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THE CITY OF NEW YORK
RENT GUIDELINES BOARD

PUBLIC MEETING
OF THE
DIRECTORS

Queens Public Hearing
Thursday, June 4, 2026
5:00 p.m.

1 Ms. Mitchell: Alright. Good evening, everyone. I'd like to welcome you to this public
2 hearing of the New York City Rent Guidelines Board, and thank you all
3 for attending. This is the first of four public hearings to consider
4 comments concerning proposed rent adjustments for leases for apartments,
5 lofts, hotels and other housing units, subject to the Rent Stabilization Law
6 of 1969 and the Emergency Tenant Protection Act of 1974. These
7 adjustments will affect leases commencing between October 1st, 2026,
8 through September 30th, 2027. I will now take roll call. Please respond if
9 present. Arpit Gupta?

10 Mr. Gupta: Present.

11 Ms. Mitchell: Brandon Mancia?

12 Mr. Mancia: Present.

13 Ms. Mitchell: Lauren Melodia?

14 Ms. Melodia: Present.

15 Ms. Mitchell: Sagar Sharma?

16 Mr. Sharma: Here.

17 Ms. Mitchell: Sina Sinai?

18 Mr. Sinai: Present.

19 Ms. Mitchell: Christina Smyth?

20 Ms. Smyth: Present.

21 Ms. Mitchell: Adan Soltren?

22 Mr. Soltren: Present.

23 Ms. Mitchell: Maksim Wynn?

24 Mr. Wynn: Present.

1 Ms. Mitchell: And Chantella Mitchell, I'm present. Let the record show that we do have
2 a quorum. The next three meetings of this board will be public hearings to
3 comment on the proposed guidelines on the following dates and times.
4 June 8th, at the main theater of Hostos Community College, 450 Grand
5 Concourse in the Bronx from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. June 11th at the
6 Theater at City Tech, NYC College of Technology, 285 Jay Street in
7 Brooklyn, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. June 16th at Symphony Space,
8 2537 Broadway at 95th Street in Manhattan from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
9 Anyone who wants to comment on the proposed guidelines at a public
10 hearing must sign up to speak. People wishing to speak at the public
11 hearings can pre-register in advance either through our website,
12 nyc.gov/rgb, or by calling (212) 669-7480 from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.,
13 Monday through Friday. Pre-registration ends at noon on the business day
14 prior to each hearing. For those who do not pre-register for the hearings,
15 registration is also available at public hearings from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00
16 p.m., on June 8th and 16th, and 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., on June 11th. All
17 of our public hearings will be live streamed and Spanish interpretation will
18 be provided at each hearing. We also accept comments on the proposed
19 guidelines outside of our public hearings. You can submit written, audio
20 and video comments for the board to review through June 16th.
21 Instructions on how to submit these comments will be available on the
22 board's website by e-mail at ask@rgb.nyc.gov or by calling the RGB. Our
23 final vote on the guidelines will take place on Thursday, June 25th,
24 starting at 7:00 p.m. at El Museo Del Barrio, 1230 5th Avenue at 104th
25 Street in Manhattan. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. The public may attend in-

1 person or may watch the vote live by streaming it on the RGB's YouTube
2 channel. To find out how, visit the RGB website. Call the RGB at (212)
3 669-7480 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Before we proceed, I would
4 like to go over the rules and procedures for those who are testifying before
5 the board. If you wish to speak, you must confirm with RGB staff at the
6 registration table, which is located near the entrance of the hall. Speakers
7 will not be called if they have not checked in at the registration table.
8 There are Spanish and Bengali interpreters here today. When registering
9 to speak, please notify the staff if you would like an interpreter. I will try
10 to call several names in advance to let you know that you will be called on
11 to speak. If you have materials to distribute to the board, please give them
12 to the RGB staff sitting at the sign-in table near the entrance, and tenants
13 and owners, but this may not always be possible. Board members may
14 need to briefly step away from the table during the hearing to use the
15 restroom or take an urgent phone call. We will keep the meeting moving
16 given the time constraints because we are eager to hear from all of you. In
17 order to accommodate as many speakers as possible, each speaker will
18 have two minutes to give their testimony. An additional two minutes of
19 speaking time will be given to those speakers utilizing interpretation
20 services. To help speakers keep track of their time we do have a clock.
21 We will start the clock when you begin speaking. The clock will beep
22 once when the speaker has 30 seconds left and will continue beeping when
23 the allotted two minutes are up. If you are still speaking at the end of the
24 two minutes, I will ask you to quickly wrap up your testimony. We expect
25 many speakers and the board wants to hear from as many of you as

