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Legal Aid Statement on the New York City Rent Guidelines Board’s 2026 Income and Affordability Study

(NEW YORK, NY) — The Legal Aid Society released the following statement on the New York City Rent Guidelines Board 2026 Income and Affordability Study:

“The findings of today’s report make the clearest case that tenants of rent-stabilized homes – the majority of whom are low-income or working-class New Yorkers – cannot afford another rent increase. You simply cannot raise the rent on people who are already choosing between rent and survival.

“According to the report, the Consumer Price Index, which measures inflation, was 3.4 percent in New York City metropolitan area during 2025, highlighting a growing economic instability that will continue to put a strain on New Yorkers’ ability to afford not only rent, but groceries, medicine, and other essentials.

“The average annual unemployment rate for New York City residents also rose to 5.2 percent in 2025. Moreover, there were 15,105 residential evictions carried out in 2025 – an increase of 9.7 percent from the previous year – marking the fourth straight year of increases.

“The Board must take this data into account and recognize that, while landlords of stabilized units continue to enjoy [steady or increased profits](#), their tenants are in urgent need of relief. The stated purpose of the Board is to make an informed decision about whether a rent increase is both necessary for landlords and feasible for tenants, and the [data released thus far](#) proves unequivocally that any increase in rent for tenants in stabilized units would serve only to benefit landlords and would have devastating consequences for tenants.

“Given the ongoing affordability crisis that, according to the Board’s own reports, is having a negative impact on tenants’ ability to shoulder another rent increase, the Board must commit to a freeze at both the preliminary vote and the final vote in June to prevent tenants from being pushed from their homes and communities.”

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The Legal Aid Society is a nonprofit law firm that exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For 150 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 the people we serve and helps improve our communities.

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