



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

Housing Justice For All Coalition Launches 2022 NYS Legislative Campaign with Statewide Day of Action

BRIAN KAVANAGH November 16, 2021

| ISSUE: **HOMELESSNESS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS**

November 16, 2021

Contacts:

Cea Weaver, Housing Justice for All, cea.weaver@gmail.com

Alejandra Lopez, The Legal Aid Society, ailopez@legal-aid.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Housing Justice For All Coalition Launches 2022 NYS Legislative Campaign with Statewide Day of Action

#HouseNY Platform Calls on Albany to Enact Good Cause Eviction, Repeal of 421-a, Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP), Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA), and an expanded Housing Our Neighbors with Dignity Act (HONDA)

(New York, NY) — Housing Justice For All—a statewide organization comprised of civil legal services organizations—today unveiled its 2022 New York State legislative agenda today, which seeks real long-term solutions to the COVID-19 housing crisis, including permanent

protections against evictions. The #HouseNY campaign comes as eviction moratoria and emergency rental assistance programs have only provided limited, short-term relief, leaving many struggling New Yorkers vulnerable to landlord harassment, unfair rent increases, and homelessness.

The 2022 platform calls on the State Legislature and Governor Kathy Hochul to pass and enact Good Cause Eviction, Repeal of 421-a, Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP), Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA), and an expanded Housing Our Neighbors with Dignity Act (HONDA).

Hundreds of tenants impacted by the COVID-19 housing crisis, housing and community groups, progressive activists, New York State Senators Michael Gianaris, Brad Hoylman, Brian Kavanaugh, Jabari Brisport, and New York State Assemblymembers Linda Rosenthal, Jessica Gonzalez Rojas, Marcela Mitaynes, Zohran Mamdani, Ron Kim, Harvey Epstein, Emily Gallagher, Demond Meeks, Brian Barnwell joined in statewide actions to announce #HouseNY, which were held in New York City, Albany, Rochester and Buffalo.

"All New Yorkers deserve a safe, stable place to live and I am proud to support the #HouseNY platform," said Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris. "Since taking the Senate majority in 2019, we have worked tirelessly to support New York's tenants, including by passing the most significant tenant protections in state history. Let's build on that achievement and continue delivering for New Yorkers."

"Today, I am proud to stand with Housing Justice For All Coalition as a supporter of the #HouseNY platform", said State Senator Julia Salazar. "The COVID-19 pandemic has only worsened the housing crisis in our state, and in January the eviction moratorium will expire leaving New Yorkers to face an unprecedented eviction crisis. We must do right by our tenants and pass this comprehensive housing platform that will keep families in their

homes, and ensure that residents have the housing security that they deserve."

"Through the Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act, the COVID-19 eviction moratorium and rent relief programs, the Housing Our Neighbors with Dignity Act, and other measures, we've taken huge steps in the last three years to prevent evictions and foreclosures, protect millions of tenants and homeowners, and provide more affordable and supportive housing," said Senator Brian Kavanagh, Chair of the Senate Housing Committee. "But with so many New Yorkers still experiencing homelessness, or living in unstable, poorly maintained housing, or paying grossly unaffordable rents, we need to do much more. The HJ4A agenda — enacting Housing Access Vouchers, good cause eviction, and tenant opportunity to purchase legislation, scaling up HONDA, and making sure we're not giving away public funds through 421-a and similar subsidies without getting enough affordable housing to justify the expense — would go a very long way toward our goal of ensuring that everyone has access to a stable, well-maintained, affordable place to live."

"Our clients and all New Yorkers deserve these common-sense legislative solutions to the ongoing economic devastation from the pandemic," said Judith Goldiner, Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Law Reform Unit at The Legal Aid Society. "With the statewide moratorium likely set to expire in January, we are facing a tidal wave of evictions, which could leave countless vulnerable tenants at risk of losing their homes and exacerbate the public health and homelessness crisis. Albany must act now to keep New Yorkers safely housed in their homes."

"Eviction moratoria and emergency rental assistance programs have provided only short-term relief during the COVID pandemic. By design and definition, these temporary measures are not substitutes for permanent, sustainable solutions to the housing crisis that millions of struggling New Yorkers continue to face across the state. Our #HouseNY platform would replace temporary, limited relief measures with the long-term solutions necessary to address

the state's worsening housing crisis. As part of COVID recovery, Governor Hochul and the state legislature should pass all the bills in our #HouseNY platform," said Cea Weaver, Campaign Coordinator of Housing Justice for All.

"The homelessness crisis in New York State has only been exacerbated by the pandemic and after continuously applying temporary bandaids, we need leaders of NYS to provide New Yorkers meaningful and sustainable relief in the form of safe, affordable housing," said Nicole Anselment-Hirsch, VOCAL-Albany Member. "Albany was the first city in the state to pass Good Cause locally, and it's time to bring Good Cause statewide, and we need to pass the Housing Access Voucher Program to provide people who do not qualify for public assistance lasting relief from the pandemic."

"The pandemic devastated Black, brown, and immigrant communities, leaving people worried about how they will pay their rent or if they will lose their home. This upcoming legislative session Governor Hochul and New York leaders have the opportunity to put tenants and people who are homeless first," said Jennifer Hernandez, Lead Organizer with Make the Road NY. "We call for the passage of long-term solutions highlighted in this legislative package that will address our growing housing crisis and homelessness, such as the Good Cause eviction legislation that will protect tenants throughout the state against unfair evictions and the Housing Access Voucher program that would create vouchers to curbe our homeless numbers. Housing is a human right and all New Yorkers deserve affordable and safe housing."

"We believe that everyone deserves safe, stable housing but for too long, far too many New Yorkers have been left down and out, especially during Cuomo's administration. With a new governor in place, New York has a unique opportunity to finally address this fundamental issue by passing the Housing Access Voucher Program, Good Cause Evictions, and ending 485a and 425a so we can house New Yorkers, keep them housed, and end tax breaks to

unethical developers," said Gabriel Silva, Lead Organizer for Capital District chapter of Citizen Action of New York.

TWITTER: Follow Housing Justice for All and #HouseNY on Twitter for photos, video, and content from these protests targeting Hochul in NYC, Buffalo, Rochester and Albany.

###

The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For 145 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. www.legalaidnyc.org

Housing Justice for All is a statewide movement of tenants and homeless New Yorkers united in our fight for housing as a human right. We are a coalition of over 80 organizations from Brooklyn to Buffalo fighting to end unjust evictions and end homelessness in our State. www.housingjusticeforall.org