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CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING  
AND BUILDINGS

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February 25, 2022  
Start: 1:12 p.m.  
Recess: 2:36 p.m.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 1)

B E F O R E: Pierina Ana Sanchez,  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Alexa Avilès  
Charles Barron  
Tiffany Cabàn  
David M. Carr  
Eric Dinowitz  
Oswald Feliz  
Crystal Hudson  
Ari Kagan  
Gale A. Brewer

A P P E A R A N C E S

Lucy Joffe

Assistant Commissioner of Housing Policy at New  
York City's Department of Housing Preservation  
and Development

Bruno Olivares with (Interpreter Jose Jiminez)  
Resides in control rent residence in Queens

Michael McKee

Treasurer of the Tenants Political Action  
Committee

Ryan Monell

Represent the Real Estate Board of New York

Ellen Davidson

Staff Attorney at The Legal Aid Society

Chris Wildelo

New York State Association for Affordable  
Housing, NYSFAFH

Eric Lee

Director of Policy and Planning for Homeless  
Services United

Lyric Thompson

Citizen Fighting to get 421A buildings up to code

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SERGEANT BRADLEY: PC recording is up.

SERGEANT SADOWSKY: Thank you. Recording to the Cloud all set and good afternoon and welcome to today's Remote New York City Council hearing of the Committee on Housing and Buildings.

At this time would all Council Members and staff please turn on their video. To minimize disruption, please place electronic devices on vibrate or silent mode. If you wish to submit testimony, you may do so at [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov). Once again, that is [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov). Thank you for your cooperation, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Alright [GAVEL] So, I am going to read the opening statement. Thank you so much everyone for being here today and then I will turn it over to our Committee Counsel for some logistics.

So, good afternoon, I am Council Member Pierina Sanchez, Chair of the Committee on Housing and Buildings. I want to thank you all for joining this hearing entitled Oversight: The Impacts of COVID-19 on New York City Housing Vacancies and Assessing the Ongoing Need for Emergency Rental Assistance Program.

1  
2           The Committee will also hear one piece of  
3 legislation in relation to the continuation of the  
4 New York City Rent Stabilization Law of 1969. In my  
5 first hearing as Chair of this Committee, I'm glad to  
6 be addressing several issues of great importance to  
7 the many renters of the city. The continuation of  
8 rent regulation and the provision of Emergency Rental  
9 Assistance to renters most in need.

10           The laws establishing rent regulation in the city  
11 are subject to renewal every few years. In order to  
12 renew rent regulation, the City Council must pass a  
13 Resolution finding that because there is still an  
14 ongoing housing shortage, there is a continuing need  
15 for rent regulation. The City Council must also pass  
16 and the Mayor must sign a Local Law updating the  
17 expiration date for rent regulation.

18           The rent laws are currently set to expire in just  
19 a few weeks, on April 1, 2022. In order to determine  
20 whether there is a housing shortage, the city relies  
21 on the Housing and Vacancy Survey or HVS, conducted  
22 by the Department of Housing Preservation and  
23 Development and the U.S. Bureau of Census every three  
24 years.

1  
2 The last time this survey was supposed to take  
3 place was in 2020. Because that was the same year as  
4 the United States Census, the deadline to complete  
5 the survey was pushed back to 2021. And the deadline  
6 to determine whether there is a housing shortage to  
7 April 2022.

8 Of course, 2020 was an unusual and difficult year  
9 to complete the HVS survey, not only because of the  
10 Census but also because of the horrible COVID-19  
11 pandemic. Recognizing that the pandemic had created  
12 additional delays in completing the survey, Governor  
13 Hochul authorized an extension from April to July  
14 2022. The additional time is meant to allow our  
15 agency, the Housing Preservation and Development and  
16 the U.S. Census Bureau to accurately complete their  
17 analysis of the data from the 2021 survey. This  
18 extension requires a local law in order to take  
19 effect and this Committee is here in part to hear  
20 what extending legislation today.

21 With the rent laws set to expire and the  
22 expiration of the states eviction moratorium last  
23 month, the city must employ all tools at its disposal  
24 to protect vulnerable renters at this critical  
25 juncture. So, another important tool for ensuring

1  
2 that vulnerable New Yorkers remain housed in the  
3 midst of a housing crisis, is to ensure that they  
4 have access to emergency rental assistance benefits.

5 Although the funding comes from the federal  
6 government, the city can and should play a part in  
7 conducting outreach to residents and landlords and in  
8 helping eligible households to apply for benefits.

9 The city was in the midst of an affordable and  
10 eviction crisis, even before the pandemic. With  
11 COVID-19, it has created new problems in the city's  
12 housing stock and has deepened inequities that were  
13 already in place.

14 Today, the Committee will hear from the  
15 Department of Housing Preservation and Development on  
16 the current status of the 2021 Housing and Vacancy  
17 Survey, as well as efforts to meet the rental  
18 assistance needs of New York City tenants.

19 In addition, we will hear testimony from housing  
20 advocates, members of the real estate industry and  
21 other key stakeholders. I would like to thank my  
22 colleagues from the Housing and Buildings Committee  
23 for joining today, including Council Member Kagan,  
24 Council Member Barron, Council Member Carr, Council

1  
2 Member Feliz, Avilès, and Council Member Cabàn and  
3 Hudson.

4 With that, I'm now going to turn it over to our  
5 Committee Counsel Audrey Son to go over some  
6 procedural items.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks very much Chair. My  
8 name is Audrey Son, I am the Counsel to the City  
9 Council's Committee on Housing and Buildings. Before  
10 we proceed, I want to remind everyone that you will  
11 be on mute until you are called on to testify. At  
12 which point, you will be unmuted.

13 During the hearing, if Council Members would like  
14 to ask a question, please use the Zoom raise hand  
15 function and I will call on you in order. In the  
16 interest of time, we will limit Council Member  
17 questions to five minutes each.

18 We will begin by hearing testimony from the  
19 Administration, which will be followed by Council  
20 Member questions for the Administration. After the  
21 question and answer period has concluded, we will  
22 proceed to testimony from the members of the public  
23 who have registered to testify.

24 Today, the Department of Housing Preservation and  
25 Development will be represented by Assistant

1  
2 Commissioner Lucy Joffe. I will now administer the  
3 oath. After administering the oath, I will call on  
4 you to affirm for the record. Please raise your  
5 right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the  
6 whole truth and nothing but the truth before this  
7 Committee and to respond honestly to Council Member  
8 questions?

9 LUCY JOFFE: Yes.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may begin  
11 when ready.

12 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you, Housing and Buildings  
13 Committee Chair Sanchez, for the opportunity to  
14 submit testimony regarding Intro. 70. I am Lucy  
15 Joffe, Assistant Commissioner of Housing Policy at  
16 New York City's Department of Housing Preservation  
17 and Development.

18 As the Committee is well aware, rent  
19 stabilization and rent control are critical  
20 protections for the City of New York, which has been  
21 in a state of continued housing crisis since at least  
22 the 1960's. This housing crisis has stubbornly  
23 persisted over the decades through many economic  
24 cycles. Periodically, New York City must conduct a  
25 survey of the supply of housing accommodations and



1  
2 related data. The survey provides the basis for  
3 determining the net rental vacancy rate, as well as  
4 critical information relating to housing inventory,  
5 rent to income ratio, i.e. rent burden, housing and  
6 neighborhood conditions and crowding, which are  
7 relevant to the continuation of rent regulation  
8 pursuant to the Emergency Tenant Protection Act of  
9 1974.

10 For decades, the New York City Housing and  
11 Vacancy Survey NYCHVS, has been the primary source  
12 for calculating these critical data relating to the  
13 state of housing in the city. It has been conducted  
14 since 1965 and provides reliable, citywide  
15 representative data. The most recent NYCHVS was  
16 conducted in 2017, and the determination of a housing  
17 emergency was made by the City Council in 2018.

18 We believe that the conditions that underlie the  
19 housing crisis in New York City continue unabated.  
20 The severe shortage of low-cost units has persisted  
21 for decades despite significant new capital  
22 investment in the creation and preservation of  
23 affordable housing and increasing expenditures to  
24 address the challenge of homelessness. This is  
25 demonstrated by the fact that the number of

1  
2 applicants in our affordable housing lotteries  
3 continues to greatly exceed the number of available  
4 units.

5 In addition, as of the last NYCHVS, most New  
6 Yorkers were paying more than 30 percent of their  
7 income toward rent and one-third of New Yorkers were  
8 paying as much as 50 percent of their income toward  
9 rent. Rent burdens are especially severe for the  
10 lowest income New Yorkers. It also seems clear that  
11 the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated these  
12 conditions. According to the New York State Office  
13 of Temporary and Disability Assistance, who is  
14 administering the Emergency Rental Assistance  
15 Program, an overwhelming number of New York City  
16 residents applied for the program.

