



To: Senator Brian Kavanaugh, Senator Brad Hoylman and Housing/Judiciary Committee Members
Memo Of Support: Good Cause Eviction
Bill Number: S3082/A5573

At this pivotal point of uncertainty in New York's COVID and housing crises we must decide how to proceed in protecting tenants. We know that the statewide eviction moratorium has saved countless lives throughout the pandemic, but we also know that it cannot last forever. New York needs an immediate plan for when the statewide eviction moratorium expires AND a permanent plan for curbing evictions driven by speculation and harassment. In order to avoid an eviction cliff when the moratorium expires, **New York needs Good Cause Eviction NOW.**

Good Cause Eviction protects tenants not covered by rent regulations and prevents evictions for the sole purpose of harassment or rent increase. Good Cause also extends protections to month to month tenants and tenants with no lease -- renters that are more likely to be working class, low income, and immigrants. These protections give renters the freedom to organize and offers a code of conduct between landlords and tenants. Across neighborhoods Good Cause establishes tenant stability and helps curb displacement and gentrification by limiting speculation.

We have seen before that economic disaster can precede periods of housing speculation where skyrocketing rents fuel evictions which feed displacement. With the current COVID-19 economic disaster we must act to prevent another compounding of the existing housing and homelessness crisis. It is critical that our State act now to steady housing volatility and curb speculation.

For the Many is a grassroots organization with members across the Hudson Valley and the State, dedicated to building a New York that works for all of us, not just the greedy few. Housing justice has been a central focus of our organization since we were founded in 2012, which reflects the acute housing crisis experienced by the tenants we organize with. **These past several months, we have been leading local campaigns to pass Good Cause Eviction, which have received broad support by members of the public and local government officials.** We've passed Good Cause in the cities of Newburgh and Poughkeepsie, and have active campaigns in the cities of Beacon, Kingston, the Village of New Paltz, and in Ulster County. We've already seen some of the benefits to tenants after these local victories. After Good Cause passed in Poughkeepsie, one of our members felt empowered to demand that their landlord provide needed repairs to their apartment.

While these local campaigns are an important organizing effort, ultimately what is needed is for the legislature to exercise its authority and pass Good Cause Eviction statewide, in order to provide comprehensive and universal tenant protections to every New Yorker.

We write in strong support of the Prohibition of eviction without good cause law ("Good Cause Eviction") (Salazar S3082/Hunter A5573). Good Cause Eviction protects New York tenants from harassment and displacement. In doing so this legislation:



- Prohibits eviction of tenants absent a showing of “good cause”.
- Applies to nearly every building except owner occupied buildings with three or fewer units -- with certain exceptions for cases where a landlord or successor seeks to occupy a living space themselves.
- Protects tenants from eviction or attempted eviction without a determination of good cause by a court even if they have no lease or if their lease has expired or terminated.
- Examples of good cause include: illegal tenant activity, violations of obligations of tenancy, refusal to cure tenant created nuisance, tenancy causes violation of law subjecting landlord to civil or criminal penalty, certain cases where landlord intends to self-occupy, and tenant failure to pay rent that is not *unreasonable*.
- Creates a rebuttable presumption that a rent increase is unreasonable if it is more than the greater of 3% or 1.5x the annual change in Consumer Price Index.
- Provides that tenants can never waive or modify these protections.
- Provides that tenants suffering landlord fraud related to the provisions of good cause protections have cause of action for actual damages, injunctive relief, and attorneys fees.

I cannot stress enough how urgently needed this legislation is for the members of our communities - every single day we work with folks who face unaffordable rent, the looming threat of eviction, or an abusive landlord. **The state legislature has the power and the responsibility to take action to protect these people, their constituents, and must do so before the existing moratorium expires on January 15th.** Good Cause will inject stability into New York's housing market, help curb speculation, and curb the longtime threat of displacement among communities across the state. We urge you to sign on and support this path towards sustainably protecting affordable housing and permanently expanding tenant protections statewide.

Sincerely,

Brahvan Ranga
Political Coordinator
For the Many