

Tuesday February 2, 2021

Testimony on Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Housing Regarding DHCR, or the New York State Division of Homes & Community Renewal

Submitted by Juan Nunez

My name is Juan Nunez and I'm president of my tenant association at 2770-2780 Kingsbridge Terrace. 3 years ago we were hit with MCI rent increases of \$57 per room per apartment for so called bathrooms and kitchens renovations. Our Landlord is known as one of the evictors in the Bronx and is known for using MCI rent increases to displace hundreds of black and brown families however DHCR approved these MCIs regardless of our appeals and testimonies. 3 years later and during this horrific pandemic we're still dealing with lack of repairs, mold, and mice infestation due to the same so-called renovations we're still being charged for. Many of my neighbors lost their jobs due to this pandemic on top of the rent burden they were already facing. Most weren't able qualify for the failed Rent Relief Program and even though the moratorium is keeping them home for now, it's not nearly enough. We need to tax the rich and cancel rent immediately.

For these reasons I testify on behalf of Housing Justice for All demands to:

- \$2.2 to clear all back rent accrued during the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic
- \$500 million in funding for a Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) to provide rental assistance for homeless New Yorkers or New Yorkers at risk of becoming homeless
- Fully fund 14,000 Units of Supportive Housing
- \$3 billion investment in public housing authorities across New York
- \$500 million for New York State Division of Homes & Community Renewal (DHCR) to implement and enforce new tenant protections
- Invest in Our New York by raising taxes on corporate landlords, full elimination of 421-A and 485-A, taxes on private equity mezzanine debt, and a Pied-a-Terre tax
- Invest in Tenant Opportunity to Purchase (TOPA)