

NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Julia Salazar

Despite the Rain, Over 2,000 Tenants from 26 Cities Descended in Albany for Major Rally, Gave Gov. Cuomo #30DayNotice to #SaveOurHomes Before Tenant Protections Expire on June 15th

SENATOR JULIA SALAZAR May 14, 2019

| ISSUE: #SAVEOURHOMES, UNIVERSAL RENT CONTROL, #TENANTPOWER, #TENANTTUESDAY, HOUSING



Tenants delivered a 30-day notice to NY Governor Cuomo and elected officials demanding an end rent hikes, harassment and evictions by passing a package of nine bills that would strengthen and expand tenants' rights across the State

(Albany, NY—May 14, 2019)—On one of the last #TenantTuesdays before the rent laws expire, thousands of tenants and housing advocates from 26 towns across New York, led by the

[Upstate Downstate Housing Alliance](#), descended in Albany for a massive rally, march and takeover of the State Capitol to demand the immediate passage of the #Universalrentcontrol platform.

Chanting: "Fight fight fight, housing is a human right," tenants filled the steps of the New York State Museum to then march to the State Capitol building to visit the offices of 36 members of the Assembly, Governor Cuomo, Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins, and Speaker Heastie.

At the Capitol Building, tenants attempted to deliver 7,000 petitions to Governor Cuomo, but were locked out of his office by the Governor's staff. The petitions includes a #30DayNotice to #SaveOurHomes.

The major action was held just 30 days before the state rent laws expire on June 15th, to demand the passage of #UniversalRentControl: A package of [9 bills](#) that would strengthen and expand tenants' rights across New York State.

Even though the majority of renters in New York State are rent burdened and lacking basic protections, many legislators are still not standing up with tenants. For that reason, many New Yorkers took over the offices of legislators who refuse to support all #UniversalRentControl bills, including offices of Senators Leroy Comrie and Diane Savino, none of whom came out to talk to tenants. [Members of Make the Road NY](#) and Westchester tenants confronted Assemblywoman Sandy Galef in an elevator and group from [Woodside on the Move](#) and DSA handed petitions to Senator Brian Kavanagh personally outside his office.

Approximately 5 million New Yorkers have no renter protections whatsoever—simply because of where or what kind of housing they live in. Moreover, New York has lost nearly

300,000 units of affordable, rent stabilized housing since 1994. This housing crisis is exacerbated by the existing loopholes in rent laws that encourage tenant harassment and allow sudden and permanent rent hikes.

The tenant movement has received major support from some of the largest labor unions in the state, including 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers, where nearly one third of its members and retirees in NYC live in rent regulated units. This week labor leaders George Gresham, President of 1199SEIU, Mario Cilento, president of the NYS AFL-CIO, Michael Mulgrew, president of the United Federation of Teachers, Stuart Appelbaum, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union and others [sent a letter](#) to Governor Cuomo, Senate Leader Stewart Cousins and Assembly Speaker Heastie pressuring them to approve the Universal Rent Control Platform put forth by the Upstate Downstate Housing Alliance.

The 9 Housing Bills that makeup the #Universalrentcontrol Platform include:

- Reform “Preferential Rent” (S2845/A4349) (Krueger/Cymbrowitz): Requires that preferential rent leases last for the duration of the tenancy.
- End “Vacancy Decontrol” (S2591/A1198) (Stewart-Cousins/Rosenthal): Repeals vacancy decontrol and re-regulates deregulated apartments that rent for less under \$5,000 in NYC and \$3,500 in suburbs.
- Eliminate the “Vacancy Bonus” (S185/A2351) (Serrano/Pichardo): Eliminates the 20% bonus on “legal rent” landlords may add to legal rent when an apartment changes hands.
- Eliminate Rent Hikes Caused by Major Capital Improvements (S3693/A6322) (Gianaris/Barnwell): Eliminates landlords’ ability to pass the cost of necessary building repairs onto renters. Stop Harassment and Deregulation Caused by Individual Apartment Improvement

- Increases (S3770/A06465) (Kavanagh/Richardson): When apartments are vacant, landlords often make cosmetic repairs in order to raise the rent and reach the deregulation threshold. This bill would eliminate that.
- Reform the Four Year Rule (S4169/A5251) (Myrie/Dinowitz): While tenants in rent stabilized apartments are able to challenge rent increases, thanks to the “four year rule,” they are limited in their ability to fight older, but often fraudulent, “legal” rents.
- Expand the Emergency Tenant Protection Act (S5040/A7046) (Breslin/Cahill): Only New York City and the surrounding counties can opt into rent regulation. This is not fair. Localities should decide for themselves whether or not they want to opt into a system to protect tenants. This bill gives all places in New York State the option to decide for themselves.
- Good Cause Eviction (S2892/A5030) (Salazar/Hunter): Gives every tenant in New York State the right to a renewal lease with fair terms from the landlord. Tenants may still be evicted for “good cause.”
- Rent Control Relief (S299/A167) (Benjamin/Rosenthal): Brings “rent control” increases in line with “rent stabilization” increases.

