



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Senator Gianaris To Introduce Legislation to Prohibit Tenant Blacklisting

MICHAEL GIANARIS January 18, 2017

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(Astoria, NY) – Following the New York School of Urban Ministry’s attempt to blindside and misleadingly demand current low-income tenants vacate their homes in Astoria, Senator Michael Gianaris will introduce legislation that would prohibit tenant blacklisting. Currently, when tenants assert their rights in court in a landlord-tenant action, they can find themselves on a blacklist that keeps them from being able to secure future housing. Residents of NYSUM expressed concerns about protecting their rights to housing in court

due to possible blacklisting.

**Senator Michael Gianaris said,** "Too many residents get the short end of the stick simply by asserting their legal rights. We cannot allow unscrupulous landlords to discriminate against tenants who are simply fighting to keep a roof over their heads."

Upon failed attempts to meet and discuss a potential solution to this disturbing situation with Executive Director Pastor Peter DeArruda, Senator Gianaris, Congressman Crowley and Assemblywoman Simotas penned a joint letter to Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, calling to investigate possible mismanagement of the non-profit.

Pastor Peter DeArruda confirmed his intentions to lease the building to a third party stating that NYSUM is facing financial hardships and can no longer afford to pay the existing operational costs. The 39-unit dormitory, located at 31-65 46th Street in Astoria is fully paid off and clear of any mortgage.

Senator Gianaris repeatedly visited residents to check on them over the course of NYSUM's actions and has encouraged residents to remain in their homes and continue working with The Legal Aid Society. Below is a photo of Senator Gianaris and resident Linda Smith.

Currently, over 90 percent of landlords are represented by attorneys in New York City Housing Court while far less than 10 percent of tenants do not have legal representation.