

To whom it may concern,

My name is Ana Galvez and I live at 295 E 149 Street, I have been a resident of the Bronx for 16 years, and I'm here as a leader of CASA (Community Action for Safe Apartments), a member of the Right to Counsel NYC, Housing Justice for All, and Invest in Our NY coalitions. I'm here today to testify on behalf of demands from tenants and homeless New Yorkers to:

- Pass the Rent & Mortgage Cancellation Act (Niou/Salazar) and protect all New Yorkers from eviction and rent debt
- Instead of putting the burden on tenants to apply for rent relief, the State should use the federal stimulus money to create a hardship fund that landlords should have to apply to make up lost rent
- Pass the Invest in Our NY platform for the remaining funds needed to cover the total rent owed across the state

I you want to understand my despair. As we all know, almost a year ago our lives changed because of the pandemic. We were left without a job, schools closed... we all know what happened. What you may not know is the situation of each one of the vulnerable people like me. I am a Mexican mother, who came to this country at 21 years old as everyone arrives with the dream of helping my family in my country and since then I never stopped working, and over time I met someone with whom I brought a beautiful girl into the world.

And to her I promised she would never lack anything, and since then I ALWAYS worked a double shift, and I never asked for help from anyone, because I always thought I should leave it for the people who needed it the most. I don't mean to say that I did not need it, but I lived day to day, and I never missed a plate of food for my daughter and me; I could cover the expenses including my rent.

My life changed in February of last year and, like everyone else, I thought this would be over soon, until the restaurants closed completely and unfortunately where I worked went bankrupt.

I applied for all kinds of help and was rejected for being an immigrant with a 9-year-old daughter who is a citizen with all her rights. So I started searching for food, and I did not stop applying for help, until eventually I gave up and a friend made me a loan to sell tamales on the streets. We did not have any savings, as I said, I lived from day to day and helped my family in my country, and I say helped because now I don't even have resources for myself.

My biggest concern and what causes me anxiety is the rent. No one should live in fear and suffer harassment from their landlord. We are all human beings impacted by the pandemic, and we need your help regardless of whether we are citizens or not - HELP FOR EVERYONE EQUALLY! That is what we are asking for and I hope you listen to us and help and hopefully we see the end of this nightmare that has us all who owe rent up all night with insomnia.

God Bless you and Thank you for your attention,

Ana Galvez,

CASA Leader