



MITCHELL-LAMA RESIDENTS COALITION, INC.

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Testimony at a New York State Senate Joint Public Hearing on Rental Assistance

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My name is Jackie Peters and I serve as Co-chair of the Mitchell-Lama Residents Coalition, commonly known as MLRC. Founded in 1972, MLRC is a statewide grassroots, all-volunteer organization whose mission is to work and organize for the preservation and future expansion of the Mitchell-Lama housing program (both co-op and rental). We identify, clarify, and solve common concerns of current and former Mitchell-Lama residents working with elected officials and government agencies at all levels.

On behalf of MLRC, I want to thank the New York Senate Standing Committees on Housing, Construction & Community Development, Social Services, and Aging for convening this Public Hearing on Rental Assistance. Our membership appreciates your focusing on the problems they face to pay their monthly rent. We have reports of very high annual increases in Mitchell-Lama developments. These increases fall heavily on our members who are disproportionately elderly and living on fixed incomes.

MLRC is particularly grateful that you are considering an array of bills which will strengthen and expand the protections offered by the SCRIE and DRIE programs. Our rental and co-operative members access both of these benefits to help them stay in their homes and communities.

MLRC has advocated for improvements to SCRIE and DRIE for decades. But we have focused almost exclusively on this advocacy since 2022 as our members need this relief urgently. Your roster of bills (S561, S1457A, S2451A, S2534, S3563, and S4252) will protect worthy New Yorkers for years to come.

MLRC is especially pleased to see that these bills will raise the annual income cap and key it to increases in the consumer price index. We have been working with you, our senators, on these changes for many years and support their enactment this year!

MLRC requests that you add another issue to your agenda. We advocate subtracting monthly Medicare premium payments from residents' incomes so that more seniors can qualify for SCRIE. We understand that such legislation was passed in a previous session and even signed into law but there were some technical glitches that have never been ironed out. Please straighten out this issue so that more seniors can stay in their homes.

Respectfully submitted,
Jackie Peters
Co-chair