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***The Legal Aid Society Calls on the New York State Legislature  
to Reconvene to Amend and Extend Eviction Moratorium***

(NEW YORK, NY) -The Legal Aid Society delivered testimony to a Joint Public Hearing before the Senate Standing Committees on Housing, Construction and Community Development and Social Service on ERAP - New York's beleaguered Emergency Rental Assistance Program - and called on the majorities in the New York State Legislature to reconvene session immediately in order to extend the state's eviction moratorium and protect financially struggling tenants who are facing imminent eviction as the current moratorium's August 31st deadline draws near.

The hearing comes a week after the Supreme Court [ruled](#) to block parts of New York State's existing eviction moratorium, specifically striking down the part of the law which protects tenants who have filed a declaration of hardship. Legal Aid is calling for the Legislature to amend the current Eviction Moratorium legislation so that it will survive a constitutional challenge.

"We call on the NYS legislature to return to work and amend the law to allow a hearing on the tenant declaration of hardship," a statement released by Legal Aid reads. "The state legislature can make this minor fix and prevent thousands of New York residents from losing their homes. We further call to extend the eviction moratorium until the state gives out all of the \$2.3 billion in rent relief money. Our elected leaders must advance these measures quickly and decisively."

Applications for the Emergency Rent Relief Program are more critical than even following the Supreme Court's recent ruling because of the protections they offers tenants. While an application is being considered the landlord and court are not allowed to move forward with an eviction proceeding. The State must commit to measures ensuring all eligible New Yorkers are aware of the program and are allowed to apply.

Recently published [research](#) in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, strongly supports the public-health rationale that eviction prevention can help stop COVID-19 cases and deaths. The analysis found that mortality increased five-fold in states after moratoriums had expired. Based on the data available, the authors concluded over 10,000 lives could have been saved.

Elected officials have a duty to ensure that New York avoids what would likely amount to a tidal wave of evictions and homelessness at a time when new variants of COVID-19 are surging. The Legal Aid Society calls on lawmakers to reconvene to amend and extend the eviction moratorium to avert a potential health and homelessness disaster, refocus efforts on streamlining the application process, and allow more time for desperately-needed relief funds to be distributed.

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*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](http://www.legalaidnyc.org)*