17 As of early February 2022, almost 250,000 New  
18 York City households applied for emergency rental  
19 assistance. Roughly 90,000 households have received  
20 relief, totaling \$1.2 billion. Based on the state's  
21 request for an additional \$1 billion in rental  
22 assistance, many more New York City residents in need  
23 have not received any rental assistance. The  
24 unemployment rate remains high, at roughly eight  
25 percent.

1  
2 The Census Bureau has performed the data  
3 collection for the NYCHVS since 1965. It not only  
4 has a unique capacity to conduct such a large survey,  
5 thousands of interviews, over a short period, less  
6 than nine months , but also provides unique data  
7 protections that protect the privacy of occupants.  
8 The NYCHVS collects data specific to New York City  
9 that is not found in other data sources. Unique  
10 features include the ability to: identify units that  
11 are vacant but not available for rent for various  
12 reasons; measure the vacancy rate within a narrower  
13 reference period; estimate the net rental vacancy  
14 rate at a high level of accuracy; provide double  
15 verification of each sampled unit identified as  
16 vacant; and parse out different types of housing,  
17 such as public housing, among others.

18 No other Census Bureau survey has these features,  
19 which are necessary and appropriate for evaluating  
20 New York City's unique housing market. Due to the  
21 2020 decennial census, we needed a one-year extension  
22 from the State Legislature and the Council allowing  
23 us to conduct the NYCHVS in 2021 not 2020.  
24 Unfortunately, the Census Bureau experienced delays  
25 due to COVID-19 and staffing to conduct the survey.

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The Census Bureau has completed field work and the data should be ready within the next few months. In anticipation of the delay, however, the State Legislature extended by three months the deadline for any declaration of a housing emergency under the Local Emergency Housing Rent Control Act LEHRCA. Consistent with the State Legislature's action, Intro. 70 adjusts the present expiration date of the Rent Stabilization Law of 1969, so as to enable the city to gather the findings which would allow the Council to assess whether there is a continued state of emergency in 2022 based on the updated NYCHVS findings.

Because the NYCHVS continues to be the most accurate and comprehensive source of information on the state of New York City's housing stock, the Administration continues to believe that this information is important for the Council to consider. The Administration therefore supports this legislation to extend the expiration date of rent stabilization by three months, thereby conforming to the State Legislature's adjustment of the date by which the formal determination of a housing emergency may be made following a survey.

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2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you Assistant  
3 Commissioner, is that the end of your testimony?

4 LUCY JOFFE: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay. Alright, well thank  
6 you. Thank you so much for testifying. So, we'll  
7 now move to questions. I'm going to start with a few  
8 questions and then I'll defer to my colleagues to  
9 also ask additional questions.

10 So, thank you so much for your testimony  
11 Assistant Commissioner Joffe and good to see you  
12 again in this new capacity. So, I want to start with  
13 just understanding exactly what stage the Housing  
14 Vacancy Survey is in now. As you have expressed and  
15 as we all understand, the Housing Vacancy Survey is  
16 critical and the integrity of the Housing Vacancy  
17 Survey is critical so that we can be sure to find the  
18 correct findings right.

19 So, can you tell us exactly what stage is the HVS  
20 in now and if Intro. Number 70 does not pass prior to  
21 April 1, 2022, what are the consequences?

22 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you for that question. So, as  
23 I mentioned, the Census Bureau experienced some  
24 delays at the beginning of their field period and  
25 that has caused delays that require us to come to ask

1  
2 for this three month extension. The field period has  
3 concluded and the Census Bureau is finishing their  
4 work to process the data and conduct the necessary  
5 reviews, so that that data may be made public.

6 Once that is complete, then we can return to the  
7 Council, which we expect to do within the next few  
8 months to share with you as we have done every cycle,  
9 what we call the select initial findings. And the  
10 data that is critical for you all to have in order to  
11 evaluate whether the city continues to be in a state  
12 of housing emergency. If the deadline is not  
13 extended, we will not be able to present these  
14 findings in time for you all to make this necessary  
15 determination.

16 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you and if we do not  
17 make that determination, what happens? Does anything  
18 happen to rent stabilization in the City of New York?

19 LUCY JOFFE: So, I'm not in the best position to  
20 advise the Council on what would happen under these  
21 unique circumstances but if at some point the city is  
22 not in a state of housing emergency and that would  
23 have lapsed, then rent regulation would no longer  
24 have a basis and so, we would not have rent  
25 regulation.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you Commissioner,  
3 Assistant Commissioner. I give you a promotion  
4 there. So, next, can you just help us understand  
5 exactly what happened? What was the field team  
6 experiencing? How did COVID-19 impact the work on  
7 the field?

8 LUCY JOFFE: So, it's important for us to  
9 consider the fact that the NYCHVS, one of the very  
10 unique features of it is that it is an in person  
11 survey through which we collect a lot of data. So,  
12 it's an extended in person interview and so, our team  
13 took extensive precautions to prepare the field staff  
14 to be able to conduct those interviews in a way that  
15 we would know that all New Yorkers would be safe.  
16 That field representatives would be safe but if you  
17 know, it's been some time but if we can remember back  
18 to what things felt like in late winter of 2021, we  
19 were deep in the throes of another wave of COVID and  
20 so, hiring enough staff and getting them out into the  
21 field was a challenge. As well as just so much had  
22 to – you know, things had to be – new documents were  
23 prepared, new trainings were put up. All of those  
24 things caused delays for Census and having enough  
25 field staff to get the field team and field work up

1  
2 and going to conduct as many interviews, to conduct  
3 the full field period. They were able to catch up  
4 but it caused some delays at the beginning of the  
5 process.

6 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great, thank you and I  
7 understand there's a COVID-19 module that has been  
8 added to the survey. What is that exactly? What are  
9 we asking and what do we hope to learn?

10 LUCY JOFFE: We are quite proud that despite all  
11 of the challenges that were in front of the team,  
12 facing the team and the Census Bureau in 2020 and  
13 2021, that we were able to add as you mentioned this  
14 COVID module. So, there's a series of questions that  
15 we were able to ask every respondent that were  
16 specific to their experience during COVID. Which is  
17 going to give us unique insight into their financial  
18 circumstances, their contributing to but not limited  
19 to housing. Related to their housing situation and  
20 housing instability. Their work situations,  
21 childcare provisions, their childcare circumstances.  
22 It is going to be a very unique opportunity to have  
23 this level of data I think both for New York City  
24 policy makers, New York City researchers, everyone  
25



1  
2 who has sort of a stake in what goes on in New York  
3 City but also on the national level.

4 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. So, how many  
5 households would be affected by the results of the  
6 HVS?

7 LUCY JOFFE: Well, one could argue that the HVS  
8 is part of the fabric of the city and every New  
9 Yorker is – the HVS and the data that we collect is  
10 relevant to how we serve every single New Yorker. I  
11 will say that specifically, that about two-thirds of  
12 our entire housing stock are rentals and about one  
13 million of those homes are currently rent stabilized.

14 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great, thank you so much  
15 and do you have a sense of how many property owners  
16 we are talking about in these one million rent  
17 stabilized apartments, homes?

18 LUCY JOFFE: No, we don't have that information  
19 unfortunately.

20 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Okay, so now some  
21 specific questions that maybe where, you know we  
22 don't have the information yet, the data yet for this  
23 Housing Vacancy Survey of course. But maybe looking  
24 back at 2017 and what we've learned in the past.

1  
2 So, does the Housing Vacancy Survey keep track of  
3 property owners that are warehousing vacant units or  
4 underutilization of otherwise viable apartments?

5 LUCY JOFFE: So, it is premature for me to speak  
6 to what our findings, the findings we will get are.  
7 As you said and as I have noted, we don't yet have  
8 the data and that's why we're here asking for the  
9 three month extension. And so, when we come back in  
10 several months, we will be in a better position to  
11 know and to share what information that we have  
12 gleaned from the survey.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you but in terms of  
14 the questions being asked, are we asking questions  
15 that are going to help us understand the reasons for  
16 the vacancies?

17 LUCY JOFFE: Yes, we generally do get  
18 information. Not just whether our unit is vacant but  
19 we have - we are able to glean some understanding as  
20 to why units are vacant.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great and do we reach that  
22 level of granularity of warehousing or maintenance  
23 issues etc.?

24 LUCY JOFFE: There is a category of the HVS  
25 that's called Vacant Not Available. And so, that

1  
2 generally would include the categories that you're  
3 talking about.

4 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay, but beyond Vacant Not  
5 Available, do we have any further information beneath  
6 that?

