



May 26, 2020

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of the State of New York
Executive Chamber
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins
New York State Senate Majority Leader
188 State Street Room 907, Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12247

Hon. Carl Heastie
Speaker of the Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 932
Albany, NY 12248

Re: Prioritizing “Good Cause” Eviction Legislation To Help Keep New Yorkers In Their Homes Amid The Coronavirus Outbreak

Dear Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie,

The coronavirus outbreak has drained the state economy and left many housing priorities out of the Fiscal Year 2021 budget. Yet you have an opportunity to enact budget neutral legislation, like the [Good Cause eviction bill \(A5030B/S2892B\)](#), which would provide desperately needed protection to [1.6 million households](#) across New York State in “market rate” homes. We urge you to prioritize the bill to help mitigate the devastating consequences of this crisis and keep families in their homes.

Millions of New Yorkers have lost their jobs, and many who were already struggling to get by are at their absolute breaking point. [Reports](#) of families having to choose between paying their rent and affording food permeate the media. While tenants in rent-stabilized apartments have the possibility of a rent freeze (pending the Rent Guidelines Board vote to grant one), tenants in non-regulated housing have no protection from exorbitant rent increases—which is tantamount to an eviction in this climate.

Moreover, landlords of non-regulated housing units are under no legal obligation to offer or renew a lease. This kind of housing instability is unacceptable during a global health crisis where New York City is the epicenter.

Last year, thousands of non rent-regulated households in New York City were evicted without any legislative solutions to defend against losing their homes. The current pandemic will surely exacerbate this injustice, leading to additional evictions, and more New Yorkers facing homelessness—a crisis already at its brim. We have already seen the reprehensible [actions](#) of some landlords looking to exploit the COVID-19 crisis for profit. We must act now to prevent this inequity from compounding once the pandemic subsides.

Across the country, people are lauding New York’s response to the crisis. However, we must be equally reactive to the lesser-known plights affecting New Yorkers, not only the macro. This is not the time for inaction. This is the time for bold moves and legislation that will overhaul antiquated housing policy that hurts vulnerable families. Other states like California and Oregon, among others, have already passed Good Cause legislation.

Nearly [80% of New Yorkers](#) support passing Good Cause legislation, and a majority of Democratic state senators and assembly members have signed on to the bill. We must protect tenants from eviction by passing the Good Cause eviction bill. Amid this unprecedented public health crisis, keeping New Yorkers in their homes is vital to lessening the devastation caused by COVID-19.

Sincerely,

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Senior Housing Policy Analyst at Community Service Society

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Executive Director of Community Voices Heard

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