



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Adriano Espailat

## Hundreds of NYC Tenants, Join Sen. Espailat, Democratic Legislators in Rallying for Strong Rent Laws

ADRIANO ESPAILLAT May 24, 2011

| ISSUE: **HOUSING**

*Interactive forum, including online platforms, used to communicate urgent need to extend and strengthen rent regulations*

**(Albany, NY)** – With rent regulations that protect affordable housing for over 2.5 million tenants set to expire on June 15<sup>th</sup>, hundreds of New York City tenants joined Senator Adriano Espailat (D – Manhattan/Bronx) to express the urgent need to extend and strengthen rent regulations.

Broadcast live over the [Internet](#), via [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), Senate and Assembly Democrats, led by Senator Espailat, engaged housing advocates from across the state on the pressing need to pass a strong rent regulations bill before June 15<sup>th</sup>. In addition to the more than 200 tenants who came to the capital to participate in the forum and other day-long advocacy efforts, hundreds participated in the the forum online.

“Rent regulations expiring would spell disaster for millions of New Yorkers who would be squeezed out of their homes,” said Senator Espailat, the top ranking Democrat on the Senate Housing Committee. “That’s why we are working so hard to communicate our sense of urgency on this critical issue and ensure that rent regulations are strengthened and extended immediately.”

Between 1994 and 2010, over 300,000 units of affordable housing were removed from rent regulation. Now over one million units of affordable housing face immediate and irreparable deregulation on June 15<sup>th</sup> if rent regulations are not extended and expanded.

Senate Democratic Leader John L. Sampson said, “To protect affordable housing for millions of New York tenants, we must stop the tenant tax and extend and strengthen rent regulations before time runs out. New York is suffering from an affordability crisis that will only get worse without an extension and expansion of rent regulations.”

New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn said, “Currently, there are millions of New York City renters who are worried that if these rent laws aren’t renewed the future of their home, their family’s homes, will be in jeopardy. It’s critical that this issue get addressed immediately in a way that supports New York City as a renter city. Right now, there are less affordable apartments for families. We need the legislature to help us keep affordable housing in New York. If we could do it in the City Council, we would do it in a heartbeat, but the power rests with the State legislature and we need them to act immediately to renew and strengthen our rent laws.”

Senator Liz Krueger (D-Manhattan) said, “In order to ensure that millions of hardworking low- and middle-income New Yorkers, living in rent regulated units, are able to remain in their homes, we must extend rent regulation laws and close the loopholes that have plagued this system for far too long. If these laws were allowed to expire it would deliver a double blow to our poorest seniors and to the disabled, because in losing rent regulation laws we would also lose the SCRIE and DRIE programs. We cannot allow the final negotiation of rent regulation to come down to the wire. There is simply too much at stake. We must act now.”

Assemblymember Vito Lopez (D-Brooklyn), Chair of the Assembly’s Housing Committee said,

“I strongly support the passage of a comprehensive rent regulations bill to provide affordable housing to over 1 million tenants living in rent stabilized units. It is imperative that we continue rent stabilization laws with additional enhancements that will provide important protections and increase the quality of life for these tenants.”

Delsenia Glover, President of Gang Of Six & President of Lenox Terrace Association of Concerned Tenants said, “Unless vacancy destabilization is repealed, the rent stabilized tenants of Harlem will be forced out of our homes in the near future. we have already lost thousands of apartments to destabilization and our children and grandchildren cannot afford to live here. Landlords are suing tenants and harassing tenants to achieve vacancies. We are looking to Governor Cuomo and the legislature to stop this disaster now and to restore our rent laws to affordability.”

**Key Components of S2783-A/ Espailat – A2674-A/ Lopez:**

- Repeals vacancy destabilization and re-regulates most of the apartments that have been lost through this loophole in the last two decades
- Allows New York City and suburban municipalities to bring former Mitchell-Lama and Section 8 buildings under rent stabilization
- Reduces the statutory vacancy bonus from 20% to 10%
- Reforms preferential rent loophole that enables landlords to increase stabilized rents by hundreds of dollars when tenants renew their leases
- Reforms the provision that allows landlords to empty entire buildings by claiming they need more than one unit for themselves or their family members
- Reforms the Major Capital Improvement (MCI) program by making rent surcharges temporary, ending when the landlord has recovered the cost of the improvement

- Reforms the Individual Apartment Improvement (IAI) program by reducing the monthly rent increase from 1/40th to 1/60th of the cost of the improvement
- Adjusts high-income deregulation thresholds to more accurately represent inflation
- Repeals the Urstadt Law which would restore home rule powers over rent and eviction legislation to the City of New York

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