



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Adriano Espallat

## Extending and Expanding Tenant Protections to Avert an Impending Housing Crisis

ADRIANO ESPALLAT March 23, 2011

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Senate and Assembly Democrats Join with Housing Advocates to Call for Saving and Strengthening of Rent Regulations in the State Budget

(Albany, NY) – With rent regulation laws that protect affordable housing for over 2.5 million tenants in New York City and the surrounding counties (Westchester, Nassau, and Rockland) dangerously close to expiring, Senate and Assembly Democrats joined with housing advocates to urge Governor Andrew Cuomo to include tenant protections in this year’s State Budget.

Between 1994 and 2010, over 300,000 units of affordable housing were removed from rent regulation in large part due to the vacancy decontrol loophole that allows landlords to take apartments out of the rent regulation system and charge exorbitant rents. If the laws governing rent regulation are allowed to expire this June, millions of families could be forced from their homes by massive rent hikes. Additionally, if

families are forced from their homes due to this “tenant tax” there would be a devastating impact on state and local budget revenue.

Senate Democratic Leader John L. Sampson said, “New York has to be more affordable for it to remain livable for Middle Class families. Including tenant protections in the budget will stop a devastating tenant tax from forcing millions of New Yorkers out of their homes.”

Senator Adriano Espaillat (D-Manhattan/Bronx), Ranking Democrat on the Senate Housing Committee said, “We must extend and strengthen rent regulations and we must do so as part of the budget. A failure to extend and strengthen rent regulations will be tantamount to a tenant tax that will squeeze millions of New Yorkers out of their homes. I urge Senate Republicans to join Senate Democrats, tenant advocates, and, Governor Cuomo in supporting tenants and include rent regulations in the budget.”

Michael McKee, spokesman for the Real Rent Reform Campaign said, “The governor clearly knows that rent law renewal and reform is critical for millions of New Yorkers. All the rent reform supporters I have talked to agree that the only way to accomplish meaningful reform of rent regulation is to pass it within budget, and that only a budget including rent reform will be acceptable. Anything short will play into the Republican plans to delay renewal until the last minute, and then dilute rent protections the same way they did the last time these laws had to be renewed. If the Governor is sincere about his stated goal of strengthening rent regulations, he will reconsider his approach and include rent reform in the budget.”

Previously when rent regulations were set to expire and negotiations came down to its final hours, landlords were able to leverage the threat of total expiration to severely weaken the laws protecting tenants. To prevent landlords from running out the clock on rent regulations and decimating New York’s stock of affordable housing, legislators urged the Governor to act on his support for expanded rent laws by including the omnibus tenant protection bill (S.2783-A/ Espaillat – A.2674-A/ Lopez) in the State Budget.

[\(Click here for video of Sen. Espaillat at todays rally\)](#)

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