

# Real Rent Reform Campaign

## Legislative Priorities for 2008

### **S5149/A7761**

**Andrea Stewart-Cousins et al./James Brennan et al.**

Repeals high rent vacancy decontrol. Currently landlords can permanently deregulate rent-controlled and rent-stabilized apartments if the legal rent is \$2,000 per month or higher, or if the landlord can get the legal rent up to \$2,000 per month while the apartment is vacant, through a combination of the statutory vacancy bonus (a minimum of 20 percent) and individual apartment improvements (adding 1/40th of the total cost to the monthly rent). It is estimated that New York City and the suburban counties of Nassau, Westchester and Rockland have lost at least 200,000 apartments to this decontrol mechanism. The tenants moving into the apartments have no rent or tenure protections.

### **S1673/A4069**

**Liz Krueger/Vito Lopez et al.**

Repeals the 1971 Urstadt Law and thereby restores full home rule powers to New York City. This allows the New York City Council and Mayor to adopt rent and eviction protection laws without interference by, and without the need for permission from, the Governor and State Legislature.

### **S5284/A7811**

**Andrea Stewart-Cousins et al./Gary Pretlow et al.**

Allows New York City and any municipality in Nassau, Westchester or Rockland Counties to declare a housing emergency for former Mitchell-Lama and project-based Section 8 buildings whose landlords take them out of the government subsidy program, thus bringing them under the rent stabilization system. The bill applies to all such developments regardless of when built or first occupied (under current law, only buildings constructed before 1974 can become rent-stabilized). The bill also clarifies the Emergency Tenant Protection Act of 1974 to make it clear that leaving a government subsidy program is not grounds for rent increases due to “unique or peculiar circumstances.”

### **(Draft bill)**

The Rent Board Reform bill. This bill restructures the entire Rent Guidelines Board process under rent stabilization in New York City and the three suburban counties. The four boards are renamed the Rent Boards (eliminating the euphemism “guidelines.” Appointments to the NYC board, currently entirely up to the Mayor, require City Council confirmation. Appointments to the suburban boards, currently made by the state Division of Housing and Community Renewal upon recommendation by the County Legislature, are made by the County Executive, subject to confirmation by the County Legislature. Qualifications for public members are expanded. Procedural and methodological changes are enacted. Per diem fees for board members are increased.

### **For more information:**

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