Turn the Tide*, 2.

<sup>47</sup> NYC Rent Guidelines Board *2014 Income and Affordability Study*, 14

financial costs for the City in sheltering homeless families at a time of decreasing revenue in the City budget.

### **Close the loopholes in the Rent Stabilization and Rent Control Systems**

This committee is considering today a number of preconsidered resolutions and proposed resolutions, all of which address loopholes in the rent laws that incentivize landlords to harass their long term tenants out of their homes and allow landlords to increase the rent regulated rents to unaffordable amounts. In 2015, we must end deregulation of rent-regulated apartments. In the past twenty years, we have lost hundreds of thousands of affordable regulated units through vacancy deregulation. Vacancy deregulation allows a landlord to take an apartment out of regulation, with no oversight as long as the apartment is vacant and the landlord can reasonably claim that the apartment could rent for \$2,500. This creates an incentive for landlords to harass long-term tenants out of their homes and communities. The laws that assist landlords in increasing rents to reach the \$2,500 threshold must also be addressed. We must close these loopholes by repealing the vacancy bonus and reforming the individual apartment improvement system that often does raise rents up to \$1,500 upon turnover. Furthermore, we must strengthen the rent laws by enacting legislation, which would slow the escalation of rents that are increasingly unaffordable for current tenants. This legislation includes reforming major capital improvements, preferential rents, and the rent increases for rent control tenants. Proposed Res. 86-A, 596-A and the six pre considered resolutions address these loopholes and we strongly support them.

### **Extend the Rent Stabilization and Rent Control laws.**

In light of the continuing housing emergency in the midst of the greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression, the City must extend the Rent Stabilization and Rent

Control laws. In Section 2 of the Emergency Tenant Protection Act, the Legislature found that

a serious public emergency continues to exist in the housing of a considerable number of persons in State of New York . . . there continues to exist in many areas of the state an acute shortage of housing accommodations caused by high demand, attributable in part to new household formations and decreased supply, in large measure attributable to reduced availability of federal subsidies and increased costs of construction and other inflationary factors.

The Legislature further found

preventive action by the legislature continues to be imperative in order to prevent exaction of unjust, unreasonable and oppressive rents and rental agreements and to forestall profiteering, speculation and other disruptive practices tending to produce threats to public health, safety and general welfare; that in order to prevent uncertainty, hardship and dislocation, the provisions of this act are necessary. . . .

These words are as true today as they were in 1974 when the ETPA was enacted. For all these reasons, we urge this Committee to extend the Rent Stabilization and Rent Control Laws.

**Conclusion**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings today. We hope that the City will extend the rent laws and protect the housing of over one million families.

Respectfully Submitted:

Adriene Holder  
Judith Goldiner  
Ellen Davidson  
The Legal Aid Society  
199 Water Street, 6th Floor  
New York, NY 10038  
212-577-3339

**Testimony by New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)  
before the NYC Council Committee on Housing and Buildings:  
Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_, A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the City of New  
York, in relation to extending the rent stabilization laws; and  
Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_, A Resolution determining that a public emergency requiring rent  
control in the City of New York continues to exist and will continue to exist on and  
after April 1, 2015.**

**March 2, 2015**

Chair Williams, Council Members, staff, good morning and thank you for the opportunity to speak about Rent Control and Rent Stabilization in New York City. My name is Yekaterina Blinova and I am a Staff Attorney at the New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG), a nonprofit law office dedicated to providing free legal services in civil law matters to low-income New Yorkers. NYLAG serves immigrants, seniors, the homebound, families facing foreclosure, renters facing eviction, low-income consumers, those in need of government assistance, children in need of special education, domestic violence victims, persons with disabilities, patients with chronic illness or disease, low-wage workers, veterans, low-income members of the LGBTQ community, Holocaust survivors, as well as others in need of free legal services.

We are testifying today in support of passing both bills that are the subject of this hearing into law and thereby extending Rent Control and Rent Stabilization in the City. I hope that our testimony will serve to support the testimony of other organizations that research and provide the deplorable statistics relating to the continual loss of affordable housing in New York.