1 possible in the limit-- limited time that we have for the hearing. We
2 understand that it may be difficult to say everything you want us to hear in
3 just two minutes, but please understand that it is our responsibility to try to
4 make sure that everyone who has taken the time to come here tonight and
5 testify will have a fair opportunity to do so. Thank you for your
6 cooperation, and the board is looking forward to hearing from your
7 comments regarding the proposed adjustment guidelines. And now we
8 will have the translation. Thank you. I will now call up, call up the first
9 few names for testimony. First, we'll have Ilan Rabinovitch, then Hannah
10 Lawson, and then Ann Korchak. Welcome.

11 Mr. Rabinovitch: Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. Today, I
12 submitted some written testimony analysis to the board and RGB staff
13 showing that the PIAC has significantly underrepresented the tax burden
14 of small buildings for going back at least a decade. Small building owners
15 have a much different financial reality than larger buildings. And I, I call
16 on the board to consider pu-- putting together reporting in PIAC that se--
17 that provides that segmentation. And a split rent order that offers those
18 buildings the, the financial assistance that they need to survive. But more
19 important than that specific report, which I do hope you'll review, and I
20 hope to discuss with you should you have any questions, is what that
21 represents. The board year after year seems to be making decisions in a
22 data desert and I don't know why. For years I hear board members in --
23 provide -- asked -- ask agencies and ask those testifying to provide data
24 and those board member -- and, and those respondents not providing it. I
25 see responses from DHCR of one or two paragraphs to answers of -- to, to

1 dozens of questions from this board. If that data is so important that
2 you're going to use it to make rent decisions, why do we accept such thin
3 data and such uncooperative data from agencies that ostensibly exist to
4 support us, the citizens in -- the citizens of New York whether we're
5 property owners or tenants? This outdated data, RPI reports from years
6 ago, data that's missing, anything buildings with under 11 units are not
7 counted in the data that you look at. It, it clouds your judgment as you
8 look at what to do here. And this information is important. It would help
9 to, to make proper decisions. This really can't be about tenants versus
10 owners as it will likely be over the next two weeks of testimony, but it is
11 because we're not looking at that -- at the right data, the accurate data, and
12 up-to-date data together. I hope that you will use your position here to call
13 on these agencies that are meant to support you and to support us to start
14 cooperating with you. And I hope you'll stop operating in this data desert
15 when most of this data is public. The data I use for my report was all
16 available on the DOF website. Thank you.

17 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Hannah Lawson?

18 Ms. Lawson: Last year, I wondered why so many people who spoke at these meetings
19 seemed to alienate their audience. How foolish, I thought. These are the
20 very board members who hold your fate in their hands. Certainly, they
21 can be reasoned with. But then I watched with disgust as those very board
22 members chuckled with landlords whom I exposed as corrupt. And yet,
23 here I am standing tall and those board members are nowhere to be found.
24 Change has arrived. Risks are not as risky for those that can afford to take
25 them. And certainly, taking risks should not be a privilege for the rich.

1 The cultural milieu of New York City, its lifeblood that endlessly attracts
2 scholars and artists and denizens of joy is built on the backs of risk-takers.
3 And arguably, the best risk-takers are made up of our city's most
4 vulnerable. We wouldn't have our iconic subway system if it wasn't for
5 risk-takers. What about our skyline? What about the Twin Towers?
6 What about the One World Trade Center? Do you think that we would
7 have been so recognizable and so resilient if it wasn't for risk-takers? You
8 need us. This city cannot thrive if it continues to squeeze its risk-takers
9 for every last dime they have. At this point, raising the rent is akin to
10 bleeding water from a stone. If you honor the heritage of our risk-takers,
11 New York City can once again set the trend for the nation, this time as the
12 heroes of housing affordability. Protect those who scaffold our city's
13 ingenuity and freeze the rent. Go Knicks.

