

Tuesday February 2, 2021

**Testimony on Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Housing Regarding DHCR, or the
New York State Division of Homes & Community Renewal**

Submitted by Anita Long

The Tenants Coalition had been at the discussion table with HCR since 2017 and are still discussing some of the same issues that we are here today testifying to demand:

- \$2.2 to clear all back rent accrued during the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic
- \$500 million in funding for a Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) to provide rental assistance for homeless New Yorkers or New Yorkers at risk of becoming homeless
- Fully fund 14,000 Units of Supportive Housing
- \$3 billion investment in public housing authorities across New York
- \$500 million for New York State Division of Homes & Community Renewal (DHCR) to implement and enforce new tenant protections
- Invest in Our New York by raising taxes on corporate landlords, full elimination of 421-A and 485-A, taxes on private equity mezzanine debt, and a Pied-a-Terre tax
- Invest in Tenant Opportunity to Purchase (TOPA)

Without regards to the fact that this Covid-19 pandemic had created an unprecedented situation in which thousands of renters across the State of New York are forced to agonize over the thought of next month rent payment, constant confrontation with imminent eviction, homelessness and massive back rent debt; which was all abruptly forced upon them.

1. Our State government agency HCR behaving as “business as usual” never wavered/paused from granting the landlords’ request for rental increase thru Major Capital Improvement during this entire Covid-19 pandemic.
2. Technology upgrade to make data collection transparent with other agencies: Transparency in communication with other agencies such as HPD to better enforce compliance

Additional funds are needed for HCR to clearly improve and make the tenants' experience more accessible. That is why we are demanding a \$500 million dollar increase to DHCR’s budget for in coming fiscal year.