It is safe to say that New York City is a city of renters; approximately two-thirds of New York City's 3 million households rent. Yet New York City is facing a severe crisis of affordable housing for low and middle income families. Between the years 2000

and 2012, median apartment rents in New York City rose by 75 percent, while incomes remained stagnant. More than half of the City's renters are rent-burdened, spending 30 percent or more of their household income on rent, and almost 600,000 of New York City's renters are severely rent-burdened, paying 50 percent or more of their income for rent.<sup>1</sup> City shelters are housing a staggering number of individuals and families costing taxpayers as much as \$3,200 per family per month.<sup>2</sup> As of March 2014, there were over 50,000 adults in the shelter system and over 20,000 children.<sup>3</sup> There is currently an inadequate amount of affordable housing available.<sup>4</sup>

NYLAG strongly supports preservation of affordable housing. As the Council is undoubtedly aware, New York City is losing rent stabilized apartments at an alarming pace; the city lost more than 150,000 rent stabilized apartments between 1994 and 2012. At the same time, aging subsidized buildings are opting out of their subsidies.<sup>5</sup> This trend has forced entire neighborhoods to change and to gentrify. Long-time New Yorkers are forced out, affecting mostly low-income communities and communities of color.

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<sup>1</sup> NYU Furman Center, *Affordable Rental Housing Landscape Research Study*, available at <http://furmancenter.org/NYCRentalLandscape> . Accessed February 24, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> "2 Programs Aim to Move City Families from Shelters," *The New York Times*, Aug. 12, 2014, available at [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/13/nyregion/2-programs-aim-to-move-city-families-from-shelters.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/13/nyregion/2-programs-aim-to-move-city-families-from-shelters.html?_r=0) . Accessed February 27, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Office of the Comptroller , City of New York, *The Growing Gap: New York City's Housing Affordability Challenge*, April 2014, available at [http://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/Growing\\_Gap.pdf](http://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/Growing_Gap.pdf) . Accessed February 24, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> See "America's Poorest People Running Out Of Places To Live: Study," *The Huffington Post*, Feb. 16, 2012, available at [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/16/affordable-rentals\\_n\\_1282519.html?view=print&comm\\_ref=false](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/16/affordable-rentals_n_1282519.html?view=print&comm_ref=false). Accessed February 27, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Office of the Mayor, City of New York, *Housing New York: A Five-Borough, Ten-Year Plan*, pp. 22-23. Available at [http://www.nyc.gov/html/housing/assets/downloads/pdf/housing\\_plan.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/housing/assets/downloads/pdf/housing_plan.pdf). Accessed January 28, 2015.

In addition to maintaining affordable housing stock and regulating rents, I would like to emphasize that regulated housing also provides stability for low and moderate income families, as well as for neighborhoods and communities, unlike private housing where tenants have little to no protection from being evicted upon the expiration of their leases. Our clients who live in non-regulated housing have to move as often as every year, leaving their family members, friends, support services, and medical providers annually, and their children are forced to constantly change schools. We have seen this trend as particularly pervasive in Queens, where there is little rent stabilized and rent controlled housing stock already.

We also see a lot of these families unable to find alternate housing once their leases expire and, as such, they are brought to Housing Court where they are sometimes able to gain some time to move, but are often unable to find alternate housing and end up going into the overburdened shelter system.

Now that the Advantage Program has ended, Section 8 is no longer available, and the rent caps for the FEPS subsidy are unrealistically low, we have seen an increase in the number of cases filed, evictions, and people entering or trying to enter the shelter system.

In addition to causing homelessness and exacerbating the housing crisis, the lack of stabilized and affordable units creates an overwhelming number of cases filed in Housing Court, which is already overworked. Therefore, we urge the Council to pass both bills in order to preserve what is left of affordable, stable housing in NYC.

In conclusion, we strongly urge you to pass this legislation extending both rent stabilization and rent control in the City and expanding the available affordable housing options for New York City residents. We also strongly encourage the New York City

government to continue to work with the State to extend stabilization and to protect the few remaining stabilized units left.

We welcome the opportunity to further discuss or comment on these matters in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Respectfully submitted,

Yekaterina Blinova, Staff Attorney

My name is Joseph Cepeda

I'm a CASA member! I'm a BRONX Tenant!! *for 50 years.*

Stagnant income for years... I live in a building complex that has over 972 rent regulated apartments. There are three other buildings from the same landlord next to my building, and about 5 thousand people live in these rent regulated apartments. *use to be mitchel Luma.*

The truth is that many of my tenant neighbors are increasingly unable to pay their rents, because the landlords use loopholes in our rent laws to increase our rents, such as permanent MCIs—(Major Capital Improvements), vacancy bonuses, Individual Apartment Increases, and unauthorized and fraudulent fees added to our monthly rent bills. Plus sub-metering electricity, which use to be included with the rent, While cutting maintenance services as well.