14 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Ann Korchak?

15 Ms. Korchak: Good evening. My name is Ann Korchak, and my family has been
16 operating housing for decades, 210-unit buildings on the Upper West Side.
17 Several weeks ago, I listened in on a panel titled what is rent? And during
18 that panel -- at one point during the discussion a member of the mayor's
19 team referred to some housing -- nonprofit housing providers as, as
20 anchors. And I thought to myself that my family should also fall into that
21 category. Since 1941, we've been providing housing, paying our property
22 taxes, operating buildings and keeping them up. And, you know, stability
23 not only for the tenants in our building, but for our neighborhood, and the
24 borough, and the city. So, you know, that's why I'm here speaking tonight
25 because there's so many small owners that are not comfortable to be here,

1 and I just want to speak on behalf of those who are not feeling brave
2 enough to be here. So, I just wanted to focus quickly just on one type of
3 expense and its utilities. And I think given the very brutal winter we had
4 you can imagine that heating a ten-unit building that's 130 years old was a
5 lot more expensive than it's been other years. It was roughly \$4,000 more
6 to keep the building heated this winter. DEP is in the middle of having
7 some hearings that will raise the water and sewer ex-- costs by six percent.
8 The, the preliminary range of -- raises that you're considering, you know,
9 are falling far below what we're seeing our expenses increase at. So, the --
10 like I said, DEP is going to be looking at a six percent increase. ConEd
11 earlier this year had an 11 percent increase improved for electric and nine
12 percent for gas. So, just -- I just wanted to kind of hammer those expenses
13 down and just ask you to consider that. Thank you.

14 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. So, the next group of folks I will invite up, Denise Espinoza
15 (phonetic), Michelle Louzon, and Xiomara Maccou. Denise, are you
16 here? Alright. I'm going to come back to Denise. Michelle Louzon?

17 Ms. Louzon: My name is Michelle Louzon, and my family owns two apartment
18 buildings in Elmhurst. My father, an immigrant, purchased the buildings
19 in 1979 at the time many people thought the city was going to fail.
20 People told them not to buy the buildings, but my father decided to invest
21 in our city. Our family has been managing the apartments ever since. We
22 do work with our tenants. If someone comes upon hard times and can't
23 pay their rent, we provide a payment plan. One tenant lost his job and
24 could not pay rent, and we helped him find a job. Our buildings are 100
25 percent rent stabilized, and our apartments list for 33 percent below

1 market. Expenses has -- have grown exponentially. Of course, for
2 materials increased by 52 percent. Plumbing increased by 28 percent, and
3 our water bill increased by 4.89 percent in the past year. We would like to
4 continue to provide housing to our community, maintain our building and
5 offer our employees increases commensurate with the cost of living, but
6 we can't do that without a -- a rent increase. Thank you.

7 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I'm going to call Denise again. Denise Espinoza. Okay.
8 Xiomara?

9 Ms. Maccou: Hi. Good evening. My name is Xiomara. I'm repping Long Island City,
10 11101. I'm a renter just like the absolute unambiguous majority of people
11 in NYC and an emergency housing voucher holder. My voucher, which
12 the Department of Housing and Urban Development has decided to defund
13 by the end of this year, is what allows me to be able to afford rent. Now
14 that the federal entity is taking away my future, and now that State and
15 municipal housing entities are proposing budgets without addressing it a
16 rent-freeze would mean I am faced with a rental payment increase of
17 \$1,751.15, which secures my displacement. Please, ask yourself if you are
18 in a position that allows you to recognize the need to combat the daily
19 waves of crises of displacement, are you in a position where the brutally
20 limited avenues to individual and collective prosperity are apparent to
21 you? In being faithful to your original values as a rent guidelines board,
22 are you prepared to discuss to what extent we should enact a rollback?
23 The question of freezing rent is decades old. It is too little and it is too
24 late. Our communities being ripped apart by placing our lives in a
25 constant state of instability does not create the foundation on which a