7 LUCY JOFFE: Yes. And so, there is as I said, I  
8 mean this will depend in part on Census disclosure  
9 review and what types of information that we get but  
10 we do – that is one of the unique features of the  
11 Housing and Vacancy Survey that is different from all  
12 other surveys of this kind is that we do get a unique  
13 level of granularity about the quality of the stock.  
14 The not just whether a unit is vacant but why it is  
15 vacant. And so, we do expect to have really rich  
16 data on the questions that you're talking about.

17 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you and can you share  
18 with us Vacant Not Available rates from the 2017  
19 analysis?

20 LUCY JOFFE: I believe that we can pull that up,  
21 yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay, so you will follow-up  
23 with us on that?

24 LUCY JOFFE: Yup.  
25

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay, wonderful. Okay, so  
3 I'm going to pause there. I have some questions  
4 around the ERAP program specifically but I do want to  
5 open the floor to my colleagues who may have  
6 questions for just a sec. I saw that Council Member  
7 Barron had his hand up a little while ago. So,  
8 Council Member Barron, can you take the floor?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you very much Madam  
10 Chair and welcome and congratulations. Around this  
11 Housing Vacancy Survey, you mentioned in your  
12 testimony homelessness. And to me that's a priority  
13 issue for me, so I wanted to know several things.

14 One, do you have a count, the latest count of the  
15 homeless, whether they're in shelters or on the  
16 streets or wherever they may be, that count? Number  
17 Two, does HPD and on de Blasio, he was talking ten  
18 percent for all new housing for the homeless but we  
19 needed it at 30 percent, so that we can eradicate  
20 homelessness or at least put a real dent in it. So,  
21 do you have any goals for all new housing coming in  
22 and whether those levels will be high enough within  
23 the next ten years or whatever an amount of years, so  
24 that we can put a real dent in the homelessness?

1  
2 And then, the Emergency Rental Assistance Program  
3 has really, really been a disappointment. All the  
4 money that we put in for the state you know on that,  
5 just that challenges between the landlord and the  
6 tenant you know when in fact, the landlords benefit  
7 because it's not like the tenants are getting a check  
8 and then they have to pay the landlord. The landlord  
9 is getting all of it, so why it became such a  
10 challenge just amazes me and how much of the money is  
11 out? And how much impact has it had?

12 LUCY JOFFE: So, thank you. There are a number  
13 of important questions and points in what you just  
14 shared and certainly the Administration and HPD  
15 shares your concerns about the wide ranging effects  
16 of COVID-19 on so many different New Yorkers in many  
17 different ways. And I'll attempt to get to as many  
18 of the things that I think you brought up as I can.

19 I will note that DSS actually, the Department of  
20 Social Services is responsible for the homelessness  
21 count, so we can coordinate with them but I don't  
22 have those numbers here today. That is something  
23 that happens out of a different agency but  
24 significantly, the Housing and Vacancy Survey, I've  
25 talked about the ways in which it is unique compared

1  
2 to a lot of the other survey products out there. And  
3 one of the things that we think is really important  
4 and really critical to the issues that you were  
5 raising is, it will give us unique insight. Both  
6 because of the data we've always collected and  
7 through the special COVID module that we were talking  
8 about earlier on the causes of housing instability.

9 And that is really significant for our policy  
10 making. How we think about, how we serve New  
11 Yorkers, including people who are homeless and/or at  
12 risk of homelessness. So, that is you know,  
13 something that we think will add to our ability to  
14 better serve New Yorkers. To be better prepared for  
15 crisis and to help us navigate the recovery. And in  
16 particular, we have greatly expanded and this was a  
17 priority in Where We Live NYC, to make sure that we  
18 really have an understanding of how housing and  
19 stability in the various factors at play impact  
20 demographic groups differently.

21 And this is really important to how we think  
22 about building an equitable recovery. And so, this  
23 is something that is also unique to the HVS, how we  
24 will be able to glean that data. So, all of this I  
25 sit here talking about the data that I'm looking

1  
2 forward to being able to come back and share with  
3 you, if we can get this extension, which we need to  
4 allow us that extra time.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right, but in all due  
6 honesty, all that you said, you should have had data  
7 already in the past on the homeless numbers. There  
8 is no way you can talk about housing emergency and  
9 vacancy and all of that and say, another agency has  
10 the numbers. We don't have them. That's a problem.  
11 That's a problem because those numbers, if you're  
12 making goals to deal with housing emergency, which  
13 includes homelessness, then certainly if you say  
14 there's 80,000 families and individuals are homeless  
15 and if we do 30 percent on the new homes, we'll get  
16 60,000. I mean, you got to have those numbers. It's  
17 not something that's responsible for another agency  
18 and not your agency. There has to be some  
19 communication with those numbers if you're serious  
20 about dealing with homelessness.

21 LUCY JOFFE: Yes, in our coordination both with  
22 DSS, with MOPT is really important and something that  
23 we're committed to working on. I apologize, I just  
24 didn't bring the numbers with me today but we will  
25 certainly circle back with that detail as well. And

1  
2 I did want to note that the homeless set aside, which  
3 you mentioned is up to 15 percent now. But we look  
4 forward to continuing to work with -

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: 15 percent is  
6 unacceptable. If we are serious, come on now. There  
7 are \$100 billion of capital money that the city has  
8 for the next ten years. 15 percent is unconscionable  
9 and unacceptable. We had to fight to get to 15  
10 percent. It needs to be 30, twice as much if we're  
11 serious. Thank you Madam Chair.

12 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you Council Member. We look  
13 forward to having continued conversations over this  
14 as well and for the usefulness of this data for these  
15 conversations moving forward.

16 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great, thank you so much  
17 Council Member Barron. I now want to call on Council  
18 Member Hudson.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Hi there. Thank you  
20 Chair Sanchez. I have a few questions. So, I guess  
21 I can just go one by one or you want me to say them  
22 all and you can - what's your preference?

23 LUCY JOFFE: We can go - let's go one by one and  
24 I'll have a better shot at it but I'm happy if a few  
25



1  
2 of them end up together. I'll do my best. We can  
3 always circle back.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Alright, cool. Let's go  
5 one by one. So, my first question is, does the HVS  
6 account for units currently on the market or rented  
7 out that are in a state of extreme disrepair, like  
8 excessive Class C violations? And if so, are these  
9 taken into account when the city determines if  
10 there's a housing shortage?

11 LUCY JOFFE: There has always been a group of  
12 units that are determined to be uninhabitable and  
13 those are not considered vacant.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Okay, thank you. What's  
15 the general understanding for why units are  
16 historically vacant and for those that are in a state  
17 of disrepair, is there a program for HPD to intervene  
18 and get them back up to codes, so we can get them on  
19 the market?

20 LUCY JOFFE: Oh, yes, well I'm here today to  
21 primarily focused on the data side of this. There  
22 are a number of HPD programs, which are geared toward  
23 both helping owners and sometimes forcing owners to  
24 better comply with their obligations as you describe.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Okay, we can follow-up on  
3 that one. As vacancies skyrocketed during the  
4 pandemic and news reports indicate that that trend  
5 has quickly turned around in the last few months, does  
6 the HVS take into account this anomaly or adjust for  
7 the likely trend of decreased vacancies particularly  
8 in Manhattan?

9 LUCY JOFFE: The NYCHVS is a snapshot in time, so  
10 essentially it captures the vacancy during the field  
11 work period. That being said, it is the – as I  
12 spoken about, the unique aspects of the NYCHVS and  
13 it's actually, their the only really uniquely  
14 represents – it's not uniquely, it is a fully  
15 represented statistic really significant source of  
16 data and ensures that we are capturing all parts of  
17 the market. Whether it's by borough, various  
18 communities that are not always well represented and  
19 therefore it's different from some of the other  
20 reports that we may have heard about, informal  
21 surveys in the news.

22 And so, we therefore are really confident that at  
23 the time that it is measuring the vacancy rate, that  
24 it is fully capturing what the true picture of what's  
25 going on.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Okay, thank you,  
3 appreciate it.

4 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much Council  
6 Member Hudson. Council Member Feliz.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Good afternoon everyone.

8 I'm Council Member Oswald Feliz. Thank you

9 Chairwoman Pierina Sanchez for organizing this

10 hearing on this very important topic. I represent

11 the 15<sup>th</sup> Council District in the Bronx and this is

12 extremely important to me and the residents that I

13 represent given that we have so many rent stabilized

14 apartments in the district that I proudly represent.

15 Just one question, super brief, I'm looking very

16 forward to reviewing the data once the new survey is

17 completed but I'm wondering if you could provide a

18 brief summary of the data that was obtained last time

19 that the survey was conducted a few years ago?