All of these are incentives to harass long time tenants out; therefore rents can hit the deregulation threshold and progressively become market rate. We have lost hundreds of rent regulated apartments already! We need to Repeal vacancy deregulation laws! Now to stop the bleeding

Today our NYC council members are going to pass a resolution to be sent to Albany declaring that we're continuing in a housing emergency in New York City!! (Since the 70's)

NYC is in it's worst housing affordability crisis the city has ever seen!! Record number of NYrs are sleeping in shelters, rent regulated apartments are becoming less and less affordable for poor communities of color & Hispanics and every year we lose many regulated apartments due to vacancy deregulation. Again! We need to repeal vacancy deregulation now!!

Tenants like me have civil right to continue to live in this city with dignity!! We have the right to real affordable housing!

Tomorrow we will go to Albany with the message from today's city council resolution!! We are in a real affordable housing emergency crisis!! Our rent regulation laws must be renewed but that is not enough we need to make sure that we close the loopholes & strengthen our laws to protect tenants like me against abusive landlords and damaging loopholes. *Predatory*

TENANT POWER! TENANT POWER! Thank you!!

*CASA power*





FOR THE RECORD

■  
■ **COMMUNITY HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, INC.**  
■

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**Testimony of the Community Housing Improvement Program**

**RE: Int. 685-2015 in relation to extending the rent stabilization laws  
AND  
Res. 597-2015 determining that a public emergency continues to  
exist requiring rent control**

**March 2, 2015**

The Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP) represents 4,000 owners of rent stabilized property in New York City. Among them they provide about 400,000 units of housing to the people of this City.

CHIP objects to the passage of Int. 685-2015 and Res. 597-2015. If they pass, New York City will have continuously declared and re-declared a “temporary housing emergency” to have existed for the last 75 years. There is nothing temporary about an “emergency” that has existed for three quarters of a century. Nor is it rational to continue rent stabilization or rent control as a means to address the “emergency.” Seventy five years of rent control and stabilization have not corrected or ameliorated the housing emergency. If in that great length of time, rent control and stabilization have not worked, it is clear evidence that they cannot work and will not work.

In fact, rent control and stabilization taken together are one of the major contributors to the housing “emergency.” Rent control and stabilization deflect sufficient investment to build the amount of housing needed, and also freeze out any affordable re-development by preventing the upgrading of substandard housing and replacing it with greater numbers of housing units.

There are other significant causes of the housing emergency. Tax policy has for decades favored luxury housing over affordable housing and tax policy today continues that pattern. Also, zoning policy has not kept pace with the needs of a city with nine million residents.

These three items (rent stabilization, tax policy and zoning policy) taken together are the primary contributors to the housing emergency. Thus, the housing emergency is not an accidental or unsuspected development but an active choice by government.

We ask you to break that 75 year pattern of failure and reject this Intro and Resolution.

Katie Goldstein, Executive Director  
New York State Tenants & Neighbors

*Testimony as Prepared*

March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015

New York City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings

Re: Int 0685 and Res 0597

Good afternoon. Thank you to Chairman Williams and to the Housing and Buildings Committee members for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Katie Goldstein and I am the Executive Director for New York State Tenants & Neighbors Information Service and New York State Tenants & Neighbors Coalition, two affiliate organizations that share a common mission: to build a powerful and unified statewide organization that empowers and educates tenants; preserves affordable housing, livable neighborhoods, and diverse communities; and strengthens tenant protections. The Information Service organizes tenants in at-risk rent regulated and subsidized buildings, helping them preserve their homes as affordable housing, and organizes administrative reform campaigns. The Coalition is a 501c4 membership organization that does legislative organizing to address the underlying causes of loss of affordability. Our membership organization has over 3,000 dues-paying members.

