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Res. No. 68

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature and U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development to take strong action and increase NYCHA accountability by auditing the responsiveness of NYCHA managers to tenants.

By Council Members Kagan, Farias, Ossé, Louis, Stevens, Hanif, Cabán, Brewer, Won, Restler, Hanks, Avilés, De La Rosa, Brannan, Menin, Williams, Hudson, Krishnan, Bottcher, Schulman, Riley, Ayala, Nurse, Rivera, Velázquez, Barron, Mealy, Narcisse, Lee and Paladino

Whereas, The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) is the largest public housing authority in North America, providing homes for over 6% of New York City residents or approximately 550,000 people, across 177,611 apartments within 335 housing developments; and

Whereas, Formed in 1935 with a mission statement of providing decent, affordable housing for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers, NYCHA has suffered from decades of disinvestment at the Federal, State, and City level; and

Whereas, In 2015, a New York State Comptroller's audit found that NYCHA did not sufficiently ensure that work orders were performed in a timely manner, did not establish time frames for or adequately track the completion and closure of work orders, and did not sufficiently track whether residents were satisfied with the services provided, or considered their complaints to be resolved; and

Whereas, A New York Daily News article published in July of 2018 outlined strategies NYCHA staff employed to close work orders without performing repairs, including forging tenant signatures on inspections that were never completed, and attempting to gain entry to units during periods tenants were least likely to be home; and

Whereas, There have been numerous well publicized incidents of NYCHA staff certifying individual

apartments and entire developments to be free from lead contamination without ever checking the vast majority of units; and

Whereas, In October of 2021, NYCHA staff at the Washington Houses in East Harlem were found to be falsifying the results of mold inspections in order to artificially reduce the number of abatements they would be required to perform; and

Whereas, Residents have also brought attention to NYCHA staffers closing heat and hot water tickets without outages being resolved, and pest related tickets being closed after insufficient work, such as plastic bags being placed over holes through which vermin were entering apartments; and

Whereas, Inadequate access to heat and hot water, and exposure to lead paint, mold, and pest issues can have severe deleterious long-term consequences for the health and wellbeing of NYCHA residents; and

Whereas, A process by which NYCHA property managers can receive disciplinary action such as reduced vacation time, fines, demotion, and firing if tenants make multiple requests with no response or adequate resolution within six months, would ensure on site staff are accountable to NYCHA residents, and disincentivize the closure of work tickets through dishonest means; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature and U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development to take strong action and increase NYCHA accountability by auditing the responsiveness of NYCHA managers to tenants.

NRC
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