



Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

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Katherine Diaz, Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

June 2, 2023

Hon. Nestor Davidson
Chair
NYC Rent Guideline Board
1 Centre Street, Suite 2210
New York, NY 10007

Re: RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE NYC RENT GUIDELINES BOARD TO ADOPT A RENT DECREASE FOR RENT REGULATED APARTMENTS FOR ONE-OR-TWO-YEAR LEASES COMMENCING OCTOBER 1ST 2023, AND ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 30, 2024.

Dear Chair Davidson:

At the General Meeting on Tuesday, May 23rd, 2023, with a vote of 38 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions, 0 not voting, Community Board 12 Manhattan passed the following resolution supporting Resolution Number 546 and strongly urging the NYC Rent Guidelines Board to grant a rent decrease for any rent-regulated apartments as detailed below.

Whereas: At a scheduled public hearing on May 3rd, 2023, the NYC Rent Guidelines Board proposed a percentage of rent increases for the current "base rent" for rent-stabilized apartments that will be finalized in June and together with such further adjustments as may be authorized by law the following proposed ranges of annual adjustment to be used for a determination of the new rent order are:

- For a one-year lease commencing on or after October 1, 2023, and on or before September 30, 2024: 2% – 5%
- For a two-year lease commencing on or after October 1, 2023, and on or before September 30, 2024: 4% – 7%; and

Whereas: New York City Council Members De La Rosa, Richardson, Jordan, Abreu, Fariás, Marte, Hudson, Hanif, Brewer, Ossé, Cabán, Won, Avilés, Joseph, Krishnan, Nurse, Gutierrez, Louis and Barron have proposed Resolution 556 calling on the New York City Rent Guidelines Board to adopt a rent decrease for one- and two-year leases beginning on or after October 1, 2023, and on or before September 30, 2024; and

Whereas: The NYC Rent Guidelines Board reported in their 2023 "Income and Affordability Study" that while NYC's economy showed positive indicators in rising employment levels with an increase of 7.0% from 2021 to 2022 but remains 2.1% lower than 2019 levels and has risen in the first quarter of 2023 for Black New Yorkers to 12.5%: concurrent with the end of the pandemic eviction moratoriums, non-payment filings in Housing Court increased 167.8% in 2022, while non-payment cases heard increased 228.6%; and

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- Whereas:** the New York State Unified Court System states an estimated 9,226 evictions have been filed across New York City in 2023 more than half of the 2022 figure of 19,098 evictions in New York City; and
- Whereas:** The sharp increase in eviction filings has led to a backlog of eviction cases in housing courts and a shortage of public defenders leaving many New Yorkers without the right to counsel; and
- Whereas:** In April 2023, the combined average number of individuals in the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelters and Humanitarian Emergency Response and Relief Centers (HERRCs) reached nearly 85,000, 87% above their level one-year prior. Approximately 46% of the combined population were recently arrived asylum seekers; and
- Whereas:** NYC Comptroller Brad Lander's "New York by the Numbers Monthly Economic and Fiscal Outlook May 9, 2023" reported that the median asking rent for a one-bedroom in New York City in March 2023 was \$3,350.00 and the median rent in Manhattan hit an all-time high of \$4,200; and
- Whereas:** Rent stabilized tenants are reported to have a median gross rent-to-income ratio of 36.2%, meaning a majority of rent-stabilized tenants are not able to afford their apartments, based on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) benchmark for housing affordability of a 30% gross rent-to-income; and
- Whereas:** Inflation was at its highest level in the NYC Metro area since 1981 rising to 6.1%; and
- Whereas:** The New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) showed 858,000 apartments registered as rent-regulated as of November 2022, down from 974,000 in 2019, the year the state legislature passed the sweeping Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act, or HSTPA. The law ended vacancy decontrol, in which property owners could remove vacant apartments from regulation after rents reached \$2,774 a month, and Community Board 12 Manhattan finds the declining number of rent-stabilized apartments concerning; and
- Whereas:** According to the United States 2020 Census, the median household income in Washington Heights and Inwood are \$57,117.00, now, therefore, be it
- Resolved:** Recognizing astronomical rents, and inflation, among other challenges facing New Yorkers, Community Board 12, Manhattan supports Resolution Number 546 and strongly urges the NYC Rent Guidelines Board to grant a rent decrease for any rent-regulated apartments:

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- For a **one**-year renewal lease commencing on or after **October 1, 2023**, and on or before **September 30, 2024: -2% - 0%**
- For a **two**-year lease commencing on or after **October 1, 2022**, and on or before **September 30, 2024: -1% - 0%**.

Sincerely,



Katherine Diaz
Chairperson

Hon. Andrew McLaughlin, Exec. Director, NYC RGB
Hon. Eric C. Adams, Mayor
Hon. Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate
Hon. Brad Lander, Comptroller
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Brian Benjamin, State Senator

Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member
Hon. Manny De Los Santos, Assembly Member
Hon. Shaun Abreu, Council Member
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Council Member