Tenants & Neighbors organizes in rent-regulated, Mitchell-Lama, and project-based Section 8 developments citywide. In the buildings where we organize, the story is the same. Low and moderate income tenants in New York City are regularly experiencing the pressures of displacement; rents are climbing and many communities are experiencing the threat of being priced out of their homes. This year in particular is significant for affordable housing, in that the rent laws expire in June 2015. Rent regulation is the largest source of affordable housing for low-income renters across the city, and an estimated base level of 100,000 units of rent regulated housing has been lost over the past 20 years. New York City is in the worst affordability crisis the city has ever seen. Not only have we lost hundreds of thousands of affordable rent-regulated units, tenants living in rent-regulated units are increasingly unable to afford to pay the rent. Rent-regulation is the largest source of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income tenants, and is largely concentrated in historic communities of color that are now rapidly gentrifying. There are more than a million units of rent-regulated housing and 2.5 million tenants who live in rent-regulated housing. Overall, 445,000 low-income families live in rent-regulated housing. Rent-regulated apartments in New York City are concentrated in upper Manhattan, the west Bronx, western Queens, and central Brooklyn. This pattern is partly the result of vacancy destabilization and coop conversions. Between 2000 and 2012, the number of units in New York City renting for less than \$1,000 declined by over 400,000. Overall, from 2002 to 2011, there has been a 39% loss in rental apartments that low-income households can afford. The practice of speculative targeting of affordable housing has decimated affordable housing in our communities. This practice would not be possible without loopholes in the rent laws and the rent regulated homes converting to market-rate apartments through vacancy deregulation.

The findings of the Housing Vacancy Survey confirm what we already know about the stark consequences of New York City's chronic housing emergency. The median rent for rent-stabilized apartments rose from \$1,073 in 2011 to \$1,200 in 2014. As a result of rising rents and stagnant incomes, rent burdens for rent-stabilized tenants rose from 31.9 percent in 2011 to 33.1 percent in 2014.

As the tenant movement is pushing to repeal deregulation and to close loopholes that make the city a more unaffordable place for low and moderate income tenants to live, it is key that we partner with the City Council. We look forward to partnering with you to strengthen the rent laws.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today.

**URBAN JUSTICE CENTER:  
RENT STABILIZATION LAW  
EXTENSION**

ON THE RECORD

TESTIMONY

ON

THE EMERGENCY HOUSING SITUATION IN NYC

PRESENTED BEFORE:

THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

PRESENTED BY:

Sadia Rahman

March 2, 2015

Good morning. My name is Sadia Rahman and I am supervising attorney of the Community Development Project of the Urban Justice Center. We are here today to highlight the importance of the renewal of the City's Rent Stabilization Laws.

The Community Development Project formed in September 2001 to strengthen the impact of grassroots organizations in New York City's low-income and other excluded communities by winning legal cases, publishing community-driven research reports, assisting with the formation of new organizations, and providing technical and transactional assistance in support of their work towards social justice. Our work is informed by the belief that real and lasting change in low-income, urban neighborhoods is often rooted in the empowerment of grassroots, community institutions. For more than 10 years, CDP has offered legal services and support on housing issues to community non-profits, group cases, and individuals in low-income NYC neighborhood.

The Housing Practice Area of CDP has sued hundreds of landlords on behalf of thousands of NYC residents to help preserve the affordable housing stock in NYC. We bring actions against landlords to compel the removal of code violations, bring 7A actions against the most egregious building owners and file harassment cases where appropriate.

During the course of this work, we are fighting to preserve every single unit of affordable housing because EVERY SINGLE UNIT IS CRITICAL. Because of rapid gentrification, harassment, substandard housing conditions, invasive construction in occupied buildings, units are being lost at a rate which cannot be compensated by new development.

The housing stock is depleting faster than advocates can preserve it. As housing attorneys we are in buildings all over the city many nights a week taking stock of the conditions. In neighborhoods like the South Bronx, Washington Heights, Chinatown, Jackson Heights and Bushwick, we see housing lost every single day. Families are pushed out by MCI's in the Bronx. Apartments are lost by harassment and frivolous lawsuits in Washington Heights. In Chinatown

landlords take advantage of families limited English proficiency. In Bushwick, using invasive construction in occupied buildings is the technique used to push families out.

