



March 22, 2023

Hon. Grace Lee  
NY State Assembly

Hon. Deborah J. Glick  
NY State Assembly

Hon. Charles Fall  
NY State Assembly

Hon. Brian Kavanaugh  
NY State Senate

Hon. Brad Hoylman-Sigal  
NY State Senate

Hon. Stewart-Cousins & Hon. Heastie  
NY State Legislative Leads

Dear Reps. Lee, Glick, Fall, and Heastie, and Sens. Kavanaugh, Hoylman-Sigal, and Stewart-Cousins

Enclosed please find a Resolution approved by Downtown Independent Democrats General Membership on March 22, 2023:

**Tax the Wealthiest New Yorkers & Corporations to Pass a Progressive Budget, including Housing Security, Universal Childcare, Education, and a Green New Deal for New York**

DID has consistently supported bills and causes across housing security, childcare, education, and environmental justice. Many but not all of our elected officials are currently co-sponsoring critical bills across these domains, including but not limited to Good Cause Eviction, the Housing Access Voucher Program, the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act, the Universal Childcare Act, a New Deal for CUNY and SUNY, the Build Public Renewables Act and the package of bills to Fix the MTA.

**DID urges all our elected officials to co-sponsor all of these bills.** Please see below for details.

Sincerely,

Richard Corman  
President, Downtown Independent Democrats

Enclosure

cc: Hon. Kathy Hochul, NYS Governor  
Hon. Jumaane Williams, NYC Public Advocate  
Hon. Brad Lander, NYC Comptroller  
Hon. Alvin Bragg, Manhattan District Attorney  
Keechant Sewell, NYC Police Commissioner  
Hon. Eric Adams, NYC Mayor  
Hon. Christopher Marte, NYC Council Member  
Hon. Carlina Rivera, NYC Council Member  
Hon. Adrienne Adams, NYC Council Speaker

Hon. Eric Bottcher, NYC Council Member  
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Bor. President  
Hon. Harvey Epstein, NY State Assembly  
Hon. Chuck Schumer, U.S. Senator  
Hon. Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator  
Hon. Dan Goldman, U.S. Representative  
Tammy Meltzer, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1  
Jeannine Kiely, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2  
Chair, Manhattan Community 3



# Tax the Wealthiest New Yorkers & Corporations to Pass a Progressive Budget, including Housing Security, Universal Childcare, Education, and a Green New Deal for New York

March 22, 2023

## Whereas:

1. DID has consistently supported bills and causes across housing security, childcare, education, and environmental justice. Many but not all of our elected officials are currently co-sponsoring critical bills across these domains:<sup>1</sup>
  - a. Housing Security
    - i. **Good Cause Eviction (S.305)** allows tenants to defend themselves in court against evictions and extreme rent hikes. *Lead Sponsor: Senator Julia Salazar. Co-sponsored by Brad Hoylman-Sigal and Brian Kavanagh. Pending: Assembly bill*
    - ii. **Housing Access Voucher Program (HAVP) (S.568/A.4021)** provides rental subsidies for New Yorkers who are homeless or at risk of losing their homes and caps tenants' rents at 30% of their income. Investing **\$250 million** into HAVP will create up to 16,000 vouchers to house New Yorkers. *Lead Sponsor: Senator Brian Kavanagh & Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal. Co-sponsored by Brad Hoylman-Sigal, Grace Lee, Deborah Glick & Harvey Epstein. Pending Charles Fall*
    - iii. **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) (S.221/A.3353)** gives all tenants the right to own or remain as renters in their homes when their building is up for sale. *Lead Sponsors: Senator Zellnor Myrie & Assemblymember Marcela Mitaynes. Co-sponsored by Brad Hoylman-Sigal & Harvey Epstein. Pending: Kavanagh, Lee, Glick, and Fall*
      1. Tenants will be able to convert their building to resident-controlled social housing, non-profit rentals, community land trusts, or more, using existing public subsidy programs. This reduces incentives for landlords to keep buildings in disrepair to sell them to the highest buyer.
      2. Taxing the rich and investing **\$250 million** in TOPA funding will convert 1,600 homes to democratically-controlled social housing in the first year alone.
    - iv. **The Social Housing Development Authority (Bill in progress)** will acquire, renovate, and build deeply and permanently affordable housing for public and community ownership. Investing **\$5 billion** into social housing will create 7,000 new homes a year, including 4,800 low-income units.

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<sup>1</sup> Tax the Rich 2023 Policy Fact Sheet, NYC-DSA, retrieved February 16, 2023  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/19tkYRX9qmw17CgjFCmP39gu943diDkvJBBj0Ct10jBY/edit>



- v. **Fund Public Housing with \$6.514 billion** (Bill needed) for badly-needed repairs in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and cancel **\$538 million** in rent arrears for NYCHA residents who did not qualify for Emergency Rental Assistance. **\$351 million** will also fund upstate public housing authorities.
  
