

RE: Passage of a Winter Eviction Moratorium, to keep tenants off the streets and out of shelters during the brutal cold

Dear Governor Hochul, Speaker Carl Heastie and Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins:

We write to urge you to prioritize Winter Eviction Moratorium legislation (Myrie-[S1403](#)/Kelles-[A4093](#)) and to work with tenants, advocates, legal services providers, and faith leaders in the Right to Counsel Coalition to ensure the prompt passage of this bill into law.

Many of our community members were put in an economically precarious position because of the pandemic, and there are now over 270,000 New Yorkers facing active eviction across the state. Each of these cases represents a household likely facing displacement, homelessness, disruptions to their jobs and their children's schooling, harms to their mental and physical health, and an array of other traumas associated with eviction. 92,000 New Yorkers, almost certainly an undercount, are already unhoused and living in shelters or on the streets.

We are honored to be working on permanent and transformative solutions to this devastating eviction and displacement crisis. Winter Eviction Moratorium (S1403/A4093), introduced by Senator Zellnor Myrie and Assembly Member Anna Kelles, will automatically pause any eviction scheduled to take place between November 1st and April 15th and will:

- Ensure that landlords' and tenants' rights are maintained throughout the Winter Moratorium, including tenants' right to a livable, safe, and sanitary home and the right to be free from harassment and discrimination.
- Strengthen consequences for landlords who harass or illegally evict tenants during the Winter Moratorium.
- Ensure that tenants in non-payment cases who can clear their rent debt during the moratorium are able to remain in their homes after the moratorium ends.
- Require that landlords who sue for eviction notify tenants of the Winter Moratorium in their court papers.

Evictions are inhumane, unjust, and violent – and are rooted in long histories of economic, gender, and racial injustice. Statistically, low-income women, especially poor women of color, domestic violence victims, and families with children are disproportionately threatened by eviction. In 2022, 23% of families with kids in NYC under 18 faced evictions and families with children under 18 accounted for nearly half of attempted evictions, while making up only 28% of New York City's households. As the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to destabilize our NYS communities, we cannot ensure the wellbeing of women, children, and other vulnerable members of our society, unless we mitigate against the harshest impacts of eviction.

Winter evictions are particularly dangerous and must be stopped if we want to ensure the safety and health of New Yorkers. Eviction and homelessness in the winter can be a death sentence, with unsheltered people facing a higher risk of death, disease and exposure-related health problems, particularly in cold weather. At least four of the 47 people in western NY who died in the apocalyptic storm in December 2022 were homeless, and these extreme weather incidents are guaranteed to increase in frequency with climate change. Those who end up in shelters after

eviction face their own set of threats from a system that is over capacity and dangerous—and especially in the winter, prone to the spread of infectious disease.

Moratoria have proven to keep people housed and relatively safe during times when evictions are particularly dangerous and destabilizing. The Winter Eviction Moratorium will cover all of the year's coldest months and will serve as a form of healthcare: stopping winter eviction will reduce the spread of infectious and lethal diseases like COVID-19, with research having shown that pausing evictions has a broad, positive social impact on ALL of society. The moratorium also covers most of the school year. Though evictions always harm children, whenever they happen, they are especially disruptive during the school year. Evictions can result in loss of social connections, sleep disruptions, stress, depression and suicide. The trauma of eviction affects children's ability to learn, focus and resolve conflicts.

Stopping winter evictions will save lives, keep kids in school, prevent homelessness, and ensure people aren't living on the streets or in shelters during the brutal cold. We urge you to ensure the prompt passage of this legislation. Please contact Katy Lasell (katy@righttocounselnyc.org), Campaign Organizer, with any questions you may have. We look forward to your response and are excited to work with you to get this done.

Sincerely,

A Philip Randolph Square Neighborhood Alliance
Brooklyn Defender Services
Brooklyn Eviction Defense
Capital District Democratic Socialists of America (CDDSA)
Catholic Migration Services
Churches United for Fair Housing
Community Action for Safe Apartments (CASA)
Community Resource Center
Community Service Society
Crown Heights Tenant Union
Flatbush Tenant Coalition
Goddard Riverside Law Project
Housing Conservation Coordinators
Housing Organizers for People Empowerment of East Brooklyn (H.O.P.E.)
Lower Hudson Valley DSA
Mamaroneck Coalition for Affordable Housing
Mount Vernon United Tenants
Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem
Neighborhood Preservation Coalition
NY Council of Housing Development Fund Companies
NYC-DSA Citywide Housing Working Group
North West Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition

Safety Net Project - Urban Justice Center

Syracuse Democratic Socialists of America

Syracuse Tenant Union

TakeRoot Justice

The Alternatives to Economic and Housing Displacement Inc.

Woodside on the Move

United Tenants of Albany Inc