

Transcript: Mayor Eric Adams Holds Public Hearing, Signs Intros 558-A and 0303

June 27, 2022

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you, thank you. Today, I'm holding hearings and doing two bill signings for bills that represent a positive step in our work to tackle the affordable housing crisis by bringing relief to New Yorkers with rent stabilized apartments, and transparency to a critical rental assistance and eviction prevention program. And we all know that right now, homeowners are suffering, renters are suffering. We are experiencing a very difficult time, and COVID has only aggravated some of the trauma that people experience every day.

Mayor Adams: Working people have lost wages, lost jobs, small property owners have had a difficult time holding onto their properties, and too many are worried whether they can stay in their apartments or not. The average New York City household would need to double their income to afford the average apartment in this city. And I know that worry and that fear all too well growing up as a child on the verge of homelessness. This is something that's real to our administration.

Mayor Adams: While we were successful in pushing down the Rent Guideline Board's increases, you heard at the beginning of the year there were talks of 9%. We were able to use our voice and advocacy to bring down those numbers. But we still know that even with the slightest increase, it impacts homeowners. But it also has been a system that has pitted small property owners against tenants year after year. The system is broken, and we need Albany help to fix it and move in the right direction.

Mayor Adams: We want New Yorkers to know that this city has your back, and that is why we are extending rent stabilization. Intro 558-A extends the expiration date of rent stabilization laws from July 1st 2022 to April 1st 2024, ensuring tenants remain protected. And we're not going to just stop there with Intro 303, we are now going to track and share more data. Transparency is important to build back the trust that we have lost in this city. The data will be released regarding any central eviction protection program that helps our most vulnerable New Yorkers. This will help increase the

transparency around the CityFHEPS rental assistance program, giving us a better picture of who is in need and how we're using the services.

Mayor Adams: I want to thank the speaker who has been a partner, Speaker Adrienne Adams and Council Member Pierina Sanchez, the Committee Chair of Housing and Building, for sponsoring Intro 558-A, and Council Member Avilés, a sponsor of Intro 303. These bills are two important bills. Before we go to the public, I want to turn it over to Councilwoman Farías to say a few words.

[...]

Mayor Adams: Thank you so much. I'm going to open it to the public at this time. Just say your name for the record, please.

Question: Mr. Adams, I'm [inaudible] Komatsu. We previously met on November 16th last year during a public resource fair in Brooklyn. You're running the show now, you told me back then you didn't. So, the point is, this public hearing is about rent stabilization, just like you just stated, transparency. So, with regards to FHEPS vouchers, you just talked about, about six years ago I was issued a FHEPS voucher by HRA. HRA illegally changed my lease agreement. They changed the rental subsidy. So, the question is, as New York City's mayor, exactly what are you going to do about it? The slumlord that was involved in that scheme, Urban Pathways, Frederick Shack is the CEO of Urban Pathways, he was part of your transition committee. So was George Silver. Point is, I've got litigation. HRA won't give me the discovery material. You had a public hearing with Norman Siegel, I think it was, you talked about transparency then. HRA still won't play ball. So, the point is, Urban Pathways is filing numerous frivolous lawsuits against me only after it and HRA jointly and criminally changed my lease agreement. So as New York City's mayor, exactly what will you do about that and when? I have confirmation I can give to one of your deputies to confirm that HRA did in fact change my lease.

Mayor Adams: Okay, I'm not really clear of your case because you laid out a lot of things, but I would like to, if you could give me something in writing, I will personally look at it.

Question: Here you go.

Mayor Adams: Okay, let me finish, okay? I will personally look at it and communicate with you directly, because no one should use any fraudulent means to change your lease or do anything that's improper.

Question: Thank you.

Mayor Adams: And so, you turn over the information, you give your number to my staff, give me an opportunity to dig into it, and I will personally get back to you, okay? Okay, thank you.

[...]

Mayor Adams: Okay. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you all.