Data proves there is no ‘downstate’ vs. ‘upstate’ divide when it comes to the need for rent regulation. According to a report by the [Fiscal Policy Institute](#) a majority of renting families in New York State are “rent-burdened” meaning that they pay over the recommended standard of 30% of their income in rent – the federal definition of unaffordable. For families of color upstate that percentage climbs even higher to 45% in Buffalo, 49% in Albany, 51% in Syracuse, and 60% in Rochester.


Jorge Rufino, Brooklyn resident and member of Make the Road New York, said: “Living in unsafe and unhealthy conditions, with the threat of displacement, is no way to live. Me and my family are part of the 5 million tenants who have no protections in our state. We want to be able to stay in our homes and not be thrown out onto the streets. Our state legislature cannot delay anymore. New Yorkers demand action now.”

Darryl Randall, Brooklyn resident and member of the Crown Heights Tenant Union said: “We came to Albany to make noise and show our power because that’s how we can get our elected officials to take us seriously as tenants. We need to get this whole package of nine bills passed this year before we lose what’s left of our communities. It feels like our lives are on the line.”

Anita Long , CASA leader in The Bronx, said: “Thousands of tenants came from across the state to demand Universal Rent Control to all our electeds. Millions of tenants suffer from not having access to basic rights to stay in their homes and are being displaced by permanent rent hikes because of MCIs and IAIs.”

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*State Senator Julia Salazar Representing District 18, North Brooklyn said: “ We have 30 days to take decisive action to protect tenants, start to ameliorate our homelessness crisis, and affirm that in New York State, housing is a human right. For too long, speculators and landlords have pursued their profits over the safety, health, and happiness of the majority of New Yorkers who are tenants. It’s past time that we sent the message that our housing stock’s primary purpose is to house human beings, not to park capital or serve as an investment vehicle for the wealthy.*

Dutchess County Legislator: Francena Amparo said: “As local elected officials, we deeply understand and experience the massive impact the rental housing crisis has on our communities. We see, day-to-day, how rising rents and speculative real estate put our 

constituents at risk of eviction and push home ownership increasingly out of reach. Our constituents are not just our voters: they are our colleagues on the parent teacher association, the patrons at our local grocery store, and our neighbors.”

City Councilwoman from Schenectady Marion Porterfield said: “Every New Yorker should have very basic housing protections. But for too many families, that right is far from a reality. Gentrification -- a problem that was associated with New York City for decades -- is sweeping across the entire state. It is time for the State Legislature to pass these reforms!”

Ellen Davidson, Staff Attorney in the Law Reform Unit at The Legal Aid Society, said: “Every day, we meet with clients who are on the verge of losing their homes as exorbitant rents continue to rise, and landlords abuse loopholes in rent laws to harass and evict vulnerable New Yorkers. In the midst of this affordable housing crisis and record-high homelessness, Governor Cuomo has the power to deliver meaningful tenant protections with these nine universal rent control bills.”

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2019-S2845A**

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- Introduced
  
- - In Committee Assembly
  
  - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Prohibits an owner from adjusting the amount of preferential rent upon the renewal of a lease

January 29, 2019

Stricken

Sponsored by [Liz Krueger](#)

Do you support this bill?

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## 2019-S2591A

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- Introduced
- ○ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor

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Makes conforming technical changes to the New York City administrative code and the emergency tenant protection act relating to vacancy decontrol; repealer

January 28, 2019

In Senate Committee [Housing, Construction and Community Development](#)

Sponsored by [Andrea Stewart-Cousins](#)

Do you support this bill?

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## 2019-S185

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- Introduced
- ○ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate



- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Relates to rent increases after vacancy of a housing accommodation; repealer

January 02, 2019

In Senate Committee [Housing, Construction and Community Development](#)

Sponsored by [Jose M. Serrano](#)

Do you support this bill?

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## 2019-S3693

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- Introduced
- ○ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Eliminates rent increase for major capital improvements

February 12, 2019

In Senate Committee [Housing, Construction and Community Development](#)

Sponsored by [Michael Gianaris](#)

Do you support this bill?

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## 2019-S3770

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- Introduced
- ○ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Repeals provisions of law relating to individual apartment improvement rent increases

February 14, 2019

In Senate Committee [Housing, Construction and Community Development](#)

Sponsored by [Brian Kavanagh](#)

Do you support this bill?

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## 2019-S4169A

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- Introduced
- ○ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor

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Relates to investigation of rent overcharge complaints in rent regulated housing accommodations

March 04, 2019

In Senate Committee [Housing, Construction and Community Development](#)

Sponsored by [Zellnor Myrie](#)

Do you support this bill?

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## 2019-S5040

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- Introduced
- ○ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Establishes the statewide tenant protection act of 2019

April 04, 2019

In Senate Committee [Housing, Construction and Community Development](#)

Sponsored by [Neil D. Breslin](#)

Do you support this bill?

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## 2019-S2892A

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- Introduced
- ○ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Relates to prohibiting eviction without good cause

January 30, 2019

In Senate Committee [Judiciary](#)

Sponsored by [Julia Salazar](#)

Do you support this bill?

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## 2019-S299

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- Introduced
- ○ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor

- Relates to the establishment of rent adjustments and prohibition of fuel pass-along charges; repealer

January 03, 2019

In Senate Committee [Housing, Construction and Community Development](#)

Sponsored by [Brian Benjamin](#)

Do you support this bill?