20 LUCY JOFFE: So, yes, I am very in my 2021

21 mindset and here very focused on making sure that we

22 all can get this three month extension but if sort of

23 go back pre-COVID, which feels so long ago, the 2017

24 NYCHVS, as we've talked about publicly did find that

25 the vacancy rate was well below five percent. It was

1  
2 between three and four percent, 3.65 about. Rent  
3 burden rates were quite high, both folks who were  
4 rent burdened and even severely rent burdened. That  
5 was of concerning levels. And so, that information  
6 among others, which we have sort of a whole list of  
7 what we call the select initial findings and that's  
8 what come present every year. That's all available  
9 on our website. We can make that public but I think  
10 sort of the things that we're most often asked about  
11 are the vacancy rate levels of rent burden and levels  
12 of rent burden crowding, housing quality, etc..

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Okay, and another  
14 question. How do we define a household that's  
15 considered severely rent burdened?

16 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you for that question. A  
17 household is severely rent burdened if they're paying  
18 more than 50 percent of their income toward rent.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Okay and last time that  
20 the survey was conducted, how severely rent burdened  
21 were the families that were surveyed?

22 LUCY JOFFE: You mean how many families were  
23 severely rent burdened or how much was their rent  
24 burden if they were over the 50 percent threshold?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Both.

1  
2 LUCY JOFFE: So, what I can say is that about  
3 half the population as of 2017, were rent burdened  
4 and about one-third were severely rent burdened.

5 Once we start talking about like what the actual  
6 levels of rent burden are, we're getting into sort of  
7 a level of detailing granularity, which might be  
8 easier if I follow up with you with some charts or  
9 data, if that would be okay?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Okay, great, yeah. No  
11 more question, thank you so much.

12 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much Council  
14 Member Feliz. I now want to turn it to Council  
15 Member Avilès.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: Thank you Chair Sanchez  
17 and thank you everyone for being here today. I have  
18 a few simple questions I guess. What is the response  
19 rate that you're generally getting for the HVS  
20 Survey?

21 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you for that question. It's  
22 actually something that we're actually quite proud  
23 about. The response rate historically for the NYCHVS  
24 is quite high and historically been around 80  
25 percent, which is the result of a lot of outreach,

1  
2 careful sort of planning and coordination to ensure  
3 that we are reaching a lot of hard to reach  
4 communities, including our language access work.  
5 Which was a huge priority for us this year,  
6 especially in the lead up to 2020 and 2021, when  
7 there was so much discussions about concerns with the  
8 Census. This is a huge priority for our team and our  
9 work with the Census Bureau and it is – we have  
10 become a model for the Census Bureau's work and have  
11 gotten questions from folks around the country and  
12 actually in Europe about how we approached some of  
13 this work.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: And when you break that I  
15 guess in terms of numbers, what's the actual quantity  
16 of surveys? The scope in terms of actual numbers and  
17 distribution I guess across the five boroughs.

18 LUCY JOFFE: So, as we have talked about, we  
19 don't yet have the data, which is why I'm here asking  
20 for this extension. And so, I will be able to speak  
21 to that better when we come back but right now, we  
22 need the three month extension, so that the Census  
23 Bureau can finish the work. And then we'll have the  
24 data and be able to share with you that level of  
25 detail.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: Got it and in terms of  
3 what's being tracked, is there also looking at losses  
4 of rent stabilized units?

5 LUCY JOFFE: Yes, that is a core function of the  
6 survey.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: And who in particular  
8 determines that the criteria of the actual, the  
9 vacancy rate is what determines whether a rent  
10 stabilization exists in our city or that it's a  
11 crisis? Because it seems like a quite narrow view of  
12 the crisis that we're actually confronted with.

13 LUCY JOFFE: So, largely as we've talked about,  
14 we're here sort of in the under the umbrella of state  
15 law requirements, which dictate our responsibilities.  
16 Dictate our obligation to conduct this survey and the  
17 circumstances under which we're coming back to all of  
18 you. And we will share these findings and say, here  
19 is what we have determined. And then from there, the  
20 Council's obligation is to determine whether or not  
21 we continue to be in a state of emergency. These  
22 legal obligations are sort of laid out in a series of  
23 largely state statutes.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: Got it. Thank you, thank  
25 you so much. I'm obviously in support of extending

1  
2 the deadline for this important piece of work. I  
3 would be remiss if I didn't say that you know, sadly  
4 we have been left with only two programs to protect  
5 some of our most vulnerable New Yorkers. That also  
6 includes public housing and all is a result of you  
7 know commodification of housing, which is going to  
8 keep us in a crisis. And we just deeply need to  
9 expand social housing for all of our communities  
10 because clearly, we are not stepping up to the job.  
11 But thank you for the work you're doing and this is  
12 an important piece of stock for our city.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much Council  
14 Member. Just a quick follow-up Assistant  
15 Commissioner. So, just on the question of the total  
16 number, understanding that we're getting an  
17 extension, so you can continue this survey, but  
18 looking at 2017 numbers, so we had about three and a  
19 half million households in New York City. About one  
20 million of those are rent regulated.

21 So, what was, if you can tell us, what was the  
22 sampling rate then? What was the end, what was the  
23 sample size for that survey?

24 LUCY JOFFE: In 2017?

25 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yes.



1  
2 LUCY JOFFE: So, we work closely with the – we  
3 actually have a team of survey methodologists here at  
4 HPD and a team of – there's a team of survey  
5 methodologists at the Census Bureau who work to give  
6 us an estimate of what is the required number to  
7 ensure that we are – our results will be  
8 statistically significant and that we are ensuring  
9 that we are representing all New York City  
10 communities. In 2017, our end if you will, was  
11 roughly 15,000.

12 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Thank you so much.  
13 Alright, I'm going to turn it over to Council Member  
14 Brewer.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you very much Chair  
16 Sanchez and I didn't hear the whole thing because I  
17 had another Committee but this is my question, which  
18 is more general. First of all, your survey has kept  
19 New York City going over the years, since I've been  
20 around for a long time. I certainly know that five  
21 percent is our scary number and we want to keep it  
22 and certainly extension.

23 But the biggest issue in New York of course is  
24 how do we make it affordable? We're a very  
25 unaffordable city and so, I'm just wondering, if even

1  
2 though you are doing the data and you have data  
3 analytics and that's what you're focusing on. I'm  
4 just trying as a Council Member and having been  
5 around for a while to figure out how we can be less  
6 siloed in our city because everything is so siloed.

7       And so one of my questions is, you know you now  
8 know if there are some ways in addition to you know  
9 SCRIE and other kinds of programs that help, what in  
10 the world are we going to do? You know, Rent  
11 Guidelines Board aside, because that's another topic.  
12 Do you see, are you willing to have this further  
13 discussion about, are there ways that we can help  
14 make our city more affordable? And I know that's a  
15 general kind of question but we've got to think about  
16 this as opposed to everybody in a silo and doing  
17 their job excellently. There's another discussion  
18 here. And so, I'm just wondering if that comes up as  
19 a result of your data. If there's some you know, I  
20 know that that's you know a goal of this  
21 Administration, goal of the City Council but to be  
22 honest with you, it never happens. So, I'm just  
23 wondering if that's something that you know, you see  
24 the overcrowding. You see the large numbers of  
25 people paying more than 50 percent of their rent.

1  
2 Are their other programs that we should be  
3 considering that would address some of these issues?  
4 SCRIE is great. Guess what? Gazillions of people  
5 don't apply for it. I never quite understand it,  
6 etc., and there may be other, maybe we need more  
7 EITC, which the Mayor and the Speaker have suggested.  
8 But it never seems to get to all the people who  
9 should be getting it etc.. So, you get my question.  
10 I'm just wondering how do we go beyond your amazing  
11 data to help get rid of some of this extremely costly  
12 city?

13 LUCY JOFFE: So, thank you for that question.  
14 There is a lot there and since I am a housing policy  
15 person, I probably could sit here and want to talk  
16 about this for long periods of time. But yes, we  
17 continue to do this because we believe there are,  
18 there is much work to do. And I've talked throughout  
19 this hearing so far about in sort of glowing terms  
20 about the data that we collect through the housing  
21 and vacancy survey and it is because I do believe  
22 that there is both the data that we collect for the  
23 survey that is required to meet our statutory  
24 obligations. And so, as we said, I'm here to ask for  
25 that extra three month extension.

1  
2 But there is other data available as well that is  
3 really critical and going to give us a unique level  
4 of insight into what we all you know are seeing every  
5 day but sort of grounded in the data of what New  
6 Yorkers experienced specifically during 2021 and the  
7 pandemic, as well as the housing instability that  
8 we're seeing generally and it is a priority.

