

WHY WE'RE CAROLING TO END EVICTIONS!

Tenants' Rights are Under Attack!

Just a few years ago, NYC tenants passed a law making it a right for tenants to have legal representation when facing eviction in housing court. Since the law was passed in 2017, evictions plummeted, landlords sued tenants less and almost EVERYONE who had Right to Counsel (RTC) stayed in their home. Now, all of that is at risk.

When COVID related eviction protections were lifted in January, courts began to move old *and* new cases at a rate that outpaced the number of lawyers. At the same time, legal services orgs (like most sectors), are experiencing an unprecedented labor shortage—there are less RTC attorneys than before the pandemic and not enough to meet the pace the courts have set.

This means that more than 18,000 tenants and their families, who should have a lawyer to defend them in housing court, don't. ***The courts are refusing to use their power to slow down cases until everyone has an attorney.***

What does this mean for NYC tenants? Denying tenants Right to Counsel means thousands of tenants are being sued who shouldn't have been, thousands are signing agreements against their own interests and thousands are being evicted who otherwise wouldn't have been. **The vast majority of tenants who are being denied RTC and who are being evicted are Black and brown.**

Who can fix this?

The Acting Chief Judge of the State of NY, Anthony Cannataro, could fix this today. He could issue an order that pauses all RTC-eligible cases that don't have RTC attorneys until the RTC legal services organizations have capacity. We've emailed him, sent him letters, asked for meetings, and he's refused to meet with us. Instead he keeps moving cases forward, prioritizing landlords' right to move cases quickly over tenants' right to have an attorney. But Judge Cannataro's position of power could be temporary. THIS WEEK, Governor Hochul will be announcing her nominee for the next Chief Judge.

TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT TENANTS RIGHTS AND STOP EVICTIONS!

Judge Cannataro, the NYS Court System and the Governor need to know you care about evictions!

1. Call Governor Hochul's Office at **518-474-8390** (press 3 to get the option where you can speak to someone or leave a message) and let her know that she must choose a Chief Judge who will fix the crisis in NYC's Housing Court and uphold RTC!
2. Call the Office of Court Administration, where Cannataro works, at **(212) 428-2700** (press 6 to speak to someone) and tell them Cannataro needs to uphold RTC and stop evictions!

More Info: www.righttocounselnyc.org/defend_rtc

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/RTCNY **TWITTER:** www.twitter.com/RTCNYC