Without the NYC rent laws, this city just would not be what it is. Our city is a machine that is operated by working class folks who need a place to live: the taxi driver, the man you buy your morning paper from, the invisible woman who cleans your office, live in this housing. These units are critical for working class New Yorkers and need to be preserved through the renewal of these laws.

Thank you for your time.

Manhattan  
Legal  
Services

Legal  
Services NYC

**TESTIMONY OF LEGAL SERVICES NYC REGARDING RENEWAL OF RENT  
STABILIZATION AND RENT CONTROL LAWS  
(INTRO 685 AND RES 597)**

**New York City Council  
Committee on Housing and Buildings  
March 2, 2015**

My name is Anita Wu and I am a staff attorney at Manhattan Legal Services. I am speaking on behalf of Legal Services NYC, the National Organization of Legal Services Workers, and the Local 2320 of the UAW. Thank you for the opportunity to give testimony before the New York City Committee on Housing and Buildings.

Legal Services NYC is one of the largest providers of legal services for low income people in New York City. With five borough offices and numerous outreach sites, Legal Services NYC's mission is to provide expert legal assistance that improves the lives and communities of low income New Yorkers. Legal Services NYC annually provides legal assistance to thousands of low income clients throughout New York City. Historically, Legal Services NYC's priority areas have included housing, government benefits and family law; in recent years, Legal Services NYC has vastly expanded services in areas of need critical to our client base, including consumer issues and foreclosure prevention, unemployment, language access, disability, education, immigration, and bankruptcy.

We thank the City Council for holding this hearing pertaining to Intro 685 and Res 597. We strongly support the renewal of New York City's rent regulation laws. Rent regulation is a vital tool for the preservation of affordable housing for the city's most vulnerable low-income residents.

The results of the U.S. Census Bureau's recently released data from the 2014 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey shows that we are still in a state of housing emergency. New York City rents rose faster than inflation over the past three years. From 2011 to 2014, the median rent rose 3.4 percent to \$1,200 per month. When including utility payments, the rent rose 4.3 percent to \$1,325 per month. However, the median household income for all renters rose by only 1.1 percent, to \$41,500 from 2010 to 2013. For rent regulated tenants, the 2013 median income of rent-controlled households was merely \$29,000 and the median income for rent-stabilized households was \$40,600.

**Manhattan Legal Services**  
40 Worth Street, Suite 606, New York, NY 10013 Phone: 646-442-3100 Fax: 212-227-9798  
1 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10027 Phone: 212-348-7449 Fax: 212-348-4093  
[www.manhattanlegalservices.org](http://www.manhattanlegalservices.org)  
Peggy Earisman, Project Director

 LSC

The real-world meaning of these statistics is stark. Even the median rent stabilized household cannot, without hardship, afford a rent of more than \$1000 per month. The 500,000 rent stabilized families living below that median – who include the vast majority of the clients of Legal Services NYC – can afford much less. Were the rent laws to expire without renewal, more than half a million families would be left to the mercies of a housing market utterly unaffordable to them, with an unthinkable surge in homelessness, overcrowding and rent hardship.

The de Blasio Administration has undertaken an ambitious plan to preserve or build 200,000 affordable apartments over the next ten years. Without renewal of the rent laws, the Mayor's plan would become an impossibility; for each unit of housing constructed or preserved, dozens would be placed out of reach of low income and working families.

Our offices regularly advocate on behalf of low-income tenants who benefit from the protections afforded by rent regulation laws. The cases we handle on a daily basis illustrate how the renewal of rent regulation laws is critical to the preservation of affordable housing in New York City.

Recently, a 93-year old monolingual Chinese speaking woman who has lived in her rent-stabilized Chinatown apartment for over 35 years came to me for help with her SCRIE application. Her household income is \$770 and her rent is \$790. Because she is a rent regulated tenant, she will be able to lower her monthly rent through the SCRIE program. However, even with rent-stabilization, she will barely be able to afford her rent.

Another case involved a non-English speaking single-mother of three children who was sued in a nonpayment case. She lives in a rent-stabilized apartment. When examining the rent breakdown, we realized that the landlord was increasing her rent higher than what was legally allowed under the rent regulatory guidelines. Due to the protections under rent-stabilization, she was ultimately awarded a rent credit by the court.

These clients, and thousands of others like them, are able to survive in New York City solely thanks to rent regulation.