9 Part of the reason why some of my answers are  
10 strained to cover some of the new data and important  
11 data that we have, is because it's hard for me to not  
12 take that opportunity to make sure everyone knows  
13 about the Housing and Vacancy Survey. As this very  
14 rich data source that is really important for  
15 researchers, policy makers, all of us to be engaging  
16 around. So, our continued hope is that if we can get  
17 this extension, if we can come back to you in a few  
18 months with more data and then over the next year  
19 we're going to continue processing this data and  
20 releasing these findings that we can all use to  
21 continue towards the very ends you're talking about.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So, I'm sure you'll get  
23 the extension. What I'm not sure of is the agencies  
24 will work together to figure out how to address some  
25 of the challenges. So, if you get the extension,

1  
2 will you promise that these agencies will work  
3 together?

4 LUCY JOFFE: Yes, we look forward to working with  
5 the other agencies and with you all on these  
6 problems.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent, thank you.  
9 Thank you so much Councilwoman. And Assistant  
10 Commissioner, just to sort of follow-up on that line,  
11 can you tell us about how the Housing Vacancy Survey  
12 in addition to you know helping us determine that  
13 there is still a state of emergency and all of that?  
14 How does the city, not just HPD, across agencies, how  
15 does the city use this information to inform you know  
16 the housing plan essentially in fighting  
17 homelessness, as Council Member Barron has raised?

18 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you for that question. So,  
19 HPD has worked historically and with even more  
20 earnest towards this 2021 NYCHVS, with a number of  
21 agencies across the city. So, a lot of agencies  
22 helped inform what question were going to be asked.  
23 What information was critical to know to understand  
24 their work.

1  
2 Those partnerships continued through both in the  
3 sort of planning, the brainstorming phase and they  
4 will, as we get the data and use phase, there's a lot  
5 of ways that we use the data after, that we've  
6 already been working with other agencies. The  
7 Department, DCWP, Department of Consumer Worker  
8 Protection, sorry the name change happened a while  
9 ago but I still struggle with it a little bit. The  
10 Office of Financial Empowerment, Department of City  
11 Planning, these are all agencies that we work really  
12 closely with using this data and the Mayor's Office  
13 for Opportunity.

14 So, these are all partners that have helped  
15 inform the information that we're collecting. Inform  
16 the process and who we work with using the data  
17 after. And I'll also say that even within HPD, this  
18 is the first full cycle that the survey is - or the  
19 team that leads the work on the survey is within the  
20 Office of Policy and Strategy, right. And that's not  
21 an accident that I'm the person here presenting to  
22 you all because it is really critical to us this is  
23 not just data that we collect and put on a shelf but  
24 data that is drives our policy making, drives how we  
25 all approach these attractable problems.

1  
2 And so, this is of huge importance to us and part  
3 of the reason why I am nervous about you know to be  
4 here today and ensure we have this extension because  
5 it is so critical. But also really confident that if  
6 we get this extension, that we will be back within a  
7 few months and ready to work with you all.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent. Thank you.  
9 Thank you so much Assistant Commissioner. Now, just  
10 a few questions on the ERAP side and then unless my  
11 colleagues have any additional questions, we'll thank  
12 you for your time.

13 So, just moving to the ERAP side, can you refresh  
14 for us how much money has been allocated to New York  
15 City? How much money or how many applications do we  
16 still have pending and do we have an estimate of how  
17 much that would cost in terms of what New York City  
18 specifically needs from the state in order to fund  
19 ERAP?

20 LUCY JOFFE: So, I want to start by discussing  
21 ERAP as a state program that was administered by the  
22 New York State Office of Temporary and Disability  
23 Assistance, as you may know. So, HPD in support of  
24 DSS and working with MOPT, provided a lot of support  
25 in terms of outreach to New York to make sure that

1  
2 New Yorkers knew about the program, knew about their  
3 rights and applied for the program. But did not  
4 administer our own program.

5 So, all of the federal funds that were allocated  
6 to New York State overall, went through the New York  
7 State program. HPD, I hope I'm getting all the parts  
8 of your question but HPD sent I think mailers to  
9 about 280,000 landlords including small landlords.  
10 Also, some follow-up emails. We emailed ERAP  
11 materials to over 60,000 partners, property managers,  
12 Section 8 participants and landlords, Mitchell Lama  
13 Property Managers. We have our mobile van that  
14 distributed ERAP flyers. We distributed flyers to  
15 tenants and landlords during building visits. We  
16 worked with DSS to distribute ERAP flyers at Tenant  
17 Resource Fairs. We put out information through our  
18 website and the New York City Housing Resource  
19 Portal. And we also created a flyer to work with our  
20 CBO partners to make sure that landlords have - know  
21 about the additional resources that are available  
22 beyond ERAP. Like the Homeowner Help Desk, the  
23 Landlord Ambassador Program and our various  
24 Preservation Programs. And finally, we promoted ERAP  
25 across HP social media channels.



1  
2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great, thank you. So, is  
3 it correct to say that you do not, HPD does not have  
4 and the City of New York does not have the numbers of  
5 – a number of applicants that were granted in New  
6 York City and the amount of relief that was received  
7 in terms of number of applicants?

8 LUCY JOFFE: So, OTDA has put out some publicly  
9 available information on this and that's what we also  
10 have. So, my understanding is that roughly 90,000  
11 households have received – New York City households  
12 have received rent relief in totaling \$1.2 billion.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: And how many applied?

14 LUCY JOFFE: As of early February 250,000.

15 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: 250,000, thank you. And we  
16 don't have a sense of how much – what the financial  
17 gap is in terms of what the City of New York needs to  
18 fund those additional 160,000 applications?

19 LUCY JOFFE: I don't have that data in terms of  
20 what the additional – those who applied and have not  
21 – did not get for whatever reason, what the amount  
22 that they need is. And I also don't know you know  
23 the extent of the number of households that are  
24 actually truly in need. Obviously, we recognize that  
25 the need is quite great. We will also hope to get

1  
2 helpful insights from the HVS when we have this data.  
3 But to your specific question, no, we don't have a  
4 source for that information that you're asking about.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: No, absolutely and I know  
6 just from at least my neighborhood in District 14  
7 that there are so many people that still don't know  
8 about ERAP. So, 250,000 applications is a vast  
9 representation of what the need is.

10 And one final question, not sure if you'll have  
11 this information but do you know how New York State,  
12 New York City might compare to other states in the  
13 country, with respect to number of applications filed  
14 versus financial aid received? Are we an outlier in  
15 any way?

16 LUCY JOFFE: So, what I can say is that New York  
17 State by virtue of being on the larger end  
18 population-wise and because of the extent of our  
19 need, we received one of the larger applications or  
20 larger grants. But it would, I couldn't speak really  
21 to other states and how their programs have  
22 functioned or the details of that.

23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. Okay, well thank  
24 you so much. I just want to check in. If any of my  
25

1  
2 colleagues have any additional questions before we  
3 let go of the Assistant Commissioner.

4 Okay, well, Assistant Commissioner, thank you so  
5 much for your time. We hope that you know someone  
6 can stay and listen in on the testimonies and  
7 questions for the other panelists we have. But I  
8 want to thank you for your time this afternoon.

9 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great, so now we will be  
11 moving to public testimony and I am going to call on  
12 our Committee Counsel Audrey Son to let us know who  
13 is first to speak.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks so much Chair. We do  
15 have one registered member of the public who will be  
16 utilizing a translator. So, we'll call on that  
17 individual to testify first. So, first, we will hear  
18 from Bruno Olivares and afterwards, we will hear from  
19 Mike McKee. And we will periodically call on names  
20 that are on deck, so when you hear your name, please  
21 be prepared to click on the prompt to unmute.

22 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you Audrey. Mr.  
23 Bruno, Senior Bruno?

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

25 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Are you ready?

1  
2 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
3 49:42].

4 INTERPRETER: Sorry. He says, I apologize, yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
6 49:53-49:57].

7 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
8 49:58-49:59].

9 INTERPRETER: This form is fine. Can it be done  
10 like this, this way?

11 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
12 50:05]. Thank you. Audrey, how should we handle the  
13 Administration of the oath via the translator as  
14 well?

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oh, there is no oath for  
16 members of the public.

17 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it, okay, perfect.  
18 [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 50:17-50:19].

19 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
20 50:20-50:30].

21 INTERPRETER: My name is Bruno Olivares, I live  
22 in Queens, part of the section that has controlled  
23 rent. Part of the member board. Hello?

24 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
25 50:47-50:52].

1  
2 INTERPRETER: One second, can I give Bruno  
3 instructions briefly for the consecutive translation?  
4 [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 51:01-51:12].

