



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

Advocates And Leaders Applaud Historic Affordable Housing Legislation

GARY GINSBURG June 14, 2019

| ISSUE: **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio:

“Tenants have pounded on Albany’s door for decades for the protections they deserve. We’ve stood with them, fought for them tooth-and-nail, and now the wait is finally over. Our State Legislature has answered the call. This is a remarkable achievement that will halt displacement, harassment and unjust evictions, and keep working families in the homes they love. Combined with the City’s rapid pace of building and protecting affordable homes, these reforms mean we can go from just holding the line to actually growing the number of apartments New Yorkers can afford.

“It goes without saying: nothing like this would have been possible without the Assembly and the new Democratic majority in the State Senate working together on behalf of the people. Elections matter. For more than two million New Yorkers who depend on our rent laws to protect their homes, and the millions more who will enjoy new protections for the first time, steadfast advocacy and an election has helped keep a roof over their heads.”

New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson:

“We are a city of renters, and these historic rent laws will protect almost two-and-a-half million New Yorkers at a time when we continue the struggle to create more affordable housing units for our working-class. This agreement shows the power of grassroots advocacy, and although we achieved a major victory, the work is far from over and will not cease until all renters in the city are protected. These transformative rent protections will help us tackle the homelessness crisis we are facing as a city, and decelerate and reduce the number of New Yorkers who are displaced from their communities. I applaud and thank Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins for their leadership and relentless work that brought us to this remarkable agreement.”

Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer:

“For too long, 'tenant protection' has been mere rhetoric in Albany while landlords and developers ran roughshod over tenants in New York City. But this week the rhetoric will be made a reality by the majorities in both the Assembly and Senate, led by Speaker Heastie and Leader Stewart-Cousins. For the millions who live in rent-regulated apartments in New York City true tenant protection is coming, and I applaud everyone who got it done.”

Queens Borough President Melinda Katz:

“Far too many families in our city are forced to choose between paying their rent each month and accessing critical services like healthcare, child care and transportation. While Queens continues to see affordable housing residences open across the borough, meaningful rent reform has never been more vital as we work to ensure all tenants living in rent-stabilized and rent-regulated apartments are afforded the protections they need. This historic rent reform package seeks to help ensure residents across Queens and New York State have the opportunity to stay in their homes and continue to be a stabilizing force in their neighborhoods.”

Ron Deutsch, Executive Director, Fiscal Policy Institute:

“Smart public policy creates stability and benefits our vulnerable community members. With their historic updating of our state’s rent laws, the Assembly and Senate have done just that. Ending the rent regulation expiration cycle and creating a permanent system provides surety and better tenant protections provide security. This is good news for tenants and New York as we cannot generate sustainable economic growth statewide without first addressing families' needs for affordable housing.

“New York has an affordable housing crisis as detailed in FPI’s report 'Nearly Half of New York Renting Families Are Rent Burdened' which shows a majority of renting families statewide are 'rent-burdened' meaning that they pay over the recommended standard of 30 percent of their income in rent – and for families of color that the percentage climbs even higher.

“Excessively high rent burdens translate into many struggling families who find it hard, in some cases impossible, to pay for the essentials including food, transportation, utilities, not to mention any other important expenses like education or recreation. This robs New Yorkers of opportunities and holds them back, preventing them and their communities from thriving. Many low-income families are rent-burdened or severely rent-burdened and could be only one or two paychecks away from homelessness.”

Cea Weaver, Campaign Director of the Upstate Downstate Housing Alliance:

“The Senate and the Assembly have come together with a proposal to confront decades of injustices in New York State's tenant protection system. Housing Justice for All is proud to stand with the State Legislature as it takes meaningful steps forward to end tenant harassment, displacement, destabilization, and rising rents. This bill is affirmation of the Statewide movement that we are building together, and we look forward to working with

the Senate and the Assembly, in the years to come, until every renter, from Brooklyn to Buffalo, can live free from the fear of displacement.”

Adriene Holder, Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Practice at The Legal Aid Society:

“The Legal Aid Society commends the New York State Senate and Assembly for reaching this deal to advance historic housing reforms across the State. This package of legislation will reverse decades of rampant landlord abuse and enact much-needed protections for hundreds of thousands of tenants in New York State. It is a new day for our clients and all low-income communities who have been disproportionately impacted by rent loopholes. We thank Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Heastie for their leadership in moving the State forward and strengthening our communities.”

Rosemary Rivera, Co-Executive Director of Citizen Action of NY:

“This past election ignited the fires of change as evidenced by today's tenant protection package. The Senate and Assembly have listened to the needs of tenants across the state and put forth bold legislation to end the housing crisis, showing how ordinary people, when organized, can beat back the billionaire real estate giants. We applaud the Senate and Assembly for taking a giant first step toward protecting tenants and affirming that housing a human right.”

Beth Finkel, New York State Director for AARP:

“AARP advocated for stronger tenant protections and reforms to make New York's rent laws work, and this agreement marks an historic day for affordable housing in New York City and other key neighborhoods in New York State. Strengthening our rent laws will preserve existing affordable housing and help keep New York City a great place to live for residents of all ages, and AARP applauds our legislators for stepping up for their constituents.”

Legal Services NYC:

“Thank you to the NY Senate and Assembly for decisively addressing the displacement crisis in our clients communities. The proposed bills will make an immeasurable difference to thousands of low income and working families who are struggling to survive in NYC's housing market.”

Benjamin Dulchin, Executive Director of the Association of Neighborhood and Housing Development:

“For too long, weak regulations have led speculators to harass and displace tenants in communities across New York. Affordable housing developers know that stability benefits both tenants and landlords and that housing quality and housing affordability can go hand in hand. We applaud the State Legislature for the proposed bill, which represents an enormous step forward for millions of tenants.”

RELATED LEGISLATION

2019-S6458

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly

- On Floor Calendar Senate

- ◦ Passed Assembly

- Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

-

Enacts the "Housing Stability and Tenant Protection act of 2019"

June 11, 2019

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by [Andrea Stewart-Cousins](#)

Do you support this bill?