



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

Deputy Leader Gianaris Announces Senate Passes NYCHA Utility Accountability Act, Providing Rent Relief For Tenants Experiencing Outages

MICHAEL GIANARIS June 9, 2023

| ISSUE: [NYCHA UTILITY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT](#), [NYCHA](#), [PUBLIC HOUSING](#), [TENANTS](#), [UTILITIES](#)



ALBANY, N.Y. – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris announced the Senate passed his [NYCHA Utility Accountability Act \(S.546/A.2573\)](#) which pro-rates rent for NYCHA tenants who experience long-term water, gas, electric, and heat outages. The legislation was prompted by a three-month long gas outage experienced by tenants at Astoria Houses.

“Months-long utility outages are unacceptable for any New Yorker, whether in private or public housing,” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “NYCHA residents should not be

expected to pay full rent, which typically includes utilities, when they are not receiving the service. My proposal would ensure we treat all our neighbors with respect and create financial urgency for NYCHA to make needed repairs on a faster timeline. I am pleased the Senate passed this legislation.”

Assembly Member Khaleel Anderson, who sponsors the bill in the State Assembly, said, "The NYCHA Utility Accountability Act has now officially passed the Senate, championed by my colleague Senator Michael Gianaris. I commend the Deputy Majority Leader for his work and commitment to public housing residents. NYCHA families deserve reliable utility services and we, elected officials, must hold the agency to that high standard. I will continue to urge my colleagues in the State Assembly to pass the NYCHA Utility Accountability Act before the end of the session."

Senator Gianaris' NYCHA Utility Accountability Act would reduce a tenant's rent obligation in an amount prorated per day of utility outage by the greater of 10% of the tenant's actual rent or \$75 per month. Affected utilities include gas, heat, water, and electric service. In addition to providing relief for impacted tenants, this legislation would provide a financial incentive to fix service more quickly.

Senator Gianaris has been a longtime advocate of improving quality of life for NYCHA tenants. He has secured major funding for a job training program for NYCHA residents through a partnership with LaGuardia Community College and Urban Upbound. When NYCHA failed to successfully test for lead in Queensbridge Houses, Senator Gianaris went in and performed tests himself and pushed for faster lead testing in these developments.

Tammy Reyes, Acting President of the Woodside Houses Tenants Association said, "NYCHA tenants pay rent and deserve high-quality housing, like every other New Yorker. I thank Senator Gianaris for fighting for the NYCHA Utility Accountability Act and all our Woodside Houses tenants. I feel that everyone of us NYCHA tenants deserve to have hot water, hot and cold clean running water, working gas, as well as electricality. majority of the residents pay their rent on time and should be able to be treated with the same respect that we give the NYCHA department when we pay our rent on time. I am a retired NYCHA employee, a resident association executive board member, but I am a tenant whom experienced living in my NYCHA apartment in which I had to live close to one year with NO GAS to cook food for my family, we had to order fast food to eat most days for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, for at least the first four months before we was offered a hot plate. No disrespect to anyone, but how can I really be

expecting me to cook meals for my family on one hot plate. I still continued to pay my rent every month, even though I still had no gas to cook with, but then when I tried to hold the rent from being paid until my gas get fix and working so that I would be able to cook a decent hot meal for my family, I received a dispossess for nonpayment of rent, so of cause I paid my rent afraid of being evicted (homeless) with my family. We suffered for many months when I finally got my gas on after almost a year and had never received any compensation for the loss of my gas (after no gas for just about a yearlong). So I want to thank Senator Micheal Gianaris for fighting for the NYCHA Utility Accountability Act and all our Woodside Houses tenants thank you as well”

RELATED LEGISLATION

2023-S546

- 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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Enacts the NYCHA utility accountability act

January 05, 2023

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Michael Gianaris**

Do you support this bill?