5 BRUNO OLIVARES: Okay, yes.

6 INTERPRETER: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 51:13].

7 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
8 51:20-51:29].

9 INTERPRETER: I've lived in this neighborhood for  
10 25 years. I've raised both my daughters and this is  
11 my neighborhood in Jackson Heights.

12 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
13 51:39-51:47].

14 INTERPRETER: I'm here because like thousands of  
15 other people, the pandemic has affected me greatly  
16 and brought me down close to ruin.

17 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
18 51:57-52:06].

19 INTERPRETER: Because my apartment is rent  
20 controlled, this has granted me a bit of stability  
21 against the increases of rent over time.

22 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
23 52:18-52:22].

24 INTERPRETER: And because of that, I've been able  
25 to stay in my apartment year after year.

1  
2 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
3 52:28-52:34].

4 INTERPRETER: And COVID, the pandemic, has ruined  
5 my stability and because of COVID, I haven't had  
6 work.

7 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
8 52:43-52:45].

9 INTERPRETER: What began to happen was the debt  
10 for the rent.

11 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
12 52:53-53:03].

13 INTERPRETER: Since I started to owe rent, the  
14 landlord started sending me letters and notifications  
15 every 14-days about paying the rent.

16 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
17 53:16-53:31].

18 INTERPRETER: I've lived with this stress  
19 throughout this situation, where I felt that I had to  
20 pay the entire balance in 14-days. The stress has  
21 affected my physical health and mental health as  
22 well.

23 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
24 53:49-53:57].  
25

1  
2 INTERPRETER: The moment I learned about the  
3 existence of the program at ERAP, I applied because I  
4 saw no other way of helping my rent situation.

5 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
6 54:09-54:11].

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

8 INTERPRETER: And to avoid being evicted.

9 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
10 54:16-54:23].

11 INTERPRETER: A week later, I discovered that the  
12 funds have been — are depleted and it would affect my  
13 application.

14 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
15 54:36-54:44].

16 INTERPRETER: I'm still waiting for a response  
17 and the people — and waiting for receiving the aid  
18 that I need.

19 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
20 54:55-55:06].

21 INTERPRETER: I can't even think of a way to get  
22 out of this debt, especially with the prices of rent  
23 in other apartments, which are out of control in this  
24 market.

1  
2 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
3 55:18-55:25].

4 INTERPRETER: Where some apartments are over  
5 \$2,400 without work and help, I would end up in the  
6 streets.

7 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
8 55:35-55:45].

9 INTERPRETER: I ask for a continuation of the  
10 rent protections in stabilized apartments, for  
11 stabilized apartment and if possible, protections for  
12 my neighbors.

13 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
14 55:59-56:04].

15 INTERPRETER: We're still in a crisis and we  
16 haven't recovered completely on the consequences that  
17 COVID brought us.

18 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
19 56:14-56:28].

20 INTERPRETER: It's important to have additional  
21 funds to avoid these types of evictions.  
22 Unfortunately in my case, the landlord has already  
23 brought this to court. And this would help avoid  
24 cases like mine.



1  
2 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
3 56:47-56:50].

4 INTERPRETER: I ask your help with these  
5 problems.

6 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
7 56:57].

8 INTERPRETER: Thank you very much.

9 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
10 57:01-57:04]. Thank you so much Mr. Bruno for  
11 sharing your story with us. If you have not already  
12 connected with your local Council Member, please  
13 reach out to us and we can make sure you do that.  
14 Although Make the Road is you know always there for  
15 its members, so I'm sure that they are also working  
16 with you. [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE 57:22-57:38].

17 BRUNO OLIVARES: [SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGE  
18 57:39].

19 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay. Thank you so much.  
20 So Audrey, we'll turn it to you for the next person.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks so much. We'll next  
22 hear from Mike McKee followed by Ryan Monell.

23 MICHAEL MCKEE: Good afternoon Chair Sanchez and  
24 member of the Committee. My name is Michael McKee, I  
25 am the Treasurer of the Tenants Political Action

1  
2 Committee. I'm here to testify in support of Intro.  
3 70, which you have to do. It's a no brainer and I  
4 have some thoughts about the Housing and Vacancy  
5 Survey, something I'm very much familiar with but  
6 won't be able to do much in two minutes in terms of  
7 expressing those thoughts.

8 I just want to point out that many tenants have  
9 been very much worried for the last couple of years  
10 at the apparent softening in the rental market, which  
11 we saw in 2020 and have worried about whether the  
12 five percent vacancy rate would be exceeded, which I  
13 want to point out is an arbitrary number. I'm not  
14 aware of any scientific or empirical study that's  
15 ever been done that will tell you that if you've got  
16 a vacancy rate of four point, four and a half  
17 percent, you've got a housing emergency. If you've  
18 got a vacancy rate of five and a half percent, you  
19 don't and if you stop and think about it, it doesn't  
20 really make much sense. It's just a number that  
21 government has plucked out of thin air and inserted  
22 into a state law. But it is what you have to deal  
23 with.

24 Clearly, the market has picked up enormously and  
25 I think it's probable that we will see the vacancy

1  
2 rate well under five percent when the HVS data are  
3 finally available.

4 I also want to point out that in 1996, according  
5 to the Housing and Vacancy Survey, New York City had  
6 56 percent of rental units in New York City were  
7 either rent controlled or rent stabilized. And  
8 according to the 2017 Housing and Vacancy Survey, 45  
9 percent of apartments were rent controlled and rent  
10 stabilized. That is a direct result of 25 years of  
11 weakening amendments.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

13 MICHAEL MCKEE: Enacted by the State Legislature  
14 and also enacted by the New York City Council in  
15 1994. Many people are not aware that it was not the  
16 republicans in Albany who first imposed permanent  
17 vacancy decontrol on New York City. It was in fact  
18 the New York City Council under the leadership of  
19 then Speaker Peter Vallone, who was currying favor  
20 with the real estate lobby whose support he wanted  
21 when he later ran for Mayor and came in third.

22 This is a very important issue. The Housing and  
23 Vacancy Survey is a vital study, not just because it  
24 gives you the information about the net vacancy rate,  
25 because it gives you an enormous wealth of data about

1  
2 tenants and housing and neighborhoods. It's an  
3 expensive study. It's statistically very reliable  
4 and we support the continuation of the HVS, even if  
5 we can once and for all get rid of the vacancy rate  
6 trigger for having a declaration of an emergency.

7 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Wonderful, thank you.

8 Thank you so much Mr. McKee and I do have one  
9 question for you. Thank you for your advocacy and  
10 for your testimony.

11 I believe that you are involved and supportive of  
12 Good Cause Legislation in this date. And so, my  
13 question for you -

14 MICHAEL MCKEE: As are you.

15 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Absolutely. And so, my  
16 question for you is, how do you see the interaction  
17 between Good Cause Legislation potentially passing in  
18 the state and HVS, State of Rental Emergency and the  
19 need for the Housing Stabilization Act?

20 MICHAEL MCKEE: Well, we are - we, when I say we,  
21 I mean the Tenant Movement, the Statewide Tenant  
22 Movement, Housing Justice for All, which I'm part.  
23 We're absolutely determined that we got to get this  
24 bill passed in Albany this year. There has also been  
25 four upstate municipalities that have enacted good

1  
2 cause eviction on the local level and there are other  
3 cities in upstate New York that are – where good  
4 cause eviction is in the pipeline.

5 Now, the City of New York cannot do this because  
6 you don't have the power because you are preempted,  
7 you are forbidden by the State Urstadt Law from  
8 enacting any law dealing with rents or evictions.

9 Other than you have two powers. You have the power  
10 to continue the rent laws every three years based on  
11 a finding of a net vacancy rate of five percent or  
12 less and you have the power to deregulate categories  
13 of housing. Those are the two powers you have under  
14 the Urstadt law. So, this is a very unfair law and  
15 we think that you and we should be working to undo  
16 the Urstadt law, so that you could do these things  
17 yourself.

18 It's also important to note that good cause  
19 eviction, while it is being painted by the real  
20 estate lobby as a radical restructuring of the  
21 landlord tenant relationship, is in fact a very  
22 moderate form of protection. Nowhere near as  
23 protective as any form of rent regulation. It merely  
24 gives tenants a defense against an unfair or  
25 arbitrary or retaliatory eviction, if they choose to

1  
2 stay and fight rather than move and we know from  
3 experience that many tenants will self-evict out of  
4 fear or because they don't know their rights or they  
5 can't get a lawyer, which is certainly easier in New  
6 York City. There is an upstate or if the tenant  
7 want's to contest an unfair excessive rent increase.

8 It just basically gives people a defense and it  
9 will be up to a judge to determine whether the  
10 eviction is justified or whether the rent increase is  
11 justified.

