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Tenant Inquilino

Housing for people, not profit

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Metropolitan Council on Housing
339 Lafayette St.
New York, NY 10012

PERIODICAL

City Council Considers Rent-Law Renewal, Urstadt and RGB Reform

By Steven Wishnia

Round One of the battle to renew rent regulations will take place this month in the City Council.

While the Council is expected to renew the city's rent laws easily when it votes on March 12, what it does on several related proposals will be more important in helping determine the fate of tenant protections in Albany this spring.

Council Speaker Gifford Miller (D-Manhattan) has endorsed four measures. The first two are the bill renewing the city's rent-stabilization law and the housing-emergency resolution needed to continue rent control. The other two, cosponsored by Miller, Christine Quinn (D-Manhattan), and Melinda Katz (D-Queens)—but not by Council housing committee chair Madeline Provenzano (D-Bronx)—are resolutions urging the state Legislature to repeal the Urstadt Law and to approve the Assembly bill renewing the rent laws.

While neither resolution is binding on Albany, both address key parts of this year's tenant agenda. The Urstadt Law, which forbids the city to enact rent controls stricter than the state's, is the toxic residue of Gov. Nelson Rockefeller's 1971 vacancy-decontrol fiasco; the Council resolution says it deprives the city from "exercising home rule over an issue of vital local importance." The Assembly bill, A.2716-A, would fix some of the more destructive parts of the state's 1997 rent law and the 1994 city law. It would repeal vacancy decontrol for high-rent apartments and lower the increase allowed for vacant apartments from 20% to 10%. It would

also extend rent stabilization to former Mitchell-Lama and Section 8 developments.

As vacancy increases and high rent decontrol are the main loopholes in the rent laws—a loophole enlarged by weak enforcement against illegal overcharges—curbing them is considered crucial. "If the Senate and governor simply renew rent stabilization 'as is,' they will in fact be phasing the rent laws out," a coalition of the Legal Aid Society, the City-Wide Task Force on Housing Court, Legal Services for New York, and Housing Conservation Coordinators testified at a packed Council hearing Feb. 25. And the Urstadt Law gives control over local housing policy to upstate and suburban politicians who take thousands of dollars in the campaign contributions

from city landlords, but can't be voted out by city residents.

Several other bills covering items on the tenant agenda have not—so far—won the backing of the Council leadership.

Quinn is planning to introduce a bill to give the Council power to confirm RGB appointees. Her proposal is intended to change the way the RGB sets guidelines for rent increases: It would ban the use of the "PIOC," the price index of operating costs, instead asking the board to consider the availability of affordable housing and landlords' overall profitability. Landlords would have to submit an income-and-expenditures statement to the RGB each year in order to be eligible to collect rent increases. Another provision would enact into law a

common chant at RGB meetings: It would periodically require a sample group of landlords to open their books to the board, in order to present a more accurate picture of the costs involved in running a building.

However, a bill to abolish the Maximum Base Rent system for determining increases for rent-controlled apartments—sponsored by Quinn, Katz, and 14 others—has been put on hold. While the MBR system is considered cumbersome and bureaucratic, and its 7.5% annual rent increases are almost always higher than what rent-stabilized tenants get from the city Rent Guidelines Board, this year may be the exception. The proposed legislation would have had the RGB

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Homelessness Hits Record High

By Steven Wishnia

More people are homeless in New York City than at any time in the last 20 years, according to "State of the Homeless 2003," a report released last month by the Coalition for the Homeless.

In January, 38,400 people stayed in city shelters on an average night, an increase of more than 7,000 in the last year. That is the highest recorded shelter population in the city's history, and "represents the largest one-year increase in homelessness since the Great Depression," the report says. Families with children now make up almost 80% of the city's shelter population.

Those figures do not include homeless people sleeping in the streets or doubled up with relatives or friends.

The number of homeless families in the shelters has followed a different pattern than the amount of single adults. While home-

lessness among single adults has been increasing overall, the number staying in the shelters falls every summer and peaks in late winter. In contrast, the number of families in the shelters has been rising steadily for five years, and the amount of homeless children has more than doubled since the 1997 weakening of rent regulations.

Going by the Coalition's figures, the number of homeless people reflects housing costs more directly than it does the overall state of the economy. The pre-9/11 high was 28,700 in early 1987, at the height of the '80s bull market. The lowest number in the last 20 years came in the 1990 recession, when housing-cost inflation temporarily slowed. Homelessness began rising again in the late '90s, despite the dot-com boom, after the 1997 laws allowed substantial rent

increases on vacant apartments and made it easier to evict tenants who fall behind in their rent. Now, the city's poorer families are being battered by both recession and skyrocketing housing costs. In the last three years, the report says, the percentage of city apartments—including public housing—that rent for less than \$600 a month has fallen from one-third to one-quarter.

The Bloomberg administration's main response, the report says, has been to expand a new "scattered-site" program of paying private landlords about \$100 a night to house homeless families temporarily. According to the Coalition, this program now occupies over 2,000 apartments, about one of every 20 vacant units on the market for less than \$1,000 a month, with the percentage rising to one out of 12 in the Bronx.

Another issue is the mayor's efforts to make it easier to throw homeless adults out of the shelters. A 1981 court settlement requires the city to provide emergency shelter to anyone poor enough to be on welfare or homeless due to "physical, mental, or social dysfunction"; the Coalition credits this rule with dramatically reducing the number of people freezing to death in the city. Bloomberg has proposed allowing shelters to eject single adults—and

ban them from city-run emergency lodging for at least 30 days—if they violate shelter rules or fail to comply with welfare, social-service, or housing-search requirements. State courts rebuffed a similar Giuliani plan in 2000, but the city is appealing that decision. The Appellate Division held a hearing on the case Feb. 28.

The Bloomberg administration is painting its

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LETTERS

I read, with interest, the latest edition of *Tenant*. I count on *Tenant* to keep me informed on all facets of tenant news. In this issue, however, Steven Wishnia presents highly controversial views on international issues in his article "US Named One of 10 Worst Housing-Rights Violators."

I wonder if Mr. Wishnia checked the statements he presented from the Swiss COHRE report. I

was amazed when I read that Israel was being condemned for "the April 2002 bulldozing of the Jenin camp." The Jenin camp is extremely large; the Israelis bulldozed only the homes which terrorists used as the bunkers from which to attack Israeli soldiers. The rest of the very large camp remains intact.

Dealing with international issues acts as a divisive element in a tenant newspaper. What we need is to stand united on our own housing issues. The purpose of our newspaper should be to inform residents of the metropolitan area of important movements and events that affect us, not to divide us on the basis of our opinions on international politics.

I remain, as ever, a dedicated member of Met Council, whose work I appreciate enormously.

M.B.

Manhattan

Steven Wishnia replies: Housing is an issue that goes far beyond the borders of New York State, from gentrification in San Francisco to evictions in Karachi, so that's why we covered the COHRE report.

The report criticized Israel for the bulldozing of 5,000 Palestinians' homes, not just Jenin. One can support Israel's right to exist in

peace—as I do—while opposing the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and "collective punishment" policies.

BECOME A WRITING TENANT

Met Council wants to profile you and your neighbors' struggle to obtain affordable quality housing. We want you to write for *Tenant/Inquilino*.

For more information call 212-979-6238

HPD CODE VIOLATIONS ON LINE

Look up your building!

At long last, the HPD violations terminal is available on-line. If you go to the HPD Website listed below and follow the instructions, you should be able to get an up-to-date list of violations on a building.

www.nyc.gov/html/hpd/html/data/hpd-online-portal.html

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE???



Well ...

- Without stronger rent regulations you can kiss your apartment good-bye.
- Without rent regulations you can pay market rate, want a rent increase of 300%?
- Without rent regulations your landlord doesn't have to renew your lease. Period.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

COME TO THE Cooper Square Committee's Community Forum on How to Strengthen the Rent Regulations.

WEDNESDAY MARCH 26th at JASA, 200 East 5th Street at 6:30 PM

For More information call Geoff at 212-228-8210 or email coopersquarecomm@aol.com. You can also visit our website at www.coopersquare.org for a calendar of events and updates on important dates!



Watch Rent Wars News

the weekly tenants show that covers the news, people, and events that affect New York's tenants.

Brooklyn

Every Monday at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.: Time Warner Channel 34 or Cablevision Channel 67

Manhattan

Every Sunday at 6 p.m.: Time Warner Ch. 67 or RCN Ch. 110. Without converter: Time Warner Ch. 16 or RCN Ch. 110

Also check out www.rentwars.com

Participate in the RWN Forum, post events, listen to interviews and specials online, and read show supplements that go deeper into the stories covered on the show.



Scott Sommer hosts Met Council's

HOUSING NOTEBOOK

Mondays at 8:00 p.m. on WBAI 99.5 FM

Listen on the Internet www.wbaifree.org/index.html

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- News from other NY tenant groups
- Fact Sheets & complete Housing Laws
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- Rent Control/Rent Stabilization/DHCR information
- Weekly Housing Court Decision summaries



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Cómo cabildear en persona

Por la renovación de las leyes de renta y para revocar la desregulación al desocupar

Traducido por Lightning Translations

- Haga una cita para hablar con su legislador. No hace falta ir al ayuntamiento ni a Albany para la reunión; usted puede citarse en la oficina local del distrito del legislador o la legisladora.
- Decida quién acudirá a la reunión. Trate de elegir una delegación de inquilinos y líderes de inquilinos que en su mayoría vivan en el distrito del legislador(a). Elija a una persona como vocero principal del grupo; asegúrese que sea alguien

que pueda hacer prevalecer su punto de vista en pocas palabras.

- Dígale al legislador que su grupo quiere que las leyes se renueven (1) *sin* concesión alguna a los caseros y (2) *con* revocación de las enmiendas debilitantes que permiten el sobrecargo del 20 por ciento cada vez que un nuevo inquilino ocupa un apartamento, además de la desregulación de apartamentos desocupados que se alquilan a \$2,000 o más al mes.

- Hable sobre cómo las leyes de renta benefician a los inquilinos del distrito. Explique que ellas impiden los incrementos de renta inesperados o excesivos, garantizan la renovación de contratos de arrendamiento y protegen a los inquilinos de los caseros que no proveen reparaciones y servicios. Hable honestamente de sus propias experiencias o las de otros inquilinos en el distrito, pero procure que la presentación sea breve. Si usted llama a Met

Council u otros grupos de la ciudad antes de la reunión, podemos darle documentación que apoye su argumento, además de información útil para ayudarlo a preparar su presentación.

- Si está seguro de que el legislador apoya su punto de vista, pídale que tome iniciativa en el tema. Si está cabildeando un miembro de la Asamblea, pídale que mantenga la presión sobre el Vocero Sheldon Silver. La asamblea ha aprobado un proyecto de ley de

renovación (A.2716-A) que renueva las leyes, revoca la desregulación de apartamentos desocupados de altas rentas y reduce el sobrecargo de desocupación; necesitamos que el Vocero Silver se mantenga firme en la defensa de ese proyecto cuando negocie con el líder del Senado, Joe Bruno.

Si se está reuniendo con un miembro del Senado, pídale que tome la iniciativa para hacer

pasa a la página 4

Los Ajustes de la "Junta de Regulación de Renta" de la Ciudad de Nueva York (Orden No. 34)

Para los contratos de apartamentos de Renta Estabilizada que comienzan el 1ro. de octubre de 2002 hasta el 30 de septiembre de 2003, incluyendo las concesiones de Pataki adoptadas por la Legislatura Estatal el 19 de junio de 1997

Los topes de renta que aparecen en el cuadro son los incrementos máximos que los dueños de edificios pueden cobrar legalmente por los apartamentos de renta estabilizada en la ciudad de Nueva York. Son válidos para todos los contratos que comienzan dentro del período de doce meses a partir del 1ro. de octubre de 2002. Los incrementos de alquiler basados en las pautas para la renovación del contrato de 1 o 2 años pueden cobrarse solamente una vez durante el período cubierto por dichas pautas, y deben ser aplicados a la renta legal estabilizada para el 30 de septiembre de 2002. Las cantidades que aparecen en el cuadro y los incrementos para los apartamentos vacíos no se aplican a los apartamentos que estaban sujetos a renta controlada en aquella fecha. No se permite la sobrecarga también conocido como el «impuesto de pobres.»

Los Contratos para Apartamentos Vacíos o Nuevos En junio de 1997, el gobernador George Pataki, al intentar destruir la regulación de rentas, forzó cambios que les dieron a los caseros una sobrecarga muy grande por los apartamentos vacíos. Una cláusula de la "Reforma al Acta de Regulación de Renta" de 1997 permite que los nuevos alquileres sean incrementados en un porcentaje obligatorio: 20% para un contrato de dos años, y por un contrato de 1 año, 20% de incremento menos la diferencia en el tope de renovación para los contratos de 1 y 2 años. La nueva ley permite también incrementos adicionales para los apartamentos vacíos donde no se habían cobrado incrementos por desocupación por ocho años o más.

Exceso de Cobro Los inquilinos deben estar al tanto de que muchos caseros van a aprovecharse de la complejidad de estas regulaciones y subvenciones, así como del poco conocimiento de los inquilinos del historial de renta de sus aparta-

mentos, para cobrar un alquiler ilegal. Una vez que el inquilino haya tomado posesión del apartamento, puede escoger entre llenar un formulario de queja de exceso de cobro de renta con la oficina de la División de Vivienda y Renovación Comunal (DHCR), o disputar la cantidad de la renta en la corte de vivienda de la ciudad para que se determine cuál es el alquiler legal.

Si un posible inquilino da muestras de conocer sus derechos, lo más probable es que el casero no firmará ningún contrato con tal inquilino. Los caseros evitan contratar con inquilinos que les pueden dar problemas. El exceso de cobro de alquiler es muy común. Todos los inquilinos deben luchar contra posibles excesos de cobro. Obtenga y llene un formulario *Form RA-89* con la oficina de DHCR para determinar el alquiler correcto en los archivos oficiales. Llame a la DHCR a (718) 739-6400 para obtener un formulario, o búsquelo en el sitio www.dhcr.state.ny.us.

La Apelación de la Renta de Mercado Justa Otro tipo de exceso de cobro sucede fre-

cuentemente cuando se vacía un apartamento que previamente estaba sujeto a renta controlada y se alquila con renta estabilizada. La Junta de Regulación de Renta (RGB) establece anualmente lo que ellos llaman el "Tope Especial de la Renta de Mercado Justa," el cual es empleado por la DHCR para bajar las rentas de mercado injustas de los inquilinos que llenan el formulario llamado "Apelación a la Renta Justa de Mercado" (FMRA). Según la Orden 34, es la Renta de Mercado Justa de HUD o un 50% sobre la renta base máxima. Ningún inquilino de un apartamento de renta estabilizada que fue descontrolado el 1ro de abril de 1984 o después debe dejar de poner a prueba la llamada "Renta Legal Inicial Regulada" (renta de mercado) que los caseros cobran cuando hay descontrol del apartamento. Use el formulario de DHCR *Form RA-89*. Indique claramente que su queja es tanto una queja de "Apelación a la Renta Justa de Mercado" como de "exceso de cobro." La corte de vivienda no puede tomar decisión sobre una Apelación de Renta de Mercado. Apartamentos vacíos que antes

estaban controlados en edificios que se han convertido en cooperativas o condominios no se vuelven estabilizados y no satisfacen los requisitos para la Apelación de la Renta Justa de Mercado.

Exención de Incrementos para las Personas de Mayor Edad:

Las personas de 62 años o más que viven en apartamentos estabilizados y cuyos ingresos familiares anuales son de \$20,000 o menos, y que pagan (o enfrentan un incremento de alquiler que los forzaría a pagar) una renta de un tercio o más de sus ingresos, pueden tener derecho al programa de Exención de Incrementos para las Personas de Mayor Edad (SCRIE, por sus siglas en inglés), si aplican al Departamento de la Ciudad de Nueva York Sobre las Personas de Mayor Edad, cuya dirección es: SCRIE Unit, 2 Lafayette Street, NY, NY 10007. Si el alquiler actual de un inquilino que tiene derecho a este programa sobrepasa un tercio del ingreso, no se lo puede reducir, pero es posible evitar incrementos de alquiler en el futuro. Obtenga el formulario de SCRIE por llamar al (212) 442-

1000.

Unidades de Desván (Lofts)

Los incrementos legales sobre la renta base para las unidades de desván son de un 1 por ciento por un contrato de un año y un 2 por ciento por un contrato de dos años. No se permiten incrementos para las unidades de desván vacías.

Hoteles y Apartamentos de una Sola Habitación

No habrá ningún aumento de la renta este año para los apartamentos de hotel de Clase A, casas de habitaciones, hoteles de clase B (de 30 habitaciones o más), hoteles de una sola habitación, y las casas de habitaciones (Clase B, 6-29 cuartos). No se permiten incrementos para apartamentos vacíos.

La Desregulación de Rentas Altas y Altos Ingresos

(1) Los apartamentos que legalmente se alquilan por \$2,000 o más por mes y que se desocuparon entre el 7 de julio de 1993 y el 1ro. de octubre de 1993, o en o desde del 1ro de abril de 1994 son sujetos a la desregulación. (2) La misma desregulación se les aplica, para el mismo período establecido en (1), a los apartamentos que legalmente pagan \$2,000 o más mensualmente aunque no se desocupen, si el ingreso total de la familia es más de \$175,000 en los dos años consecutivos previos. Para cumplir los requisitos de esta segunda forma de desregulación, el casero tiene que enviarle un formulario de certificación de ingreso al inquilino entre el 1ro de enero y el 1ro de mayo, así como someter dicho formulario al DHCR y conseguir su aprobación.

Para pautas previas, llame a la RGB al 212-385-2934 o busque el sitio www.housingnyc.com.



| Tipo de Contrato | Renta Legal Actual | Contrato de 1 Año | Contrato de 2 Años | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|--|---|---|
| Renovación del Contrato | Todas | 2% | 4% | |
| Contratos para Apartamentos Vacíos | Más de \$500 | Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años | 18% | 20% |
| | | Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años | 0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, más el 18% | 0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, más el 20% |
| | Menos de \$300 | Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años | 18% + \$100 | 20% + \$100 |
| | | Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años | 0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, + 18% + \$100 | 0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, + 20% + \$100 |
| | Renta de \$300 a \$500 | Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años | 18% o \$100, lo que sea mayor | 20% o \$100, lo que sea mayor |
| | | Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años | 0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, mas 18%, o \$100, lo que sea mayor | 0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, mas 20%, o \$100, lo que sea mayor |

Cabildear

viene de la página 3

aprobar un proyecto de ley compañero al proyecto de la Asamblea. Avise a su Senador que no bastará simplemente con renovar las leyes. Sin cambios en las leyes, la ciudad de Nueva York perderá la poca vivienda asequible que queda.

- Pregunte si un miembro del personal de la oficina estará a cargo de la cuestión; si hay tal persona, manténgase en contacto con ella. Pídale que le avise de cambios importantes o noticias.

- Haga al legislador un reconocimiento especial si se sabe que él o ella es partidario(a) de los derechos de los inquilinos. Pídale que le dé consejos y ayuda para comunicarse con otros legisladores. Pídale que trate de convencer a los otros miembros de la legislatura de apoyar sus planteamientos.

- Si su legislador se opone a las leyes de renta o apoya nuevas enmiendas debilitantes, exprese

con firmeza su opinión y la de otros inquilinos en el distrito. Trate de concluir la visita en una atmósfera amigable e intente reclutar a otros grupos a la causa para reunirse con el legislador otra vez. No entre en discusiones, insultos o amenazas. Las amenazas sirven solamente después de varias reuniones sin resultados y si usted tiene la capacidad de activar a los electores del legislador.

- Después de la visita, continúe con el cabildeo enviando una carta, llamada o fax de agradecimiento. Señale otra vez su deseo de que las leyes de renta se renueven revocando las enmiendas debilitantes; si ha prometido enviar información adicional, incluya ésta en el mensaje. Manténgase en contacto para que el legislador sepa que usted sigue activo en esos temas.

Homeless

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policy as a way to enable shelters to evict people who get violent and endanger other residents, but its proposed rules are much broader. They would allow shelters to evict people for missing an appointment with a social worker or not going to drug treatment, says the Coalition's Patrick Markee. "It would shred the last remaining safety net for the homeless," he adds.

To reduce homelessness, the report suggests renewing the 1990s "New York/New York Agreement" for state-funded supportive housing; converting the scattered-site units to permanent housing; and expanding the share of apartments earmarked for the homeless to 10 percent of the mayor's housing plan.

Council

continued from page 1

set increases for rent-controlled apartments, and this year, sponsors fear, the RGB may give increases higher than 7.5%, due to the Bloomberg property-tax increase.

In addition, Councilmember Bill Perkins (D-Manhattan) is the lead sponsor of Intro 101, which would strengthen the city's lead-paint law, which was gutted in 1999 by the Giuliani administration and then-Speaker Peter Vallone. The bill was cosponsored by two-thirds of the Council's members last year, but Miller so far has refused to hold hearings on it.



SAVE THESE DATES

✓ **Tuesday, March 11, 11:00 a.m.-5 p.m.**

City Council Housing Committee vote on the rent laws, City Council Chambers, City Hall. J/M/Z/4/5/6 to Brooklyn Bridge or R/N to City Hall

✓ **Wednesday, March 12, 1:30-5 p.m.**

Witness the full vote of the City Council on the Rent Law and the Urstadt resolution. City Council Chambers, City Hall. J/M/Z/4/5/6 to Brooklyn Bridge or R/N to City Hall

✓ **Saturday, May 3**

Met Council General Assembly; workshops on the rent laws
Time and location TBA

✓ **Tuesday, May 13**

"Tenant Lobby Day." Rally and lobby for stronger rent laws in Albany. Call Met Council for bus info or see coupon page 5.

✓ **Sunday, June 1**

Rally for Stronger Rent Laws in Union Square
N/Q/R/W/4/5/6 to Union Square.

✓ **EVERY Wednesday from 6:00-8:30 p.m.**

Volunteer nights at the office of the Metropolitan Council on Housing, 339 Lafayette St., Room 301, Buzzer #5 (Our space is a two-flight walkup.)

**No se quede
helado:
¡ORGANÍZASE!**



La ley requiere que su casero proporcione calefacción y agua caliente a las temperaturas siguientes, desde el 1ro de octubre hasta el 31 de mayo:

Desde las 6 a.m. hasta las 10 p.m.: Si la temperatura afuera es de menos de 55 grados, la temperatura dentro debe ser al menos de 68 grados en todo el apartamento.

Desde las 10 p.m. hasta las 6 a.m.: Si la temperatura afuera es de menos de 40 grados, la temperatura dentro debe ser al menos de 55 grados en todo el apartamento.

Se tiene que proporcionar agua caliente a un mínimo de 120 grados en el grifo las 24 horas del día, todo el año.

Si su casero no mantiene estas temperaturas mínimas, usted debe:

- * Comenzar una "Acción HP" (HP Action) en la Corte de Vivienda. Pida una inspección por orden de la corte y una Orden de Corrección (Order to Correct)

- * Llamar al Buro Central de Quejas (Central Control Bureau) de la ciudad de Nueva York al (212) 824-4328 inmediatamente, para documentar la violación del casero. Llame repetidamente. Se supone que un inspector vendrá eventualmente, aunque a veces no lo haga.

- * Exhortar a los otros inquilinos en el edificio a llamar al Central Complaint. Todos deben llamar repetidamente, al menos una vez al día, todos los días en que tenga problemas con la calefacción.

- * Comprar un buen termómetro para afuera y adentro, para documentar las fechas exactas, las horas, y las temperaturas, tanto afuera como adentro, mientras tenga problemas con la calefacción. Esta documentación es su evidencia

- * Llamar a la División de Vivienda y Renovación Comunal del Estado de Nueva York (DHCR, por sus siglas en inglés) al (718) 739-6400, y pedir que le envíen el formulario de Queja de Calefacción y Agua Caliente. Llene el formulario y consigue la

participación de todos los inquilinos en su edificio que pueden firmarlo. Reclame una orden para restaurar la calefacción y el agua caliente, y que se reduzcan y congelen (¡disculpe lo de "congelen"!) todas las rentas.

- * Necesitarán una fuerte asociación de inquilinos para obligar al casero a proporcionar la calefacción y el agua caliente. Escriban y llamen al casero para demandar las reparaciones y aceite. Prepárense para una huelga de renta (sobre todo con asesoría legal)—de relámpago si es necesario.

Las leyes sobre la calefacción establecen también:

- * Que el Departamento de Reparaciones de Emergencia de la ciudad le proporcione la calefacción si el casero no lo hace. (No se siente en un bloque de hielo—otra vez, ¡disculpe!—mientras espere que lo haga.)

- * Una multa de \$250 al casero por cada día que se produzca la violación. (Pero la verdad es que la Corte de Vivienda raras veces impone las multas, y mucho menos las cobra).

- * Una multa de \$1,000 al casero si algún aparato de control automático se instala en la caldera para mantener la temperatura por debajo del mínimo legal.

- * Si el tanque de combustible de la caldera está vacío, los inquilinos tienen el derecho de comprar su propio combustible después de haber pasado 24 horas sin calefacción y también sin obtener ninguna respuesta del casero. Esto no se aplica si la caldera está rota y necesita tanto reparación como combustible.

¡Cuidado! ¡proteja su dinero! Si los inquilinos deciden comprar el combustible, hay que seguir los procedimientos legales cuidadosamente. Consiga la ayuda y el consejo de un organizador de inquilinos. La existencia de leyes de calefacción y agua caliente vigentes no garantiza que el gobierno las implemente. No se quede helado por esperar que la ciudad o el estado actúe. ¡Organízase!

SAVE THE DATE

**NYC Tenants To Invade Albany!
Tuesday, May 13, all day**

On this day, rent-regulated tenants and their allies will rally and lobby in Albany at the state legislature for stronger rent laws. The rent laws expire June 15 of this year.

We MUST make a strong showing in order to be taken seriously.

If you can only take one day off of work this year to defend your home, make sure THIS is that day. According to numerous elected officials from both parties, their biggest impression of the 1997 renewal fight was "Tenant Lobby Day", when over 5,000 tenants converged on the state capital. If we don't make an equal or greater showing this year, our rent laws are in deep trouble.

Organize your community and PLAN TO BE THERE!!

For more information, contact Dave at (212) 979-6238 ext. 6 or see coupon next page.

How to Lobby in Person

For the Renewal of the Rent Laws and the Repeal of Vacancy Decontrol

- Make an appointment to see your legislator. You do not have to go to City Hall or Albany for your meeting; you can make an appointment at his or her local district office.

- Decide who will go to the meeting. Try to choose a delegation of tenants and tenant leaders who are mostly from the legislator's district. Choose one person to be the main spokesperson, and make sure that they are someone who can get the point across with as few words as possible.

- Tell the legislator that your group wants to see the rent laws renewed (1) *without* any concessions to landlords, and (2) *with* the repeal of the weakening amendments that allow for the 20% vacancy allowance between tenants and vacancy decontrol of apartments renting for \$2,000 or more.

- Speak about how the rent laws benefit tenants in the district. Explain that they prevent unexpected or excessive rent increases, guarantee lease renewals, and protect tenants from landlords who don't provide repairs and services. Talk honestly your own experiences or about experiences of tenants in the district, but keep your presentation short. If you call Met Council or other citywide groups

before your meeting, we can supply you with supporting documentation and useful information to help you prepare.

- If you are sure that your legislator is supportive, ask him or her to take a leadership role on the issue. If you are lobbying an Assemblymember, ask him or her to keep the pressure on Speaker Sheldon Silver. The assembly has passed a renewal bill (A.2716-A)

companion to the Assembly bill. Let your Senator know that simply renewing the rent laws is not enough. Unless the laws are strengthened, New York City will lose what little affordable housing it has left.

- Ask if a particular staff person in the office will be covering the issue, and if so, stay in touch with that person. Ask that staff person to let you know of any important

and help in reaching other legislators. Ask them to try to convince other members of the legislature to your position.

- If your legislator is opposed to the rent laws or supports new weakening amendments, speak firmly about your position and that of other tenants in the district. Try to leave on a friendly note, and attempt to pull in other groups to your cause and meet with the legislator again. Don't be argumentative, call names, or threaten. Threats are useful only when you have had several meetings and are getting nowhere, and you have the ability to activate the legislator's constituents.

- Follow up your visit with a thank-you letter, call, or fax. Restate your wish that the rent laws be renewed with repeal of the weakening amendments, and provide additional information if you have promised it. Stay in touch so the legislator knows you remain active on the issues.

To find out who your elected officials are and how to contact them, call the League of Women Voters, 212-725-3541 or see www.lwvny.org.



ART BY TALKING/212-613-3321

that renews the laws, repeals high-rent vacancy decontrol, and reduces the vacancy allowance, and we need Speaker Silver to stick to that bill when negotiating with the leader of the Senate, Joe Bruno.

If you are meeting with a member of the Senate, ask them to take the leadership in passing a

changes or news.

- Give special recognition to your legislator if he or she is known to be a supporter of tenants' rights. Ask them for advice

Missed an issue of TENANT?
see www.metcouncil.net

Sign Me Up to Save the Rent Laws

..... clip and mail

Tenant Lobby Day in Albany Get On the Bus May 13

Yes, I want to join Met Council and thousands of my fellow tenants in Albany on May 13. Bus fares are \$20 each. Enclosed is a check for \$___ for ___ seats.

I cannot go, but wish to make a donation so others can go in my place \$___.

I would like to go but cannot afford the full cost of a seat. Here's \$___ to reserve my seat.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 E-mail: _____
 Phone(s): _____ (day) _____ (eve)

..... clip and mail

Yes, I want to help Met Council fight back the real-estate lobby and defend the rent laws in 2003.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 E-mail: _____
 Phone(s): _____ (day) _____ (eve)

Contact me about:

Organizing a meeting in my building or community group
 Participating in a lobbying meeting with my elected officials
 Attending rallies and demonstrations
 Volunteering in Met Council's office
 Tabling or handing out flyers in my neighborhood

Enclosed is a contribution of ___\$15 ___\$25 ___\$40 ___\$100 ___\$250 ___\$

Contributions are not tax-deductible because they support legislative activity to maintain the rent laws.

Please make checks payable to Met Council, Inc. and return this coupon to: 339 Lafayette Street, NYC 10012.

Return to:
 Metropolitan Council on Housing, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012
 Phone: (212) 979-6238; Fax: (212) 979-6997; www.metcouncil.net

Bloomberg Housing Plan Favors Upper-Middle Class

By Steven Wishnia

Nearly half the apartments funded by the increased spending in Mayor Bloomberg's \$3 billion housing plan would go to households making more than \$88,000 a year, according to an analysis by the city's Independent Budget Office published last month.

The mayor's plan, announced in December, would expand city housing spending from \$2 billion to \$3 billion over the next five fiscal years, using it to build or renovate between 65,000 and 85,000 units. But of the 35,000-plus apartments financed by the increase, the IBO estimates, 49% would go to households making \$88,000 to \$157,000 a year, which the plan classifies as "middle income." About another one-third would go to households in the \$50,000-\$88,000 range, with 16% going to families with lower in-

comes and 2% set aside for the homeless and "special needs" housing. Most of the \$2 billion in spending already slated for the city Department of Housing Preservation and Development would "continue to target low-income and special needs households," the report said.

"The new initiatives outlined in the Mayor's plan will place a greater emphasis on units affordable to middle-income households," the IBO—a city-funded but independent watchdog agency—said in its report. The way \$88,000 and more gets considered "middle income" is that "middle income" is defined as households making 140% to 250% of the median income for a family of four in the metropolitan area, which is now about \$63,000. If rent is set at 30% of household income, those apartments would

start at \$2,200 a month.

In contrast, the report notes, more than 80% of units built or rehabilitated between 1987 and 2000 using city capital funds went to low- and moderate-income households, with another 9% going to house the homeless.

The Bloomberg plan comprises over a dozen programs, from HDC's Low Income Tax Exempt bond program, which gives tax breaks and subsidies to developers of moderate-income housing, to the New Housing Opportunities Program, which subsidizes housing for more affluent "middle-income" households. It also contains \$50 million to preserve up to 7,000 Mitchell-Lama and similar apartments as affordable housing, and expects to rehabilitate over 1,500 privately owned apartments using money from the sale of low-income

housing tax credits.

The plan calls for maintaining \$2 billion in housing spending already budgeted for fiscal years 2004 through 2008, adding an extra \$500 million from the Housing Development Corporation and \$562 million from HPD. The extra HPD money will come part from the sale of

city-owned "in rem" buildings (taken over after they were abandoned by private owners) and part from money that would otherwise have been spent maintaining those buildings. Those funds will not be available for new housing until 2007 and 2008, the report says.

Wednesday, March 12
1:30-5 p.m.

Come witness the full vote of the City Council on the Rent Law and the Urstadt resolution.

City Council Chambers, City Hall
J/M/Z/4/5/6 to Brooklyn Bridge
or R/N to City Hall

Contact: Met Council, (212) 979-6238

NYC Rent Guidelines Board Adjustments (Order No. 34)

for Rent Stabilized Leases commencing Oct. 1, 2002 through Sept. 30, 2003, including the Pataki vacancy bonuses adopted by the State Legislature on June 19, 1997

This rent guidelines table shows the maximum increases landlords in New York City can legally charge for rent stabilized apartments on all leases commencing in the twelve-month period beginning October 1, 2002. Increases in rent based on the 1- or 2-year renewal guidelines can be charged only once during the period covered by the guidelines, and must be applied to the legal stabilized rent on September 30, 2002. The above guidelines and vacancy bonuses do not apply to an apartment which was rent controlled on that date. There is no low rent supplement, a.k.a. poor tax, allowed.

Sublease Allowance

Landlords can charge a 10 percent increase during the term of a sublease that commences during this guideline period.

Vacancy Leases

In June 1997, Governor George Pataki, as a part of his efforts to destroy rent regulation, forced changes that gave landlords large vacancy bonuses. Provisions of his Rent Regulation Reform Act of 1997 allow the rents of apartments to rise by a statutory percentage: 20 percent for a 2-year lease, and 20 percent minus the difference between the 1- and 2-year renewal guidelines for 1-year leases. The new law also allows additional vacancy increases for apartments which have had no vacancy allowance in eight or more years.

Rent Overcharges

Tenants should be aware that many landlords will exploit the complexities of these guidelines and bonuses, and the tenant's unfamiliarity with the apartment's rent history, to charge an illegal

| Lease Type | Current Legal Rent | One-year Lease | Two-year Lease | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--|---|---|
| Renewal Leases | All | 2% | 4% | |
| Vacancy leases | More than \$500 | Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years | 18% | 20% |
| | | No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years | 0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 18% | 0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 20% |
| | Less than \$300 | Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years | 18% plus \$100 | 20% plus \$100 |
| | | No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years | 0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 18% plus \$100 | 0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 20% plus \$100 |
| | Rent \$300 to \$500 | Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years | 18% or \$100, whichever is greater | 20% or \$100, whichever is greater |
| | | No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years | 0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 18%, or \$100, whichever is greater | 0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 20%, or \$100, whichever is greater |

rent. The tenant can choose between filing an overcharge complaint with the Division of Housing and Community Renewal or challenging the rent in Housing Court to get a determination of the legal rent.

A prospective tenant who expresses knowledge of their rights will probably not be given a lease to sign. Landlords avoid renting to tenants who may be troublesome. Overcharging is very common. Every tenant should challenge possible overcharge. With DHCR, obtain and fill out *Form RA-89* to determine the correct rent from official records. Call DHCR at (718) 739-6400 to obtain the form or go to: www.dhcr.state.ny.us

Fair Market Rent Appeal

Another type of overcharge frequently occurs at the time that a previously rent controlled apart-

ment becomes vacant and is re-rented as a stabilized unit. The Rent Guidelines Board annually sets what they call the "Special Fair Market Rent Guideline" that is used by DHCR to lower unfair market rents for tenants who file the Fair Market Rent Appeal (FMRA). Under Order 34, it is HUD Fair Market Rent or 50% above the maximum base rent. No stabilized tenant of an apartment that was decontrolled on or after April 1, 1984 should fail to challenge the so-called Initial Legal Regulated Rent (market rent) that landlords charge upon decontrol. Use *DHCR Form RA-89*. Indicate clearly that your complaint is both a complaint of "overcharge" and "Fair Market Rent Appeal." The Housing Court cannot determine a Fair Market Rent Appeal. Formerly controlled vacant apartments in buildings converted to co-ops or

condos do not become stabilized and are not eligible for a Fair Market Rent Appeal.

Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption

Rent stabilized seniors, 62 years or older, whose disposable annual household income is \$20,000 or less and who pay (or face a rent increase that would cause them to pay) one-third or more of that income in rent may be eligible for a Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) if they apply to the NYC Dept of the Aging, SCRIE Unit at 2 Lafayette Street, NY, NY 10007. If an otherwise eligible tenant's current rent level is already above one-third of income, it cannot be rolled back, but future rent increases may be avoided. Obtain the SCRIE application form by calling (212) 442-1000.

Loft Units

Legalized loft unit increases above the base rent are 1 percent for a one-year lease and 2 percent for two years. No vacancy allowance is permitted on vacant lofts.

Hotels and SROs

There will be no rent increases this year for Class A apartment hotels, lodging houses, Class B hotels (30 rooms or more), single room occupancy (SROs) hotels, and rooming houses (Class B, 6-29 rooms). No vacancy allowance is permitted.

High-rent, High-income Deregulation

(1) Apartments legally renting for \$2,000 or more a month that became vacant from July 7, 1993 through October 1, 1993, or on April 1, 1994 and thereafter are subject to deregulation. (2) The same deregulation applies in the time periods set forth in (1) above to apartments legally renting for \$2,000 or more a month without their becoming vacant if the total household income exceeds \$175,000 in each of the prior two consecutive years. To be eligible for this second form of deregulation, the landlord must send an income certification form to the tenant between January 1 and May 1 and file it with and get the approval of DHCR.

For previous guidelines call the RGB at 212-385-2934 or go to www.housingnyc.com.



Flawed HVS Numbers Roil Rent Debate

By Matt Pacenza

As anyone who writes or collects a rent check each month knows, rent regulations are a matter of numbers.

This year, as both landlords and tenants argue about the state's rent laws—which expire in June—they look to hard numbers to make their case.

For tenant advocates, housing data recently released by the city, when compared to figures from three years ago, could put a wrench in their campaign.

That is, if the data were actually correct.

When the city's lead housing analyst, Dr. Moon Wha Lee, released the results of the city's triennial Housing and Vacancy Survey on February 7, he urged readers not to jump to conclusions based on the numbers, since they were still incomplete.

Whoops. Despite a huge math problem that should stop anyone from comparing the city's 1999 and 2002 surveys, at least one city Housing Preservation and Development official and a landlord lobbyist have been using flawed numbers to make their case in the state's upcoming debate on rent regulation.

This year's debate in Albany is focusing on high-rent vacancy decontrol, a 1993 amendment—expanded in 1997—that lets landlords remove an apartment from the rent-stabilization program once the rent hits \$2,000. Tenant advocates want decontrol repealed. New York State Tenants and Neighbors estimates it has deregulated 99,000 apartments.

Some city officials and landlord advocates, however, are tossing around an entirely different set of numbers. At a state Assembly hearing on February 12, HPD Deputy Commissioner Joseph Rosenberg told Assembly member Vito Lopez (D-Brooklyn) that he didn't agree with Tenants and Neighbors' estimate, saying "We don't believe it's anywhere near [99,000]." In fact, Rosenberg continued, HPD's 2002 housing survey showed an increase of 21,000 rent-stabilized units since 1999, to 1.065 million.

Hold on, says Lee, an HPD assistant commissioner. "It's inappropriate to compare the 2002 numbers to 1999," he told *City Limits*. Here's why: The 2002 housing survey was based on addresses obtained by the 2000 census, while the 1999 housing survey was based on the 1990 census. Because the 2000 census was more accurate than 1990's, roughly 370,000 new addresses turned up citywide. The 2002 survey is based on that larger number of housing units.

To make things clearer, Lee says HPD will "reweight" all of its 1999 numbers within a few months, and release final 1999 and 2002 numbers that can actually be compared.

In the meantime, the preliminary—and flawed—numbers are entering the contentious rent-

regulation debate. Later during the Feb. 12 hearing, landlord advocate Dan Margulies, of the Community Housing Improvement Program, echoed Rosenberg's claim that the number of regulated units may have increased.

That infuriates Michael McKee, associate director of Tenants and Neighbors. "It's totally disingenuous for HPD—or anyone else—to

say there's more regulated units than three years ago," he says. While affordable housing construction and rehab programs do add some new units to rent stabilization, Tenants and Neighbors says that number is dwarfed by those apartments that have been deregulated.

HPD is now backing off Rosenberg's testimony, claiming

that the deputy commissioner did say his numbers were preliminary. The agency admits that it really doesn't know what the final numbers will show. "We just don't have the right data yet," says HPD spokesperson Virginia Gliedman. "We're just salivating to do the proper analysis."

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Housing Survey Offers Dismal Picture

In the never-ending battle to preserve affordable housing, we look to the triennial Housing & Vacancy Survey to see how we are doing. The just released 2002 HVS tells what most tenants already know: We have very few apartments in New York City available at affordable rents.

The city-wide rental vacancy rate was 2.94 percent—or 61,000 units. The vacancy rate is the number of apartments that are vacant and available to rent, compared to the number of total rental housing units. The heart of the housing crisis is explained in matter-of-fact prose in the report: "Vacant units available for lower rents were extremely scarce." The vacancy rate for housing units renting for less than \$500 a month (affordable to a family earning less than \$20,000 a year) was only 1.54%—only 6,200 units in the entire city.

The survey also tells us some

basic information about tenants, housing, and rents. In 2002, there were 2,085,000 rental units in New York City. The median rent was \$708 and the median tenant household was earning \$32,000 per year (half of what homeowners made). About half the rental units were rent-stabilized, or 1,065,000 apartments. The survey showed 60,000 rent-controlled apartments—a surprise, since earlier surveys had shown lower numbers, and the number is decreasing, due to vacancy decontrol. The higher number shows the Census Bureau doing a better job of coordinating with the state Division of Housing and Community Renewal to find those units for the count.

The median rent-stabilized household was earning \$32,000 a year, compared to just over \$20,000 for rent-controlled households income. The lowest

household income was in the group that contained Mitchell-Lama, public housing, Section 8, *in rem*, and Loft Board units: \$13,450.

Rents varied widely depending on the status of the apartment. The average stabilized rent was \$703, and the average controlled rent was \$500. The median rent for private, non-regulated units was much higher at \$850, showing again what most tenants already know: It is better to be in a regulated apartment. In the rent-controlled population, tenants pay 33.4% of their income for rent. Rent-stabilized tenants were better off as a whole, paying 28.4% of their income. The HVS has shown once again that many New Yorkers live on the edge of homelessness: More than 1/4 of rent households in the city pay more than half their income for rent.

—Jenny Laurie

2003 Rent Guidelines Board Schedule

The Rent Guidelines Board (RGB) is the city agency which determines rent guidelines for renewal leases on all rent-stabilized apartments in New York City. Although landlord profits from stabilized housing have risen to new heights over the past 4 years, the RGB has still hammered tenants with rent increases that its own data reveal are unfair. This year, with landlords already screaming about fuel costs and the property-tax increase, tenants will have to come out in record numbers to stop the highest rent increases in a decade. Below is the current schedule of RGB hearings and votes.

all addresses are in Manhattan

* indicates meetings at which tenant turnout is important

MEETING TYPE/DATE/LOCATION/TIME

Public Meeting/Tuesday, March 25/Dept of City Planning, Spector Hall, 22 Reade Street/9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Public Meeting/Tuesday, April 15/Dept of City Planning, Spector Hall, 22 Reade Street/9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Public Meeting/Thursday, April 24/Dept of City Planning, Spector Hall, 22 Reade Street/9:30 am - 12:30 pm

* Invited Testimony/Thursday, May 1/Dept of City Planning, Spector Hall, 22 Reade Street/9:30 am - 5:30 pm

* Preliminary Vote/Monday, May 5/Alexander Hamilton US Custom House, basement auditorium, 1 Bowling Green/ 5:30 - 9:30 pm

Public Meeting/Tuesday, June 3/Dept of City Planning, Spector Hall, 22 Reade Street/9:30 am - 12:30 pm

* Public Testimony/Tuesday, June 17/Cooper Union, the Great Hall, 7 East 7 Street/ 10:00 am - 10:00 pm

* Final Vote/Thursday, June 19/Alexander Hamilton US Custom House, basement auditorium, 1 Bowling Green/ 5:30 - 9:30 pm

To confirm times, dates and locations call the RGB at (212) 385-2934 or see www.housingnyc.com

Feds Investigate Praxis AIDS-Housing Group

By Geoffrey Gray

The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development has begun a probe into the finances of Praxis Housing Initiatives, a multimillion-dollar nonprofit provider of housing and services for homeless people with HIV and AIDS.

In early February, *City Limits* reported that the group's executive directors had been funneling some of Praxis' funding to pay for gifts and bail, and to start up and operate their own for-profit housing ventures, unbeknownst to board members or the Internal Revenue Service.

HUD, the primary funder of one of Praxis' shelters, the Riverside Place Hotel on the Upper West Side, is now wondering where its money has gone. "Based on what was reported in *City Limits* last week and allegations of financial impropriety, the matter has been referred to our Inspector General," said HUD spokesperson Adam Glantz. "We're looking into how HUD funds were spent. And we're taking this very seriously."

If they follow the money, HUD inspectors might find that federal money earmarked for specific housing programs at the Riverside was transferred into the bank account of a for-profit homeless

shelter that Praxis President G. Sterling Zinsmeyer and Executive Director Rev. Gordon H. Duggins control through a separate holding company.

Since Praxis' inception in 1995, HUD has awarded the group two consecutive three-year grants—totaling \$4.7 million—to support social services, renovation costs, and supplies at the Riverside, a shelter for homeless men and women, many of whom have HIV or AIDS. Those grants ended in 2001.

According to internal documents obtained by *City Limits*, the Praxis execs pulled big sums directly from the Riverside's bank account and transferred the money to the account of the Dawn Hotel, the for-profit shelter. Copies of the Dawn's 1998 general ledger show that in just 48 days, the Praxis execs shifted \$137,000 directly from Riverside to the Dawn.

"HUD can't be too thrilled," said Fred Rothman, former chair of the Tax-Exempt Organization Committee of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. "If money was earmarked for specific purposes, it shouldn't be going to feather the nest of the private, for-profit enterprise."

Urbach, Kahn and Werlin, the accounting firm in charge of managing Praxis' HUD audits that year—as well as those of the Dawn—no longer does business with Praxis or the Dawn and would not discuss details of any previous audits.

In defense of Praxis, Amy Millard, one of the group's attorneys, reiterated the same statement she made the previous week: "We've been cooperative with all investigators and continue to do so. We're confident it will be established that [my clients] have

at all times provided a great service to the population they're dedicated towards serving."

That claim is not entirely accurate, say several former Praxis employees and Riverside social workers. Shelter clients suffered from a lack of services despite the nearly \$1 million from HUD earmarked for social services, they said. "There's no way that much HUD money was spent in the Riverside," said one caseworker, speaking on condition of anonymity. "The HUD grant had an extensive staffing budget, for at least seven or eight social workers, and the only worker there was me, or Eve [Abzug, another former Praxis

employee]. Everything was nickel-and-dimed."

Brought on to fundraise and run Praxis' social services, Eve Abzug, daughter of late Congresswoman Bella Abzug, said her overall experience at Praxis was fine and declined to discuss the details of her program or the decisions of the directors.

In addition to HUD's investigation, both the city Department of Investigation and the New York State Attorney General—responsible for prosecuting corruption at charities—continue to look into possible "fiduciary improprieties."

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Complaint Numbers

The Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD) Central Complaints hotline's new number is:
(212) 824-4328

The Department of Buildings has condensed its borough phone numbers into one complaint line,
(212) 227-7000

Missed an issue of TENANT?

Check us out on the Web:
www.metcouncil.net

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL ON HOUSING

Met Council is a citywide tenant union.

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We can briefly answer your questions, help you with organizing or refer you to other help.

212-979-0611

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WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

LOWER EAST SIDE BRANCH at

Cooper Square Committee
61 E. 4th St. (btwn. 2nd Ave. & Bowery)
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CHELSEA COALITION ON HOUSING

Covers 14th St. to 30th St., 5th Ave. to the Hudson River.
322 W. 17th St. (basement), CH3-0544
Thursdays 7:30 pm

GOLES (Good Old Lower East Side)

525 E. 6th St. (btwn. Aves. A & B) Lower East Side tenants only, 212-533-2541.

HOUSING COMMITTEE OF RENA

Covers 135th St. to 165th St. from Riverside Dr. to St. Nicholas Ave.,
544 W. 157th St. (basement entrance).
Thursdays 8 pm

LOWER MANHATTAN LOFT TENANTS

St. Margaret's House, Pearl & Fulton Sts.,
212-539-3538
Wednesdays 6 pm-7 pm

VILLAGE INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

26 Perry St. (basement), 212-741-2994
Wednesdays 6 pm

WEST SIDE TENANTS UNION

200 W. 72nd St. Room 63; 212-595-1274
Tuesday & Thursday 2-5 pm
Tuesday & Wednesday 6-7:45 pm



Join Met Council

Membership: Individual, \$25 per year; Low-income, \$15 per year; family (voluntary: 2 sharing an apartment), \$30 per year. Supporting, \$40 per year. Sustaining, min. of \$100 per year (indicate amount of pledge). For affiliation of community or tenant organizations, large buildings, trade unions, etc. call 212-979-6238.

My apartment is controlled stabilized unregulated other _____

I am interested in volunteering my time to Met Council. Please call me to schedule times and duties. I can counsel tenants, do office work, lobby public officials, attend rallies/protests.

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone Number _____ Email _____

Send your check or money order with this form to:
Metropolitan Council on Housing, 339 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10012