  - b. Universal Childcare and Education
    - i. **Tax the rich and invest \$5 billion** for **The Universal Childcare Act (S.3245)**, which will create a statewide, high-quality, free childcare system that meets the needs of children and families, invests in the childcare workforce, and ensures *all* children can access care, regardless of immigration status. *Lead Sponsors: Senator Jabari Brisport & Assemblymember Andrew Hevesi. Co-sponsored by Brad Hoylman-Sigal and Brian Kavanaugh. Pending: Assembly bill*
    - ii. **Tax the rich and invest \$5 billion** towards **A New Deal For CUNY (S.2146/A.4425)** and **Free SUNY** (Bill in progress), which will enact free tuition at New York's two public university systems. *Co-sponsored by Brad Hoylman-Sigal, Brian Kavanaugh, Harvey Epstein, Charles Fall. Pending: Lee and Glick*
  
  - c. Environmental Justice and A Green New Deal for New York
    - i. The **Build Public Renewables Act (A.279/S.4134)** enables the New York Power Authority (NYPA) to build enough renewable energy to meet our climate targets. Investing **\$500 million** in NYPA, along with strong labor provisions and a mandate to build, will jump start NYPA to be able to build renewable energy. *Lead Sponsors: Assemblymember Bobby Carroll & Senator Kevin Parker. Co-sponsored by Lee, Glick, Fall & Epstein, and Hoylman-Sigal and Kavanaugh*
    - ii. Investing **\$5 billion** towards **Building Retrofits** (Bill in Progress) will weatherize buildings for renters and low-income homeowners to improve our homes, and make them more energy efficient.
    - iii. **Fix the MTA: Freeze Fares, Fund Frequency, & Free Bus Act, (S.4024/A.4122)** is a comprehensive spending proposal to fund the MTA to keep fares at \$2.75, increase subway and bus frequency, and phase in free buses over the next four years. By taxing the ultra-rich and their corporations, we can invest **\$3.3 billion** on average per year and create desperately needed improvements in the nation's largest public transportation system. *Lead Sponsors: Senator Michael Gianaris & Assemblymember Zohran Mamadani. Co-sponsored by Lee & Epstein. Pending: Kavanaugh & Hoylman-Sigal, Glick & Fall*
2. The bills will cost approximately \$40 billion. Our elected officials have already identified approximately \$40 billion in tax increases, primarily burdened by the rich residents and corporations of New York:



- a. **The Corporate Tax (S.1980/A.3690)** raises **\$9 billion**. *Lead Sponsors: Assemblymember Anna Kelles, Sarahana Shrestha & Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal. Pending: Kavanagh, Lee, Glick, Fall, Epstein*
  - i. In 2017, Republicans cut the federal corporate tax rate from 35% to 21%. Many businesses don't pay corporate tax at all.
  - ii. In 2021, due to our advocacy, New York State added a new corporate tax bracket for businesses making over \$5 million a year, raising their tax rate from 6.5% to 7.25%. We must ensure this tax is made permanent and expanded to close tax loopholes and ensure the wealthiest corporations pay what they owe.
- b. **Capital Gains Tax (S.2162/A.2576)** raises **\$12.5 billion**. *Lead Sponsors: Assemblymember Ron Kim & Senator Gustavo Rivera. Co-sponsors: Hoylman-Sigal, Pending: Kavanagh, Lee, Glick, Fall, Epstein*
  - i. Most New Yorkers pay taxes on their wage income with every paycheck. But the very wealthy make much of their money from buying and selling investments, or "capital gains," not wages.
  - ii. Federal tax law provides a large tax break for capital gains, which means that feckless billionaires like Elon Musk pay less tax than you do.
  - iii. The wealthy should be taxed on their capital gains just as if it were personal income.
  - iv. This bill adds an additional tax on the investment income of only the top 1.3% of tax filers. About 99% of filers would see zero change in their tax rates.
- c. **Heirs Tax (S.2782/A.3193)** raises **\$8 billion**. *Lead Sponsors: Assemblymember Michaelle Solages & Senator Jabari Brisport. Co-sponsors: Epstein. Pending: Kavanagh, Hoylman-Sigal, Lee, Glick, Fall*
  - i. We have the highest tax rates on income from work, lower tax rates on income from investments, and no taxes on inherited income. The rich remain rich because they inherit enormous amounts of wealth, often completely untaxed.
  - ii. This bill would overhaul our inheritance taxes with an Heirs Tax that treats inheritances as taxable income.
- d. **Progressive Income Taxes ("PIT") (S.2059/A.3115)** raise **\$15 billion**. *Lead sponsors: Assemblymember Demond Meeks & Senator Robert Jackson. Co-sponsors: Hoylman-Sigal & Epstein. Pending: Kavanagh, Lee, Glick, Fall*
  - i. In 1972, the state tax code included fourteen tax brackets. In subsequent years, Republicans eliminated the brackets for the wealthiest and narrowed the range of taxes to benefit the wealthy.
  - ii. In 2021, we fought and raised the PIT for those making over \$1 million a year, and added progressive tax brackets at \$1M, \$5M, and \$25M.
  - iii. Today, we're fighting to restructure the income tax code to create more progressive tax brackets and raise revenue from the top 5% wealthiest New Yorkers.
- e. **Mark-to-Market Billionaires' Tax (S.1570/A.3252)** raises **\$34 billion the first year, then \$1.7 billion each year thereafter**. *Lead Sponsors: Assemblymember Anna Kelles & Senator Jessica Ramos. Co-sponsors: Kavanagh & Hoylman-Sigal. Pending: Lee, Glick, Fall, Epstein*



- i. The wealthiest New Yorkers pay almost no tax on their vast accumulations of wealth because they almost never sell their assets. Billionaires use these assets to derive huge amounts of cash through loans and other instruments, and then pass on their wealth to their heirs while avoiding taxes.
- ii. The mark-to-market income tax creates a yearly tax on the annual increase in value of a billionaire's total wealth. This would require billionaires to pay tax on their real economic income (their total gain in wealth).

**Therefore Downtown Independent Democrats supports the following:**

- All of our state elected officials signing onto all the above bills