12 That's no great assurance because there are good  
13 judges and bad judges but this is a crucial, crucial  
14 protection for tenants living in unregulated market  
15 rate apartments, who otherwise have no protections at  
16 all. They have procedural rights but they have no  
17 summons with protections.

18 And I want to just thank you Chair Sanchez for  
19 your speech the other day in the Bronx. I watched  
20 the video of that rally. It was a terrific rally but  
21 this is a perfect illustration of why we've got to  
22 get these protections on the books.

23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much Mr.  
24 McKee, I really appreciate your time and your  
25 testimony and your continued advocacy. Thank you.

1  
2 MICHAEL MCKEE: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Now, we'll go to our next  
4 speaker. Audrey?

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, thanks so much. We'll  
6 next hear from Ryan Monell followed by Ellen  
7 Davidson.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

9 RYAN MONELL: Well, thank you Chair Sanchez and  
10 congratulations on your first hearing. My name is  
11 Ryan Monell, I represent the Real Estate Board of New  
12 York.

13 Throughout the pandemic, REBNY and its members  
14 have taken the industry leading steps to help keep  
15 New Yorkers housed and ensure greater access to  
16 housing for New Yorkers in need. For example, even  
17 before the state adoption of the eviction moratorium,  
18 REBNY members committed to a voluntary 90-day halt to  
19 evictions to ensure vulnerable New Yorkers were not  
20 displaced from their homes during the immediate  
21 crisis.

22 This step was followed by REBNY members and  
23 others in the real estate community stepping forward  
24 to create Project Parachute, which is a coalition of  
25 owners, non-for-profit organizations and service

1 providers led by enterprise community partners.

2 Which aims to work collaboratively to keep vulnerable  
3 New Yorkers impacted by the COVID-19 crisis in their  
4 homes. And to date, Project Parachute has raised  
5 nearly \$13 million to support over 3,000 New Yorkers,  
6 particularly those who have not served – were not  
7 served by existing forms of assistance to stay in  
8 their apartments or homes.

9  
10 Over 80 percent of these New Yorkers would not  
11 have qualified for existing rental assistance programs  
12 because of restricted eligibility requirements. On  
13 top of that, in regards to ERAP, in 2021, REBNY has  
14 repeatedly worked with the state since 2021 to deploy  
15 those dollars effectively and expediently and  
16 continues to find ways to expand access to rental  
17 assistance for New Yorkers in need.

18 Most recently REBNY was proud to join Governor  
19 Hochul and many others who call on Washington,  
20 allocated more than \$1.5 billion in additional  
21 funding for emergency rental assistance. And the  
22 recent reopening of the ERAP Portal and its increased  
23 advocacy shows what we all know is that New York  
24 needs more assistance.



1  
2 We are ready to work and willing to work with the  
3 Council and the appropriate city agencies to keep New  
4 Yorkers housed. Design and implement systems and  
5 programs that meet the need of New Yorkers today.  
6 Thank you and happy to answer any questions you might  
7 have.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so Ryan and good  
9 to see you. So, I have just one question. On  
10 Project Parachute, can you tell us a little bit about  
11 the scale and scope of that program? How you funded  
12 it?

13 RYAN MONELL: We did, yeah, so a number of REBNY  
14 members actually stepped up as I mentioned to put  
15 money aside that could support New Yorkers and that  
16 money was allocated through organizations across the  
17 city, throughout the five boroughs to actually get it  
18 to the folks that they are working with on a regular  
19 basis to stay in their homes. To help pay their  
20 rent. Help pay the utilities.

21 And so, this has been something we've been very  
22 proud of. We raised almost \$14 million dollars.  
23 That money has gone directly to 3,000 New Yorkers and  
24 we want to make sure that we're continuing to utilize  
25 these resources. And so, if you and your

1  
2 constituents have a need or if you hear of anyone  
3 else that we can particularly help, let us know and  
4 we'd be happy to connect with them and make sure they  
5 can stay in their apartments.

6 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great, excellent. Thank  
7 you so much Ryan. I appreciate your testimony and  
8 your time.

9 RYAN MONELL: Absolutely.

10 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Audrey.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks, we'll next hear from  
12 Ellen Davidson followed by Chris Wildelo.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

14 ELLEN DAVIDSON: Good afternoon. My name is  
15 Ellen Davidson, I'm a Staff Attorney at The Legal Aid  
16 Society and I want to thank Chair Sanchez for holding  
17 this hearing today and it's exciting to meet the new  
18 Housing and Buildings Committee of the City Council.

19 I, well, my testimony discusses ERAP and I am  
20 available to answer any questions about the program.  
21 I've spent most of my life for the last number of  
22 months working on it. The only thing I would say  
23 about ERAP is that the State Legislature legislation  
24 put subsidized and public housing at the back of the  
25 line. And the state agency has said that they expect

1  
2 that nobody who is subsidized or is in public housing  
3 will receive ERAP funds.

4 NYCHA at this point estimates that it is owed  
5 about over \$200 million. It says it does not want to  
6 go after its residents but that is its operating  
7 expenses and that is the money that it needs to pay  
8 bills. We think also HUD will require them  
9 eventually to go after the residents. We ask the  
10 Council to actually pay that money out of New York  
11 City's COVID Rent Relief. It is outrageous that some  
12 of the poorest New Yorkers were put at the back of  
13 the line for rent relief.

14 Additionally, we think it is time for New York  
15 City to think of bold ways of helping New York City  
16 residents afford their homes. And therefore, we are  
17 proposing a new expansion of the City FHEPS program  
18 to not only help people in all shelters, not only  
19 specific shelters get a path to permanent housing but  
20 to help people who are rent burdened and unstably  
21 housed and to be able to stay in their homes, so that  
22 we can recover from COVID.

23 I'm happy to answer questions about anything in  
24 my testimony. I might also mention that we represent

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

ELLEN DAVIDSON: The defendant interveners in the lawsuits against the rent laws and I'm prepared to answer questions about that as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent, thank you so much Ellen for your testimony. I also want to just make a note if any colleagues want to ask follow-up questions, please raise your hands and I'll of course call on you.

Yeah, so Ellen, quick question just in follow-up to your very last sentence. The rent law interveners, can you explain a little bit about what that means?

ELLEN DAVIDSON: Yeah, some of you may be aware, others may not that the real estate interest in New York State have brought five separate lawsuits. Some of which are trying to overturn the Rent Stabilization Law. Some of which are simply trying to roll back a Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act. All five cases have been dismissed by federal judges. All five cases are currently on appeal. The first two were heard in the second circuit two weeks ago. And those two cases, that's the case brought by CHIP and RFA, and also a second

1  
2 case involving a number of plaintiffs have made it  
3 very clear that they are trying to overturn the rent  
4 laws all together.

5 Having said that, the panel of judges hearing it,  
6 did not make it seem likely that they would be  
7 successful. They did not accept the landlords  
8 arguments in any way that makes me concerned about  
9 the decision that will be coming out of that circuit  
10 panel.

11 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent. Well, thank  
12 you. Thank you so much Ellen for your testimony.  
13 We'll certainly be following up on the \$200 million  
14 in rent arrears in NYCHA. It's a very serious issue.  
15 We know that NYCHA already has such a shortfall,  
16 budgetary shortfall, so we'll look forward to talking  
17 more with you about that, especially during the  
18 budget process.

19 ELLEN DAVIDSON: Alright, excellent. Thank you  
20 so much and I look forward to testifying in future  
21 dates. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Audrey.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks so much. We will now  
24 hear from Chris Wildelo followed by Eric Lee.

1  
2 CHRIS WILDELO: Hi, good afternoon Chairperson  
3 Sanchez. Thank you very much for the opportunity to  
4 testify today.

5 I want to talk a little bit about the ERAP  
6 program and some perspective from our, from where we  
7 sit. I am with NYSAFAH, we're the New York State  
8 Association for Affordable Housing. Our members are  
9 you know largely building affordable housing that  
10 receive some type of state or city subsidy. And you  
11 know, I guess the first thing I would like to ask is  
12 that for the Council to continue to ask and urge the  
13 state to look for any way that they can apply or ask  
14 for more funding you know from the federal government  
15 to continue to fund the ERAP and LRAP program.

16 LRAP program is for small landlords, assistance  
17 for small landlords that need to apply - you know  
18 that want to apply for rent funding for their tenants  
19 that are not part of ERAP. And you know there's over  
20 300,000 applications were submitted for ERAP and  
21 there are still about 148,000 that are outstanding  
22 that have not been processed. So there's still a  
23 long way to go.

24 We know that the governor, we really do  
25 appreciate Governor Hochul's persistence in asking

1  
2 for you know \$1.6 billion but we know that New York  
3 only got a small, small fraction of that and it's  
4 just not you know not going to go far enough.