We thank the City Council for addressing these important issues, and look forward to working with the Committee in providing effective protections to vulnerable low income tenants.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Wu  
Manhattan Legal Services  
1 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10027  
(646) 442-3126



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ANDRES MAREZ - MURO

Address: 601 W. 156<sup>th</sup> ST

I represent: Fifth Ave Committee

Address: 621 Degraw Bklyn

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/2/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kahe Goldstein

Address: Tenants Neighbors 230 W. 27<sup>th</sup> St 4<sup>th</sup> Flr

I represent: Tenants Neighbors

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Clara Perez - Joseph

Address: 1115 Carroll St. 1B

I represent: Inquilinos Unidos / Tenants United

Address: Fifth Ave Committee 621 Degraw St.

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL** translator  
**THE CITY OF NEW YORK** fo Ana RAMOS

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Aura Mejia

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: FAC / NH

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL** need translator  
**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ANA A Ramos

Address: 2750 Home Crest Ave apt 115 ny

I represent: FAC

Address: 621 DeGraw Street

**THE COUNCIL**  
**THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LEANDRA REGUENA

Address: 35-27 21st STREET apt-47 Jackson Heights NY 11372

I represent: Make The Road NY

Address: 92-10 ROOSEVELT AVE Jackson Heights NY 11372

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: March 2, 2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ivana Maier

Address: 301 E 85<sup>th</sup> Street, Apt 9A 10028

I represent: Met Council on Housing

Address: 339 Lafayette Street, 10012

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: RAFAEL GOMEZ LUNA

Address: 505 PRESIDENT ST APT 3T

I represent: BROOKLYN NY 11213  
(IN FAVOR)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Murat Ersoy

Address: 874 43<sup>rd</sup> Street Apt. 6D

I represent: Sunset Park Brooklyn

Address: Neighbor helping Neighbors

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 3/2/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Luis Caello

Address: 68 Mauer Street

I represent: Himself

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 3-2-2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Hally Chu, Policy Analyst

Address: 1 Centre St. 19th Fl. NY NY 10007

I represent: Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 3/2/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Yekaterina Blinova (NYLAG)

Address: 7 Hanover Sq NY NY 10004

I represent: New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)

Address: 7 Hanover Sq NY NY 10004

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 685 Res. No. 397

in favor  in opposition

Date: 3/12/2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anita Wu

Address: 1 West 125th St 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10027

I represent: Legal Services NYC

Address: 40 Worth St Suite 606, New York, NY 1126

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 685-206 Res. No. 597-215

in favor  in opposition

Date: 3/2/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Joseph Condon

Address: 5 Hanover Square Suite 1605

I represent: CHIP (Community Housing Improvement Program)

Address: same

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: MARCH 2 2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ELLEN DAVIDSON

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: The Legal Aid Society

Address: 199 WATER ST

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: March 2, 2013

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Barbara Graves-Poller

Address: MFY Legal Svc, 299 B'way 10007

I represent: MFY Legal Services, Inc

Address: 299 Broadway 4<sup>th</sup> fl. NYC 10007

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 685 Res. No. 597

in favor  in opposition

Date: 3/2/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elizabeth Graumer

Address: Acting Assistant Commissioner of Research  
Evaluation

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: Dept. of Housing Preservation & Development

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 685 Res. No. 597

in favor  in opposition

Date: 3/2/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elizabeth Emma Wolfe

Address: Director, Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental

I represent: Affairs

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: ALESSANDRA MOLLI

Address: 21-03 45<sup>th</sup> AVE

I represent: MYSELF / MEMBER OF TENANTS

Address: AND NEIGHBORS.

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 3/2/15

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Joseph Cepeda

Address: 825 Baynton Ave

I represent: CASA

Address: 1512 Townsend Ave

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal of  in favor  in opposition  
Rent Stabilization Law

Date: 03-03-2015

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Marcela Mitaynes

Address: 577-39 St. 3FL BK NY 11232

I represent: Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Address: 462-36 St. 3H, BK NY 11232

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: TIM COLLINS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Terrards / Med Council

Address: 272 Broadway

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/2/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jon Furlong - ANHD

Address: 50 Broad St. NY, NY 10004

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tom Waters

Address: 90 Terrace View Ave Bx 10463

I represent: Community Service Society

Address: 105 E 22 St NYC 10010

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms