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Media Contacts:

Chris Natoli, Fifth Avenue Committee, [cnatoli@fifthave.org](mailto:cnatoli@fifthave.org), 917-693-7747

Alejandra Lopez, The Legal Aid Society, [ailopez@legal-aid.org](mailto:ailopez@legal-aid.org)

Emmitt Mendoza-Gaspar, Assemblymember Marcela Mityanes, [mendoza-gaspare@nyassembly.gov](mailto:mendoza-gaspare@nyassembly.gov)

## **Maimonides Tenants, Electeds, & Advocates Call on Hospital to Stop Mass Evictions**

*Heroes to Homeless: Maimonides Plans to Start Evicting Long-time Hospital Essential Workers and Retirees*

*Tenants Call on State Legislature to Pass Good Cause Eviction as Last Lifeline to Save Their Homes*

**BROOKLYN** – Dozens of Maimonides workers and retirees rallied with elected officials – including New York Assembly Members Marcela Mitaynes and Phara Souffrant Forrest, New York City Council Member Alexa Avilés – 1199 SEIU and The Legal Aid Society outside of the hospital’s employee housing to urge Maimonides to drop the eviction cases against them. Nearly 60 families are facing eviction despite decades of service to the hospital, including through the pandemic.

The group also demanded the state legislature pass Good Cause Eviction, which if passed next week as part of the state budget, could help them remain in their long-time homes. In addition, tenants called attention to the horrible building conditions they suffer through because Maimonides refuses to repair issues, including damage from a fire in October 2023 at 974 47th St., the building where they rallied.

Pressure from elected officials has grown. Last month, [Attorney General Letitia James](#) urged the hospital to halt the planned evictions, and [Maimonides tenants traveled to Albany](#) to meet with 14 Brooklyn legislators and the Speaker of the Assembly, Carl Heastie, calling on them to support them in their fight to stay in their homes and to pass Good Cause Eviction. With mounting pressure from various stakeholders, Maimonides has agreed to stay evictions until June 1st.

Maimonides used to own eleven apartment buildings near the hospital, which it rented out to nurses and staff. Now the hospital is evicting these essential workers and retirees because, in 2018, the hospital decided to cash in on their real estate assets, [selling](#) seven of the eleven buildings for \$68 million to a private landlord, Iris Holdings Group.

Meanwhile, Maimonides is trying to clear out two more buildings occupied by current employees in advance of a sale or demolition. The Legal Aid Society, on behalf of tenants in those two buildings, has commenced cases against the hospital, urging the court to appoint an administrator to take charge of the buildings and make repairs, especially in the building where damage from a fire hasn’t been repaired for months ([see photos and videos](#)). Those cases are scheduled to be heard on April 15.

Tenants are outraged that after decades of service to the hospital and praise as essential workers during the pandemic, Maimonides has not maintained their homes and is now trying to evict almost 60 families. The workers, retirees, and their neighbors formed a tenant union and [picketed](#) outside the hospital in November. They have been supported by Fifth Avenue Committee, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, The Legal Aid Society, and Sunset Park Assemblymember Marcela Mitaynes.

Maimonides does not have good cause to evict the tenants. The tenants paid their rent: in fact, for current employees, rent was automatically deducted from their paychecks and therefore never late. Retirees were allowed to stay after retirement, some for years, and Maimonides collected their rent without issue. Only after selling the buildings did Maimonides decide to start evicting current employees and retirees.

In selling the seven buildings to Iris Holdings Group, Maimonides negotiated a master lease covering the units occupied by workers and retirees. The hospital positioned itself as a middleman, renting those units from Iris Holdings Group and subletting them to their current and former employees. Maimonides agreed to exorbitant rent increases that they would pay to Iris.

Evicting the tenants in the buildings owned by Iris Holdings Group would spare Maimonides from the high rent increases they negotiated. Iris would benefit from the evictions because it would allow them to rent out the units to higher-paying tenants and to receive substantial subsidies from the City for low-income tenants.

“We gave our blood, sweat, and tears to our patients before, during, and after covid. We were called heroes, and now we are being punished with eviction for this dedication, for no reason except greed,” said a **Maimonides nurse** who wanted to remain anonymous. “All of us Maimonides tenants have been living in fear for the last five years. Our lives have been turned upside down.”

“Putting people out of their homes is wrong. The people facing eviction here worked during the pandemic to save lives. They were heroes for us when we needed them. I call on Maimonides to stop this eviction process. It is troubling to see an organization dedicated to providing healthcare working to push people out of their homes. Many of these families are working class immigrants from diverse backgrounds who gave the best years of their lives to this hospital. Displacing them would only intensify the pressing housing crisis throughout New York City. All parties should work together to keep people in their homes,” said **Assemblymember Marcela Mitaynes**.

“Maimonides's campaign to evict dozens of working, largely immigrant families and retirees is harmful and unjust to them, their patients, and the surrounding neighborhood,” said **Senator Julia Salazar, District 18**. “I join in calling for Maimonides to cease their eviction efforts and instead commit to making their housing truly stable and affordable. The crisis at Maimonides is just another reminder of the increasingly urgent need to pass Good Cause Eviction, my bill that would protect hundreds of thousands of tenants and their communities from arbitrary evictions and outrageously high rent increases.”

**Tyler Crawford, Staff Attorney in the Housing Justice-Group Advocacy Practice at The Legal Aid Society**, said: “Our clients and all the Maimonides tenants have dedicated their lives to caring for the hospital's patients, even risking their own health through the pandemic. Some of these healthcare heroes may become homeless when Maimonides begins evicting them from their long-time homes. We demand that Maimonides stop the eviction cases against them and allow them to remain in their homes. We look forward to continuing to fight in court on their behalf.”

“We support these essential workers in their fight to stay in their homes and in their neighborhood. They've been part of their community for decades, and after years of service to Brooklyn, they deserve to stay with stable and affordable housing,” said **Michelle de la Uz, Executive Director of Fifth Avenue Committee & Neighbors Helping Neighbors**.

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*[Fifth Avenue Committee](#) is a community development corporation in south Brooklyn that provides community-centered affordable housing, grassroots organizing, policy advocacy, and transformative education, training, and services. [Neighbors Helping Neighbors](#) is an affiliate of Fifth Avenue Committee serving Sunset Park residents through housing counseling and tenant organizing and advocacy.*

*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 over 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.*

[Assemblymember Marcela Mitaynes](#) represents the 51st Assembly District, including Red Hook, Sunset Park, Northern Bay Ridge, and parts of Boro Park, Park Slope, and Gowanus. She is a Peruvian immigrant and previously a tenant organizer in her community for more than 10 years, playing a key role in the passage of the 2019 Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act. She is the first Peruvian-American in the New York State legislature.

[Housing Justice for All](#) is a statewide coalition of more than 80 organizations representing tenants and homeless New Yorkers, united in our fight for housing as a human right.