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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Bronx Tenants, Advocates, Elected Officials Gather to Demand Immediate Repairs to Deplorable Conditions – Including Elevator Outage in 16-Floor Building – Amid a Citywide Heatwave

480 East 188th Street has over 500 open violations; residents are calling on the courts to hold landlord accountable and save their deteriorating rent-stabilized building

(Bronx, NY) – Tenants at 480 East 188th Street, along with the support of **Senator Gustavo Rivera, Council Member Oswald Feliz, the Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition and The Legal Aid Society**, held a press conference on Wednesday, July 17, to condemn the landlords of their building, Karan Singh and Sean Campbell, and draw immediate attention to the years-long essential service outages, including elevator outages amid an unprecedented heat wave, harassment of tenants, and the long term neglect of the 170-unit building. The building has more than 500 open violations, 147 of which are classified as “immediately hazardous,” which property owners must correct within 24 hours of receiving the Notice of Violation.

Tenants have been working with Legal Aid since October 2023 and with NWBCCC since January 2024 to strategize how repairs can be obtained and living conditions can be improved. Tenants have reported extensive incidents of harassment, with many receiving threatening letters demanding payments of money that they do not actually owe. Others have been told that they have days to move out, even when their rent payments are up to date.

Continued harassment and inhumane conditions have deeply impacted tenants, creating stress and affecting their mental and physical health and security.

“One elevator has not been working for well over a year, and I have called 311 everyday,” said **Melanie Jackson, a tenant at 480 East 188th Street**. “If someone is sick and waiting for an ambulance, they can’t get the help they need. We desperately need help. We cannot wait for a tragedy for the landlord to be accountable.”

Tenants demanded that “**FORDHAM FULTON REALTY CORP,**” a corporation for which Mr. Rajmattie Singh and Mr. Karan Singh are listed as the Owner and Head Officer, complete necessary repairs to the elevator and individual apartments, hire a management company, and qualify security for the building.

Tenants also called on the state legislature to pass the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) to address predatory equity and provide a pathway for tenants to own and manage their buildings responsibly.

“Landlords are accumulating units they have no capacity to maintain,” said **Ahshaki Long, a tenant at 480 East 188th St.** “With the passage of TOPA, tenants would have a pathway to instate responsible management companies and end the vicious cycle of handing off buildings from one predatory landlord to another. Tenants should be at the helm of the conversation when their buildings are being sold and have a seat at the negotiating table.”

“For too long, these tenants have suffered deplorable conditions including leaks, vermin infestation, and frequent elevator outages, which are especially problematic, as they leave tenants vulnerable to heat-related injuries,” said **Zoe Kheyman, Staff Attorney at The Legal Aid Society.** “All New Yorkers have a legal right to live in homes that are safe for their families. We are calling on the owner to immediately repair these hazardous conditions.”

“We cannot stand idly by while landlords neglect addressing the basic maintenance demands of tenants. Tenants at 480 E 188th Street have waited long enough for action while living in inhumane conditions that affect their physical and mental health, as well as their day-to-day security,” said **State Senator Gustavo Rivera of the 33rd district in the Bronx.** “I stand with my constituents and support the Legal Aid Society and the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC) in continuing to fight for the repairs they need and deserve.”

“Tenants deserve to live in safe apartments, free from conditions such as lack of heating and hot water,” said **Oswald Feliz, New York City Council Member for District 15.** “I’m shocked by the amount of housing code violations that continue to exist in this building. We will work with every city agency to hold this landlord accountable.”

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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 over 140 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. <https://www.legalaidnyc.org>

The Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC) unites diverse peoples and institutions to fight for racial and economic justice through community organizing to transform the Bronx and beyond. We take direct action to confront injustice and win concrete victories that change material conditions, giving people a sense of the power of our community. We invest in our members’ capacity to realize a shared vision for the Bronx where our people collectively own and govern the assets and political processes in our community.