5 I think you know should we be able to find a path  
6 forward with ERAP and find additional funding or  
7 should something like this happen again, we need to  
8 have a little bit better process. And one of the  
9 things that we learned at NYSAFAH is part of the  
10 group, Project Parachute that Ryan mentioned and what  
11 we heard you know in working on how we can you know  
12 help renters in affordable housing was you know,  
13 you're the owner. You have all this information.  
14 Why am I asking to go through this long process to  
15 provide additional information to get you know the  
16 assistance?

17 And people usually that are in affordable housing

18 -

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

20 CHRIS WILDELO: Have to provide a lot of  
21 documentation, right. So, they, in order to qualify,  
22 they need to have all this information already  
23 provided to the owner and so, many of them do have  
24 everything that they need but are unable to apply on  
25 behalf of the tenants.

1  
2           And so, we would like to see at least for those  
3 that are receiving city or state subsidy that there  
4 is some type of process, where landlords can apply on  
5 behalf of a building for that's quality. That those  
6 that are in arrears, so we can make the tenants whole  
7 and also, make sure that landlords have the funds  
8 that they need to continue to operate the buildings  
9 the way we need them to.

10           So, I've submitted written testimony as well with  
11 further detail and welcome any questions and/or  
12 follow-up conversation. So, thank you very much.

13           CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent, thank you so  
14 much Chris, really appreciate your testimony and your  
15 time. Audrey.

16           COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, thanks so much. We will  
17 now hear from Eric Lee followed by Lyric Thompson.

18           SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time will begin.

19           ERIC LEE: Hi, good afternoon. My name is Eric  
20 Lee, I am Director of Policy and Planning for  
21 Homeless Services United. Thank you Chair Sanchez  
22 and members of the Committee for allowing me to  
23 testify today.

24           I'll summarize my written testimony given time  
25 allotted. Given the overwhelming need for rental



1  
2 arrears, we recommend that the Council urge Governor  
3 Hochul to commit an additional \$2 billion in  
4 unallocated federal pandemic relief to fund ERAP.

5 In doing so, the Governor could halt the states  
6 eviction crisis and possible surge in homelessness.  
7 While we want to see those funds replenished now, the  
8 city can and should take immediate action to help  
9 renters in arrears through expanding access to one-  
10 shot deals. One way that the Council could do this,  
11 is reintroducing Intro. 2172, which would remove the  
12 future ability to pay requirement, which is an  
13 eligibility requirement for one-shots.

14 As the Council is considering its response to the  
15 Mayor's Preliminary Budget, it's critical that  
16 nonprofit agencies as well as nonprofit providers or  
17 sorry, government agencies and nonprofit providers  
18 have enough staff to quickly provide access to  
19 housing and services.

20 We strongly recommend the Council exempt HPD,  
21 NYCHA, DHS, HRA, and DYCD runaway and homeless youth  
22 from the Mayor's three percent across the board cuts  
23 to city agencies.

24 Eliminating vacant positions doesn't mean that  
25 the positions weren't necessary, it just means that

1  
2 there will be less people left to do the work.  
3 Robust staffing is necessary to help tenants get  
4 their arrears paid, to access city and state FHEPS  
5 rental vouchers, as well as the emergency housing  
6 vouchers, as well as applying for public assistance  
7 and other things like cash assistance and SNAP.

8 HSU's extremely grateful to the Council for  
9 passing Intro. 146 last session, which raised City  
10 FHEPS rent levels. And DHS and HRA budgets need to  
11 be held harmless to be able to really maximize those  
12 gains, given that there is going to be increased  
13 demand for that voucher now.

14 Council should also direct additional funding to  
15 NYCHA and HPD departments that are processing the  
16 emergency -

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

18 ERIC LEE: Housing vouchers. Given that roll out  
19 for that has been very slow because of most staffing  
20 levels and just two other things that we hope the  
21 Council will consider in its budget request, is  
22 supporting the Human Services Council Just Pay  
23 Campaign to raise wages of the nonprofit workforce.  
24 Given that there are staff vacancies and critical  
25 positions like housing specialists, which means

1  
2 slowing the rate at which people can move into  
3 permanent housing. And then, we are concerned that  
4 the Mayor did not include any additional funding for  
5 affordable housing or for increased cost rental  
6 assistance. We hope the Committee will lead on those  
7 two issues. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much Eric.  
9 Super helpful, appreciate your time and your  
10 testimony.

11 ERIC LEE: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Audrey.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We'll now hear from Lyric  
14 Thompson.

15 LYRIC THOMPSON: Hi, good afternoon Council.  
16 Congratulations Council Member Sanchez.  
17 Congratulations on your appointment as Chair. There  
18 is so much need here in the trenches. I am not with  
19 an organization. I'm just a regular citizen out here  
20 fighting to get my 421A building up to code.

21 There's a lot of -- there's so many people that  
22 need help right now and we are losing affordable  
23 housing like a fart in the wind. Rent stabilized  
24 buildings are going like this.

1  
2           So, I decided I would start this by giving you  
3 some money. We need money currently and I find a lot  
4 of it in the hands of noncompliant 421A developers.  
5 To give you an example, I'll give you three  
6 buildings. 5527 Myrtle Avenue Queens, this is 50  
7 units that has not been registered with DHCR since  
8 2018, currently receiving 421A. We've lost \$800,078  
9 in tax income from that building.

10           We have 635 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Brooklyn, 91 units. It  
11 hasn't been registered with DHCR since 2018,  
12 currently receiving 421A exemptions. We've lost two  
13 million eighty three thousand, two hundred and ninety  
14 five dollars in that building. And then we have 836  
15 Bergen Street in Brooklyn, 67 units also have not  
16 been registered with DHCR since 2018, currently  
17 receiving 421A exemptions. Two million, fifty  
18 thousand, three hundred and twenty two dollars. That  
19 is five million, eleven thousand dollars in three  
20 buildings that could go towards rental aid and  
21 assistance for tenants towards the one-shot deals and  
22 I have to ask myself, you know this is just three.  
23 We're losing billions.

24

25

1  
2 If we decided to actually audit the 421A program  
3 and inquire with HPD as to why they are not requiring  
4 full repayment to noncompliant developers -

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is expired.

6 LYRIC THOMPSON: We would have some money on the  
7 table. I know in our building; our building wasn't  
8 even completed. The entire 421A application was  
9 forged and when HPD revoked the exemption, even those  
10 the developer received over \$150,000 in tax  
11 abatements, we only have him pay back \$40,000.

12 So, the under other \$100,000 is like what a gift  
13 for committing crimes? For not finishing the  
14 building? For forging documents? I can't help but  
15 think that that sends a very bad message. A message  
16 that we need to send. It's not in our best interest.

17 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great, well thank you so  
18 much Lyric and we will certainly be talking more  
19 about 421A as reform efforts are underway. So, I  
20 look forward to hearing more from you and if you will  
21 submit your testimony, it will be great to have those  
22 addresses you've listed on file and the quantities as  
23 well.

24 LYRIC THOMPSON: Certainly, certainly, thank you.  
25

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: No problem. Great, now I  
3 just want to call on Council Member Kagan.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER KAGAN: Good afternoon. Thank you  
5 Chair Sanchez for an amazing public hearing. A very  
6 important topic. I believe it's important for the  
7 entire city, for both tenants and landlords and for  
8 the wellbeing of New York City.

9 Of course pandemic affected everyone and I  
10 strongly support the extension of the Rent  
11 Stabilization Law. It's so important for so many  
12 families. I live myself in a building, which is rent  
13 stabilized and I see my neighbors like, some of them  
14 applied for a program, which is very, very important.

15 So, I'm definitely in support of this extension  
16 and I would like for praise to Chair Sanchez for this  
17 amazing hearing. Thank you very much. I  
18 unfortunately have to leave because of a commitment  
19 but this is so important and this program is  
20 important but stabilization extension is crucial for  
21 so many families just to keep going, especially for  
22 families with financial hardship and middle and low  
23 income. Thank you very much.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much Council  
3 Member Kagan. I believe that wraps our public  
4 testimony, is that right Audrey?

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent. And so, with  
7 that we'll bring this hearing to close. Thank you so  
8 much to all of my colleagues who were able to sit and  
9 listen and participate and to all of the members of  
10 the public, the Administration for testifying today  
11 on this important issue. I look forward to your  
12 support on my bill Intro. 70 to extend the deadline,  
13 to extend the Rent Stabilization Act for July 1,  
14 2022. And we will be having a vote on that shortly.  
15 That information will go out.

16 So, thank you so much everyone. I really  
17 appreciate everybody's time. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date March 15, 2022