

October 18, 2021

Hon. Kathy Hochul
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 1224

Re: Prioritizing passage of “Good Cause” legislation to help keep New Yorkers in unregulated units safe from eviction

Dear Governor Kathy Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie,

The following signatories colleagues actively representing tens of thousands of tenants across New York State urge you to prioritize “Good Cause” legislation (S3082/A5573) next session, and to work with tenants, homeless New Yorkers, and advocates to ensure speedy passage of this legislation into law.

Despite progress combating the pandemic and returning the state to a sense of normalcy, millions of New Yorkers have lost their jobs, and many who were already struggling to survive remain at their absolute breaking point.

Roughly 1.6 million unregulated households across New York State continue to be in desperate need of additional protections to ensure that the devastating social and economic consequences of the pandemic are not allowed to turn a public health crisis into an eviction and homelessness crisis. We must act now to prevent this inequity from compounding once COVID-19 completely subsides.

“Good Cause” legislation would prohibit the eviction of residential tenants or the non-renewal of residential leases without legitimate reason, and would require landlords to have “just cause” to evict a tenant in an unregulated housing unit. Since the bill was introduced in 2019, tens of thousands of people across the state have faced eviction. Many of those people would have remained in their homes had their unregulated apartments received the minimal protections “Good Cause” would provide.

The “Good Cause” housing movement is spreading across the nation, with California, Oregon, Washington, New Jersey, and other major cities and states having already given unregulated tenants critical protections to remain in their homes. Just days ago, Hudson, NY passed “Good Cause” Eviction legislation for renters, becoming the second municipality in the state - after Albany - to do so. The city of Kingston, NY has also introduced the law, and dozens of other localities are considering similar action.

“Good Cause” is budget neutral and has received broad public support. In a 2020 poll, 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.

This is the time for bold moves and legislation that will overhaul antiquated housing policy that hurts vulnerable families and one that institutes universal protections that will keep renters safe.

If nothing is done, and after the eviction moratorium eventually expires, it is only a matter of months before New York grapples with an unprecedented eviction crisis.

Amid this ongoing and unprecedented public health crisis, keeping New Yorkers in their homes is vital to lessening the devastation caused by COVID-19. We urge you to protect tenants from eviction by passing “Good Cause” legislation into law.

Sincerely,

Housing Justice for All members and allies including,

89th Street Tenants Unidos Association
Broome Street Tenants Alliance
Buffalo Democratic Socialists of America
CAAAV: Organizing Asian Communities
Campaign for NY Health
Carroll Gardens Association
CASA-New Settlement
Citizen Action of New York
City-Wide Tenant Union of Rochester
Chhaya
Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC)
Churches United for Fair Housing (CUFFH)
Community Service Society
Community Voices Heard
Cooper Square Committee
Crown Heights Tenant Union
DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving
Free the People WNY Coalition
Fifth Avenue Committee
Flatbush Tenants Coalition

For the Many
Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES)
Greenbrook Tenants Coalition
Housing Conservation Coordinators
Hudson Catskill Housing Coalition
Housing Organizers for People Empowerment
Housing Rights Initiative
Housing Works
Hunger Free America
Ithaca Tenants Union
JustFix
The Legal Aid Society
Long Island Progressive Coalition
Los Sures Lucha
Lower Hudson Valley Democratic Socialists of America
Make the Road New York
Met Council on Housing
Mid Hudson Valley Democratic Socialists of America
Morningside Heights Resistance
Nassau County Democratic Socialists of America
Neighbors Helping Neighbors
Neighbors Together
New York City Democratic Socialists of America
New York Communities for Change
New York State Tenants & Neighbors
New York Working Families Party
Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition
NY4NY
Partnership for the Homeless
Partnership for the Public Good
Pratt Center for Community Development
PUSH (People United for Sustainable Housing) Buffalo
Release Aging People in Prison Campaign
Resource Generation NYC
Ridgewood Tenants Union
Right to Counsel NYC Coalition
Riverside Edgecomb Neighborhood Alliance (RENA)
Safety Net Project - Urban Justice Center
Southside United HDFC-Los Sures
Southwest Brooklyn Tenant Union
St. Nicks Alliance
Suffolk County Democratic Socialists of America
Syracuse Democratic Socialists of America
Syracuse Tenants Union
TakeRoot Justice
Tenants Political Action Committee

Together We Will Long Island
Westside Neighborhood Alliance (WSNA)
Woodside On The Move
United Neighbors Organization (UNO)
Uptown Community Democrats
VOCAL-NY