1 healthy New York can thrive. It kills us. It devastates our families. It
2 tears at our health. Scarcity, by the way, results in violence. Violence that
3 we are all forced to deal with. And that is not just bad news for us as
4 vulnerable tenants lining up to beg for basic decency in the face of
5 oppression. It is also bad news for the people who have an immense love
6 for the pockets of the coddled and protected landlord class of New York
7 City. Every single person that has even the slightest responsibility in
8 establishing laws and guidelines that encourage our displacement is
9 contributing to the death of New York and New Yorkers. I am a New
10 Yorker and I want to live. I'm demanding a rent rollback. Thank you.

11 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. The next few names I will call are Tom Owner, Daquon
12 Llewellyn (phonetic), and Joyce Eff.

13 Mr. Tom: Hello. This is my, my issue with this moment, is one, I mean, the mayor
14 promised a rent-freeze and then he appointed three quarters of the board.
15 Okay? And I don't think that's fair to have a pre-judged position on the
16 board. Alright. So, as professionals, I'm looking for you to put the
17 professional hat on and look at specifically what are the costs that you
18 guys decided was the absolute minimum cost. And then ask tenants, what
19 are you actually paying. And if they're paying below your actual cost,
20 why is that on the owner to make up the difference? And then we have to
21 try to right now is just passed the nine-year mark. Okay? She just doesn't
22 bother working. She works part-time here, part-time there. She dissolved
23 the second bedroom, so that she can claim that she's poor. She gets free
24 legal aid for the last nine years to come up with one nutty story after
25 another. And it took five years to get to the deposition and at the

1 deposition, she got clobbered. Every single thing in her complaint was
2 wrong. Alright? And yet it can -- the case continues. So, where is my
3 cost? Where's my \$75,000 in legal fees that I've -- that I owe at this point?
4 She owes me over \$300,000 in rent. And we're arguing about exactly how
5 much that is. Alright? She doesn't bother to work. And that's the
6 numbers that you guys have got to ask people. Why can't you afford the
7 work -- the rent? What are you actually paying? And what's the actual
8 cost? Not percentages and anything else. Okay? And some of you still
9 might know me.

10 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Daquon, Daquon Llewellyn? We'll go to Joyce Eff.

11 Ms. Eff: The cost-of-living expenses have to be commensurate with salary not raise
12 wages, then cost goes up or manipulating work hours. Not for people to
13 steal or some other way to break the law. People always need their
14 physical health to survive. No place is safe where device is eating on or in
15 person's head or body. Not a weapon, endangering, injurious to physical
16 health. Opposed to dope, psychotropic shock, drone, puncture, vice, the
17 sex to stay clean, lean and healthy inside and out, not bionic. Health not
18 bionic. Not a hooker. Not some goddamn crack den whorehouse.

19 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. The next names I will call are Asma Islam and Rosemary
20 Moyano.

21 Ms. Islam: Hello, everyone. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak up
22 something of regarding apartment rent. Actually, to-- today I would like
23 to talk about a problem that affects millions of people. The rising of -- the
24 rising cost of apartment renters. Many renters find that each year that they
25 pay more for housing, making it harder to save money and meet other

1 financial goals. Point -- main point one, increased demand. One reason
2 rents continue to rise is that more people are looking for housing in cities
3 and growing communities when demand for apartments increases faster
4 than the number of available units. Landlords can charge higher rents.
5 Point two, rising cost for property owners. Property owners also face
6 increasing expenses, property taxes, insurance, maintenance, repairs,
7 utility costs even rise each year. Some of these costs are passed onto
8 tenants through higher rent. Main point, main point three, limited housing
9 supplies in many areas, not enough new apartments are being built to meet
10 de-- demand. Restrictions on constructions, high, high building cost,
11 limited land can reduce the supply of housing, which contributes to higher
12 rental prices. My question is that every year -- I live in Jamaica, Jamaica
13 Hillside Avenue, so, every year, re-- rent has been increased percentage-
14 wise, which is, you know, complete to-- totally out, out of my budget, you
15 know. So, so, that -- that's the reason I came here today to address the
16 issues. That's, that's it. Thank you.

