

## Manhattan Community Board Five

---

Vikki Barbero, Chair

450 Seventh Avenue, Suite 2109  
Manager  
New York, NY 10123-2199  
212.465.0907 f-212.465.1628

Marisa Maack, District

April 12, 2023

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
NYS State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

RE: May-S2721 / Joyner-A1493

Dear Governor Hochul,

Manhattan Community Board 5 (“CB5”) supports Senate Bill S2721 and Assembly Bill A1493, related to establishing the New York State Office of Civil Representation to provide a Statewide Right to Counsel, (“Right to Counsel”) to all tenants in eviction proceedings. Statewide Right to Counsel would create a right to counsel in eviction and foreclosure proceedings for all New Yorkers and is currently pending in the State legislature and in the 2022 session, passed by 90 votes in the Assembly, and had 28 Senate cosponsors, with a majority of NYC’s State legislators in both houses cosponsoring the legislation.

Representation by counsel in eviction and foreclosure proceedings provides fundamental fairness and due process for those facing the possibility of losing their homes. Eviction and foreclosure proceedings are complex and technical legal proceedings that are challenging to navigate and create meaningful disadvantages for unrepresented individuals. Many affected tenants are not able to afford or obtain counsel and must appear in court unrepresented in contrast to the majority of New York State landlords that have counsel.

The provision of adequate representation to tenants delivers cost savings to the City and State through reduced shelter, emergency room, and homeless services. While eviction affects New Yorkers across socioeconomic strata, consequences for low-income people are especially dire. Evicted low-income families and individuals frequently find themselves in homeless shelters and suffering from loss of employment, missed schooling and damage to physical and mental health – all resulting in meaningful costs borne by New York State. Long-term savings delivered by Right to Counsel would more than offset program costs while also maintaining and promoting quality of life for New Yorkers.

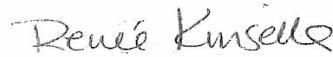
CB5 recognizes the significant effort required to ensure appropriate implementation of the bill, and believes that securing adequate program funding and a legal talent pipeline so that these tenant rights may be enforced without straining our court system, existing public resources or prolonging the legal process is part of this solution.

As this legislation would create a robust ecosystem to support and protect tenants facing eviction and foreclosure proceedings within New York State and within specifically within Manhattan Community Board 5, we urge you to adopt the Statewide Right to Counsel Legislation and the benefits it would bring to all New York residents.

Sincerely,



Vikki Barbero  
Chair



Renee Kinsella  
Chair, Budget, Education & City Services Committee

Cc: Hon. Carl Heastie, New York State Assembly Speaker  
Hon. Charles Schumer, New York State Senator  
Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, New York State Senator  
Hon. Jerry Nadler, U.S. Representative  
Hon. Liz Krueger, New York State Senator  
Hon. Robert Jackson, New York State Senator  
Hon. Tony Simone, NYS Assembly Member  
Hon. Linda Rosenthal, NYS Assembly Member  
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President