



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

The Dirty Tricks Some Landlords are Playing to Feed on the Pain and Suffering of Our Community

RUBEN DIAZ May 27, 2014

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

By Senator Rev. Rubén Díaz

32nd Senatorial District, Bronx County, New York

Tel. 718-991-3161

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You should know that there are many landlords who are forcing people out of their homes so they can make more money by using those apartments as cluster-site housing for homeless families, and my Senatorial District has become a hot spot for this scam. These landlords are playing very dirty tricks, and this is ruining many people's lives and making our neighborhoods unstable.

You should know that when these landlords get their current tenants to move out and convert their apartments to cluster-site housing, they charge the city \$100+ per night/per apartment, which is comparable to a hotel nightly rate. (And the price they charge comes

nowhere near the level of service any hotel might provide.) Cluster-site contracts are reported to have cost the city an estimated \$77.8 million last year.

You should know that there are constituents from my Senatorial District who tell us that they are being harassed by their landlords to move out of their buildings. They say that the landlords offer them \$5000 to \$7000 dollars incentive to vacate their homes so the landlord can make money from these apartments by charging the City of New York a lot more money to let homeless families live there. While \$7000 might sound like a lot of money, people on fixed incomes will find themselves homeless in no time if they take these incentives - and it's a small investment for landlords who will profit greatly.

These families who are being forced out of their buildings by their landlords often have no place to go, especially if they are on fixed incomes. They cannot afford to move or rent elsewhere, and if they stay, their living conditions quickly deteriorate, some landlords won't renew their leases, and make life impossible for them to live there.

You should also know that to add insult to injury, the management companies that are being subsidized by New York City to provide maintenance services to these buildings have been neglecting their responsibilities.

These management companies ignore the residents' complaints about deplorable conditions. Rats, mold, debris, holes in walls and floors, leaky roofs, sparking electrical outlets, unreliable heating, and broken fire escapes are common complaints in cluster-site housing buildings in my district. Families and children should not be living in these conditions. No one should.

Families who reside in buildings where their landlords are converting these buildings to cluster-site housing tenants are not even allowed to have their personal mail delivered to their buildings. Instead, they must go to the local US Post Office and wait on line just to pick

up their mail.

Families who reside in these buildings must suffer in silence. Of course they can join the ranks of other New Yorkers who call 311, but the complaints of cluster-site housing families are somehow not put on the same level as others who call 311 and ask for help.

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope that New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and his Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Lilliam Barrios-Paoli take notice, pay attention and work to put an end to those greedy landlords who come to our community to feed themselves on the needs and suffering of our people. No more!

This is New York State Senator Reverend Rubén Díaz and this is what you should know.