17 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Rosemary Moyano?

18 Ms. Moyano: Hi. My name is Rosemary Moyano. My kids would like not be happy if I
19 didn't correct you.

20 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

21 Ms. Moyano: Two years ago, I turned 65, and it was, like, really devastating to me that I
22 had to file for SSA and Medicare. And I was like no, I'm too young. I
23 can't do this. I said, okay. I needed a place to live because the place
24 where I was living was a house, a two-family house. It was falling apart.
25 The water dripped down one side. The ceiling, there was a crack so badly.

1 I had to get out of there and my asthma was horrifying. I got onto this
2 website that I thought was wonderful, New York City Housing Connect. I
3 got on there. They connect -- con-- contacted me. I put all my paperwork
4 in. I am currently working, to this gentleman over here who said people
5 that don't work, I do work for the Board of Education actually and they
6 gave me this wonderful apartment. It was wonderful. Something I could
7 afford. I knew that I'd be retiring soon and all I would be living off of is
8 my Social Security, which I don't want to start yet because I don't want to
9 get to that point. But I would have to once I retire because that's what
10 they're telling me that I need to do. I couldn't believe that once I filed this
11 paperwork and my lease was done, I was so happy. The building is
12 beautiful. The landlord -- I mean, not the landlord, the custodian is
13 wonderful. Everything about the area I love. It's far from my job, but it's
14 okay. I take two buses to get to work. In October of the year 2024, I got a
15 letter that said my rent was going to be increased. And then I started
16 listening to the news in Channel One, which I listen to all the time, talked
17 about how, yes, the Rent Guidelines Board decided to raise the rent two
18 percent. I was like, okay. That's not good, but I'm going to make it work.
19 I had to do it again in 2025, because I do one-year leases, and it went up
20 2.5 percent. Now I'm freaking out. This is really not good. When I retire
21 and I'm living off of Social Security, am I going to be able to afford where
22 I live? Then our president decided to start a war. Gas prices are through
23 the roof and food. Okay. We can buy eggs now, but I cannot buy meat.
24 The only thing I can eat is chicken because chicken is the only thing that
25 seems to be affordable. I just pray that you guys do the right thing this

1 year and give me a break and do not raise my rent this we-- this year.
2 Please don't rent it. I just signed my lease. So, in October, if you do this
3 again in June, I would have to pay another whatever, two, three, four
4 percent. I can't afford it. Please do the right thing.

5 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

6 Ms. Moyano: Thank you so much.

7 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you, Rosemary. Are either Denise Espinoza or Daquon Llewellyn
8 back? Okay. The next names I'll welcome up are LaToya LeGrand, April
9 Hurley and Cameron (phonetic) Mosca -- Carmen Mosca, excuse me.

10 Ms. LeGrand: Good afternoon, board members. My name is LaToya LeGrand. I am
11 also a candidate running for New York State Assembly in this district.
12 This is the part of my district where this rally is taking place. It is
13 important that we are here to show representation and make sure that our
14 vo-- voters and our constituent voices are being heard today. I am not
15 here speaking about the issue from the outside. I also live here. I know
16 what it feels like to open a letter and see your rent going up, while your
17 paycheck says exactly something different. I know what it means to sit at
18 a kitchen table and do the math that doesn't add up. And then -- and I
19 know what it means to wonder how much longer can a person hold on.
20 That is the reality for thousands of families right here in Queens, right
21 now. Rent stabilized tenants are already stretched to their limits. Working
22 families, seniors on fixed income, essential workers who kept the city
23 running through a pandemic, and still cannot keep up with the city and
24 their rent increases. The city is charging them to live here is way too high.
25 We have to make sure that our city workers stay here, our State workers,

1 our federal workers stay right here so that our ecosystem can truly work.
2 Our constituents and our voters are moving down south. They are taking
3 their dollars to another State because they cannot live here. If we're
4 saying that we want to keep the fabric and culture of our communities,
5 that's going to entitle making sure affordability is really affordable. I want
6 to thank you all for your time, and please take these messages back to our
7 mayor and, and make sure that every voice here is truly being heard
8 because a rent increase is going to truly be a deficit for us. And we are,
9 we are going to lose dollars in the culture of New York City if our people
10 keep moving down south. Thank you.

