



## THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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**\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\***

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# COUNCIL MEMBERS URGE PASSAGE OF LAW TO PROTECT LOW-INCOME TENANTS 'Landlord Accountability Act,' introduced by Congresswoman Velazquez, would help keep working families in their homes

CITY HALL –Citing a deepening affordability crisis and looming cuts to federal housing funding, Council Members Margaret S. Chin and Antonio Reynoso rallied in support of legislation introduced by Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez that would end the discrimination, harassment and displacement of thousands of Section 8 tenants across our City.

"We cannot let another year go by without the tenant protections that thousands of working New Yorkers need to stay in their homes, free of the fear of being pushed out by market-rate renters or being forced out by unsafe living conditions," said **Council Member Chin**. "With a Trump Administration threatening cuts to federal housing subsidy programs, low-income families need our help more than ever. Congresswoman Velazquez's legislation ends the second-class status of Section 8 voucher holders by empowering tenants and holding dishonest landlords accountable. I ask my Council colleagues to join this growing tenant movement by supporting our Resolution that calls for the passage of this important legislation to protect vulnerable residents."

"This legislation addresses crucial issues for Section 8 tenants, especially in gentrifying neighborhoods where unscrupulous landlords are letting their buildings fall into disrepair in an effort to displace these tenants. Everyone deserves quality housing, and now more than ever, we must protect our city's low-income tenants. I want to thank Congresswoman Velazquez for continuing to fight for our communities, and encourage my colleagues to sign on to the Resolution to show support for this bill," said **Council Member Reynoso**.



The Landlord Accountability Act, which was recently reintroduced by Congresswoman Velazquez, would protect all holders of federal Section 8 housing vouchers from discrimination based on federal-assistance status, penalize landlords for flipping Section 8 apartments into market-rate units, and establish a new program to receive complaints from voucher-holding tenants. The legislation would also create a tax credit to incentivize adequate and timely maintenance of Section 8 units, require landlords to notify tenants of their rights, and provide much needed funding for tenant harassment prevention programs.

First introduced in 2016, Congresswoman Velazquez's legislation would subject landlords to fines up to \$100,000 for taking actions, or neglecting to act, with the intention of disqualifying units for federal housing programs. As of Jan. 1, 2016, a total of 205,714 tenants lived in 86,610 apartments across New York City through the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program.

In order to demonstrate widespread support for this important legislation affecting thousands of city tenants, Council Members Chin and Reynoso plan to introduce a City Council Resolution urging its passage at the next Stated Meeting on Thursday, March 16th.

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