



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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COUNCIL PASSES BILL FORCING CITY'S WORST LANDLORDS TO PAY FOR DISPLACED TENANTS

***Bill by CM Chin puts negligent landlords on the hook for relocation costs
City accrues after a vacate order***

CITY HALL – Today, the New York City Council voted to pass [Intro 30-A](#), sponsored by Council Member Margaret S. Chin, which would force unscrupulous landlords to pay up to house tenants who have to evacuate following a vacate order.

“A system that rewards unscrupulous landlords for forcing their tenants out due to their own carelessness is the epitome of inequality,” said **Council Member Margaret**

S. Chin, prime sponsor of the legislation. “Yet time and again we have seen predatory landlords create unlivable conditions that lead to emergency evacuations that not only uproot tenants’ lives – but can create a pipeline into the shelter system. My bill, Intro 30-A, tells these landlords that they can no longer act with impunity. Through mandating that HPD create an electronic, first-of-its-kind system to recover relocation expenses, we are giving the City the tools necessary to hold New York’s worst landlords accountable for the enormous hardship and trauma that tenants have to endure during a vacate order. Today, we are sending a message that vacate orders should never be weaponized as a tool for displacement.”



“This administration is committed to halting tenant harassment in its tracks, and when owners neglect their buildings to the point that they are no longer safe to live in, HPD steps in to protect New Yorkers in need. This historic piece of legislation strengthens our enforcement tools and compels owners to make the repairs that put displaced families back in their homes,” said **HPD Commissioner Louise Carroll**. “I applaud Council Member Chin for her leadership and advocacy, and thank all of our partners at City Council for standing up for vulnerable tenants throughout the city.”

Between January and July of 2019, the City issued 1,200 vacate orders impacting more than 2,400 housing units across New York — including 100 units in Manhattan. Intro 30 creates a more reliable payment system in partnership with the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Department of Finance (DOF) to recover relocation expenses from landlords.

“This is a vital piece of legislation that protects vulnerable New Yorkers from losing the place they call home,” said **Council Member Robert E. Cornegy Jr., Chair of Housing and Buildings Committee**. “It is no secret that we are in a tight housing market, and a housing crisis, so it is imperative that we protect tenants from unscrupulous landlords. When landlords refuse to maintain their building in an effort to push out tenants in rent-regulated apartments, we must stand up, speak out, and hold them accountable. This is another important tool for the city in fighting both nefarious landlords and the lack of affordability in this city.”

"Intro 30-A makes landlords accountable when tenants are forced to vacate their homes due to unsafe conditions," said **Steve Herrick, Executive Director of Cooper Square Committee**. "We have seen examples of landlords who took over a year to repair fire damage or structural damage to their building in the hopes that the vacated tenant would relocate elsewhere permanently so they could raise the rent. This law makes that far less likely."

“Tenants forced into prolonged displacement due to the negligence of landlords should not be forced to bear the financial hardship of relocations,” said **Council Member Mark Levine, a co-sponsor of the legislation**. “This bill targets landlords who have a history of causing totally preventable displacements by not properly maintaining their buildings and holds them financially accountable. This is an important safeguard against landlords taking advantage of renters and another step forward in upholding the rights of tenants in New York City.”

"When New Yorkers are forced to leave their homes due to a vacate order caused by the negligence of their landlords they can easily fall into the shelter system," said **Council Member Ben Kallos, a co-sponsor of the legislation**. "Intro 30-A ensures that landlords will complete the necessary repair work quickly so that tenants can return home as soon as possible. As a City facing a homelessness crisis, we need to be doing everything

possible to keep New Yorkers out of the shelter system and off the streets. This legislation will help with that. Thank you to Council Member Chin for being a leader on this legislation designed to help vulnerable New Yorkers."

"It is only fair that landlords are held responsible for the cost of temporary housing when their tenants must leave home because of a vacate order," said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal, co-sponsor of the legislation.** "This legislation will incentivize landlords to make badly-needed repairs in a more expeditious fashion, and is minor compensation for the incredible disruption to tenants' lives when they are forced out of their homes through no fault of their own. I commend Council Member Chin for leading the way on this important legislation, and I am proud to be a co-sponsor."

"Intro 30-A is the kind of legislation that will make a real difference for New Yorkers who are going through one of the worst experiences anyone could imagine – being forced out of their homes," said **Council Member Carlina Rivera, co-sponsor of the legislation.** "The landlords who keep buildings in unsafe and unsanitary conditions shouldn't leave tenants footing the bill when this harassment tactic forces them into a hotel. I'm proud to co-sponsor this legislation with Council Member Chin and look forward to continuing to work together to protect our city's tenants."

"Time-after-time, unscrupulous landlords have exploited the system, using vacate orders to evict rent-stabilized tenants and erode our dwindling stock of affordable housing," said **Thomas Yu and Jennifer Sun, co-executive directors of Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE).** "This legislation will act as a deterrent, compelling landlords to take proper care of their buildings and to preserve low-income housing throughout New York City. We thank Council Member Chin for her strong advocacy on behalf of this common-sense proposal."

"Slum landlords have been rewarded for bad behavior for far too long," said **Julian Morales, Director of Organizing for Good Old Lower East Side.** "Even short-term displacement can do long-term damage, and it's time for landlords to foot the bill. Intro. 30-A is necessary and vital to stop bad landlords from getting away with scamming the system and to help keep tenants in their homes and in their communities."

HPD reports that as of August 1, 2019, there are 876 households in emergency relocation shelters as a result of City vacate orders. By providing HPD with the tools it needs to push unscrupulous landlords to complete the repairs needed to lift a vacate order, Intro 30 seeks to break down the vacate order-shelter system pipeline.

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