11 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. April Hurley?

12 Ms. Hurley: Good evening. My name is April Hurley. The US, US Census defines
13 one as rent burden when a household spends more than 30 percent of its
14 gross income on rent and utilities and food. Spending more than 50
15 percent is classified as severe rent burden. Last time I was here, there was
16 a rent-freeze. And I was a housing organizer then in the Bronx. Since
17 then, I have received two graduate degrees. I currently work in housing
18 and security. I volunteer in food and security, and two things have
19 changed. One, the pantry lines have continued to grow longer, and the
20 lines around housing court in the Bronx, and the lines around housing
21 court in Queens continue to grow longer. One thing that has also changed
22 is my pay, but yet I am still considered rent burden. I can't afford the rent
23 because it is more than 30 percent of my income. A rent-freeze as one of
24 the participants said early -- earlier, is decades old. As we know inflation
25 has already, like, increased amongst other things. A rent ro-- rollback is

1 necessary. I humbly ask this Rent Guideline Board to look into the
2 numbers and consider how is it that New Yorkers -- how many New
3 Yorkers qualify for Medicaid, Medicare, food stamps, the Fair Fares
4 program, all of these programs and still we could endure another rent
5 increase. Thank you for your time.

6 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Carmen Mosca? Okay. Then I will call Moreom Perven and
7 then Laretta Humphrey. Is Moreom here? Okay. Go ahead, Laretta
8 Humphrey.

9 Ms. Humphrey: Yes. Greetings. My name is Laretta Humphrey. I am the president of
10 the Greater Triangular Civic Association, located in Southeast, Queens. I
11 am a foundational Black American, and I live in a New York City
12 Housing Authority private home managed, managed by NYCHA. And I
13 want to say there needs -- what NYCHA is doing now, I, I don't know if
14 you guys are handling NYCHA or you just handling private sector, I'm not
15 sure. But I want to say that NYCHA is the worst landlord in the City of
16 New York. They, they have not repaired our homes. We have come out
17 of our pockets. Some -- one of the residents, the FHA residents said she
18 spent \$25,000 to remodel her kitchen because NYCHA, it was so -- in
19 such disrepair. Now, what we are looking for is a transfer of title. And
20 we are tired of putting in re-certification, rents going -- the people can't
21 afford it. Most of the people are 70 to 90 years old. It's five generations
22 living in this ho-- these homes. And these homes need to be turned over to
23 the residents, not at market rate, not at market rate, but at the promise
24 which NYCHA gave to us in the very beginning of signing the lease,
25 which is transfer of title. So, we are in a battle. And freezing rents would

1 be definitely the thing to do regarding NYCHA because they have not
2 taken care of these homes. I've been in my house for 40 years. They have
3 -- they stopped taking care of the house probably 25 years ago, 20 years
4 ago. A lot of my money for, for roofing, for heating. We pay heating, we
5 pay, we pay everything except for the taxes and the water. So, I think a
6 rent-freeze on NYCHA is a go.

7 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you, Laretta. And to answer your question, this is the Rent
8 Guidelines Board for private rent stabilized housing, but we appreciate
9 your testimony on NYCHA. Okay. I'm going to call once more for some
10 folks we've been waiting on. Is Denise Espinoza, Daquon Llewellyn,
11 Carmen Mosca, or Moreom Perven back? Okay. Okay. Great. Next, I'll
12 call up Christopher Athineos.

