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**MAYOR DE BLASIO SIGNS BILLS TO EXPAND GREEN NEW DEAL, COMBAT
INCOME DISCRIMINATION AND PROVIDE ONLINE ACCESS TO RENTAL
ASSISTANCE**

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today signed into law a package of bills that will expand New York City’s landmark Green New Deal, increase access to online rental assistance and strengthen income discrimination laws.

“Fighting climate change and increasing access to safe and stable housing are crucial to making New York City an equitable place to live for generations to come,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “These bills will chart a path forward for a fair and sustainable recovery.”

The bills include:

Intro. 1947-A (Constantanides): Increases the threshold for rent-regulated buildings to be exempted from Green New Deal emissions reduction requirements. Under the original law, buildings with one or more rent-regulated units were be exempted. Under this law, buildings that are up to 35 percent rent-regulated will required to meet the Green New Deal standards. The bill provides this newly added universe of buildings an extra two years to comply with the initial requirements.

Intro. 2072-A (Constantanides): Requires the City to report on its outreach and education efforts and methods buildings use to comply with greenhouse gas emissions limits pursuant to Local Law 97 of 2019, including information about non-compliant buildings, types of retrofits different building types are using, and funding available for these energy investments.

Intro. 2080-A (Levin): Requires the Department of Social Services provide clients online access to their CityFHEPS rental assistance application. This will help clients track their application status and serve as a way for New Yorkers to get help if they have questions about the application process.

Intro. 1339-A (Ayala): Requires the Department of Social Services to provide information to CityFHEPS rental assistance applicants about income discrimination at the time an applicant receives a “shopping letter” from DSS. The notice would provide information about protections under the New York City Human Rights Law related to discrimination on the basis of a person’s lawful source of income and use of rental vouchers.

Examples of actions that may indicate discrimination include:

- Refusing to accept lawful source of income for rent payment (unemployment benefits, child support, alimony, foster care subsidies, Social Security, or any other form of federal, state, or local public assistance or housing assistance)
- Publishing any type of advertisement that indicates a refusal to accept any lawful source of income
- Refusing or delaying repairs because a person uses any lawful source of income for rent payment
- Refusing to accept a CityFHEPS subsidy for payment of rent or a security deposit voucher

Intro. 2082-A (Powers): Expands prohibition of income discrimination by landlords of small buildings (1-5 units). The bill also amends the definition of “lawful source of income” to clarify that the term encompasses other types of lawful income that low-income New Yorkers may have access to, including, but not limited to, “child support, alimony, foster care subsidies, income derived from social security, or any form of federal, state, or local public assistance or housing assistance including, but not limited to, Section 8 vouchers.”

"The Council is proud of our efforts to create and expand a Green New Deal for New York City and we will continue to strengthen the Climate Mobilization Act and other resiliency initiatives. We will also keep working to protect New Yorkers from income discrimination and increase access to rental assistance for tenants throughout this pandemic and beyond," said **Council Speaker Corey Johnson**.

"New Yorkers understand that climate change is an existential threat, especially in a city of islands like ours," said **Department of Buildings Commissioner Melanie La Rocca**. "Buildings are our largest source of emissions, and we look forward to continue educating and working with buildings owners on the necessary changes they must make to meet this threat head-on. We remain committed to implementing NYC's Green New Deal, and appreciate the continued support of the Council to do so."

"We must, and will, ensure our climate interventions also protect every New Yorker's right to affordable, comfortable and healthy housing," said **Mark Chambers, Director of Sustainability, City of New York**. "Intros 1947 and 2072 signed today provide pathways for more buildings to meet our ambitious climate goals, and we stand ready to support their compliance."

"Our climate crisis demands bold leadership to decarbonize our economy and deliver justice for our frontline communities," said **Daniel Zarrilli, New York City's Chief Climate Policy Advisor**. "Today's actions are critical to achieving New York City's Green New Deal and ending the age of fossil fuels by expanding the City's global leadership on energy retrofits to even more buildings. Investments like these into clean energy, resilient infrastructure, and environmental justice will create the jobs needed to accelerate our economic recovery and ensure a livable future for the next generation. Congratulations to Councilmember Constantinides and the entire City Council for their partnership and leadership."

“Since day one, we have made housing stability a top priority,” said **Department of Social Services Commissioner Steven Banks**. “Today’s legislation exemplifies that pledge and will take our progress even further, making it easier for New Yorkers in need and landlords alike to open and access doors of opportunity, like permanent housing, including by reinforcing the source of income discrimination protections provided under the law to New Yorkers who may use rental assistance to get back on their feet. We thank our partners and the sponsors of the legislation at City Council for their ongoing support and commitment to providing New Yorkers in need with a variety of tools to secure their homes.”

"Fighting source of income discrimination remains a top priority at the NYC Commission on Human Rights" said **Carmelyn P. Malalis, Chair and Commissioner of the NYC Commission on Human Rights**. “Since 2014, the Commission has assessed over \$1.2 million in damages and penalties in source of income cases, \$450,000 of which was assessed in Fiscal Year 2020 alone. Because of the systemic nature of these violations, the Commission employs innovative strategies in our enforcement efforts to ensure maximum impact, such as requiring violators to set aside a percentage of their units specifically for tenants utilizing government rental assistance. Today’s bills serve to strengthen the Commission’s ability to protect New Yorkers. At a time when housing insecurity is made all the more dangerous by the COVID-19 pandemic, we applaud these steps taken toward eradicating housing discrimination and keeping people in safe and secure homes."

"New York City is on the frontline of climate change, which is why we passed the Climate Mobilization Act last year in spite of an absent federal government," said **Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection**. "I am thankful to have City partners, from Speaker Corey Johnson to Mayor de Blasio, who have worked with advocates like We Act for Environmental Justice and New York Communities for Change, to continually strengthen our sustainability initiatives. Climate Change is not taking a break, so neither will we."

“All New Yorkers have the right to a permanent home. Now more than ever, it is critical that we remove barriers to finding housing. No one should be denied a permanent home based on their form of payment or source of income. Thank you to Mayor de Blasio and my colleagues for their support in helping more New Yorkers secure housing,” said **Council Member Keith Powers**.

“I am proud to join today's bill signing for this much needed legislation. These bills advance our climate change and housing goals at a critical point during our city's history. Intro 1339 and my bill, Intro 2080, will help improve the process of obtaining rental assistance and ensure that clients know their rights. Rental assistance vouchers are the primary tools we have in the city to ensure that people are able to move out of shelter and into housing, however, the confusing bureaucracy of securing government benefits as well as voucher holders not knowing their rights when landlords illegally deny them housing are barriers to securing housing. These bills will provide greater support for New Yorkers, but until we have vouchers that meet the cost of housing in our city, we will continue to hear from constituents who have vouchers for years without finding an apartment. Thank you to the advocates for pushing this legislation forward and to the Council Speaker and Mayor for prioritizing these critical issues for our city," said **Council Member Stephen Levin**.

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