13 Mr. Athineos: Good afternoon. As a small owner in Brooklyn, we're struggling to
14 maintain our buildings with the high cost of inflation, new city mandates
15 each year, and unf-- underfunded RGB increases over the years. Our
16 buildings were built between 1885 and 19 nine -- and 1933, and they're in
17 desperate need to upgrade -- for upgrades and repairs. Try getting a
18 Model B Ford from 1933 and try to make it as efficient as a Tesla with no
19 money, it just can't happen. We do as much work as we can ourselves to
20 save on labor costs, but some things like lead paint abatement, sidewalks,
21 roofs, boilers need to be done by outside contractors. And even the work
22 we do ourselves, materials like copper, sheetrock, and parts don't come
23 cheap. Costs that we have absolutely no control over, like gas, electric,
24 and oil have skyrocketed this past year and exacerbated by the cold winter.
25 Our insurance costs have gone up over 30 percent, and the insurance

1 companies use any excuse to drop coverage. Recently, they expected us to
2 re-pitch our roof because they saw one puddle of water sitting on the roof,
3 which measured about 12 inches in diameter. They expect the sidewalk to
4 be replaced because the city installed tree is pulling it up, even though it
5 was done a few years ago. We have no ability to remove the tree or pass
6 the cost along to the city. If we don't replace the sidewalk to comply with
7 the insurance company, they just drop us in 30 days. Maintaining
8 buildings is like whack-a-mole. As soon as you think you fix one
9 problem, another two or three pop up without fail. New lower standards
10 for lead paint abatement continue to drive our costs up and keep
11 apartments vacant longer, which leaves us even less revenue to do repairs.
12 We're not speculators. We're a family who has invested in these buildings
13 for over 50 years. We take pride in our buildings and, and satisfaction in
14 providing good quality housing but it's reached the point where we cannot
15 do this anymore with near zero percent increases when you factor in
16 inflation. I urge the board to consider rent increases that are in line with
17 the PIAC to at least try and maintain these buildings, so they don't pass the
18 point of no return and risk the very people we're trying to house. Thank
19 you.

20 Ms. Mitchell:

Thank you. I'm going to call these names once more just in case a few
21 people are coming in and out. Denise Espinoza, Daquon Llewellyn,
22 Carmen Mosca, or Moreom Perven. Okay. Then we will take a five-
23 minute break to just grab some more names and we'll be right back.

24 [OFF THE RECORD]

25 [END JUNE 4, 2026 RGB QUEENS PUBLIC HEARING-PART 1]

1 [START JUNE 4, 2026 RGB QUEENS PUBLIC HEARING-PART 1]

2 [ON THE RECORD]

3 Ms. Mitchell: Okay. Alright. I will now call up Cristina Rodriguez-Hart, Terri Renae
4 Green, and Olivia Rodriguez.

5 Ms. Rodriguez-Hart: Hi. My name is Cristina Rodriguez-Hart and I'm a member of the DSA
6 Tenant Organizing Working Group. I've lived at 4120 46th Street in
7 Sunnyside for nine years. I'm not rent stabilized, and the sponsor of my
8 building is my landlord, Sunrise Apartments, LLC. The sponsor and the
9 board of my co-op building bicker with each other and repair needs go
10 unaddressed. On the sixth floor, right outside the apartment of Debbie
11 (phonetic), a rent stabilized tenant who has lived there more than 25 years,
12 major cracks in the ceiling caused plaster to fall and rain to enter. Debbie
13 is the one who puts out buckets to catch the water and empties them. The
14 issue has 3 Class C violations, 4 Class B, and 2 Class A for nine open
15 violations total that are ignored. One apartment nearby has had water leak
16 in and caused mold for at least eight years now, and I've seen two tenants
17 move out, fed up, because our landlord and the board do not address the
18 problems of our roof. Nonetheless, two years ago, they sent me a lease
19 renewal with a \$425 a month increase, and my elderly neighbor
20 downstairs from me got a \$250 a month increase last year. Even though
21 she and I are not rent stabilized, the lack of building maintenance affects
22 us all, rent stabilized and non-rent stabilized tenants. Down the street at
23 43-23 40th Street, A&E continuously ignores issues that need to be
24 repaired. Those tenants, most of whom are rent stabilized, also have a
25 roof that leaks into the hallway and into apartments. In their lobby, I

1 spoke to a tenant with moisture so consistent on his ceiling that
2 mushrooms were growing down from it, which he showed me a picture of.
3 These landlords are making profits year after year, and this money is not
4 going into building upkeep. We need them to open their books and to not
5 be allowed any rent increases when violations exist. So, I'm asking that
6 the board commission a study analyzing both present and historical profits
7 made by landlords and what rental adjustments are needed to truly make
8 the city affordable. And a rollback of rent.

9 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Terri Renae Green?

10 Ms. Green: Hello. So, I first would like to just say that I found out about this hearing
11 just a couple of hours before it started. So, I do think that that is a big
12 issue of why a lot of the presence isn't here today from tenants that I
13 communicate with all the time that do express the fact that they cannot pay
14 their rent. And then speaking about myself, I do live at 83-57 118th Street
15 in Kew Gardens. And I won't go into the different repairs that need to be
16 done with the building but when I -- what I can say is I do live in a rent
17 stabilized apartment that I cannot afford. It is very difficult to be able to
18 afford it. And listening to the landlords, I understand what they're saying
19 as well. You know, how much it's costing them to keep the building up.
20 However, when we're not getting evaluations and raises on an annual
21 basis, but the rent is going up every year, that is putting us in a deficit
22 every single month of trying to pay for the rent versus clothes for the kids
23 versus food. It's, it's almost impossible to survive here in New York City
24 with the rent going up all the time. So, where is the balance? Where can
25 the balance come from? What I can say is it was very scary to look at our

1 lease this year and sign it again, seeing that it was going up when we are
2 ready or living paycheck to paycheck and there is a shortage every month.
3 So, I'm speaking for the people who are also not here who did not get the
4 memo that this hearing was happening today. We cannot afford it, we
5 cannot afford it. And I'm, I'm just hoping that something can be done.

6 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Olivia Rodriguez. And then we will have Tim Murphy.

7 Ms. Rodriguez: Thank you. I am an 18-year-old college student, and I live in Flushing.
8 Although, I live in a rent stabilized apartment and my parents are able to
9 pay their rent, young people as me looking forward to live reasonably on
10 their own in their adulthood in the very near future, are unable to. I want
11 to convey to you that we, as students looking to start our own lives, are
12 less able to each year. Let alone insufficient wages, it should not cost
13 more than half of one salary to pay their rent.

14 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Tim Murphy?

15 Mr. Murphy: Hi. Thank you. My name is Tim Murphy. I'm -- I live in Ridgewood,
16 Queens. I'm a rent stabilized tenant. I've been a freelance journalist
17 writing on issues of housing and health services in the city for 30 years
18 with the focus on HIV/AIDS. And as someone who's made a living as a
19 freelance journalist all these years, I can say honestly that if I didn't have a
20 rent stabilized rent, I would not be able to stay in the city and to report on
21 these issues that are so vital to so many of us. I would have to leave after
22 35 years of, of living here. I also want to say I'm not here just today on
23 behalf of myself, I'm a unicorn in that I think my landlord owns only our
24 one six-unit building and his mother lives on the first floor and he's a good
25 landlord and he clearly can -- he clearly has the money to make repairs

1 because he maintains the building very well and responsibly. I'm also here
2 today on behalf of many friends who are older than me, who've survived
3 the AIDS epidemic in the city and who are living on disability or they're
4 living on a very paltry Social Security check. And they're living in rent
5 stabilized apartments that they've been in sometimes for years. And they
6 have, by the standards of contemporary New York City excellent, rent and
7 they're still struggling. The increases still hit them hard because they are
8 doing jujitsu every day just to make ends meet when it comes to the basic
9 things, which is like rent and groceries and transportation. So, I'm here on
10 their behalf as well. Thank you so much.

11 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. And I'm going to recall Denise Espinoza, Daquon Llewellyn,
12 Carmen Mosca, and Moreom Perven. Okay. Alright. We're just getting
13 some more names.

14 Ms. Mosca: Carmen Mosca.

15 Ms. Mitchell: Oh, Carmen, you're here? Great.

16 Ms. Mosca: Members of the, members of the board, good evening. I'm here for myself
17 and also on behalf of the senior citizens and peop-- and disability, disabled
18 people that were not able to make it on their own over here. On June 1st,
19 2026, my lease was renewed for two years at 4.5 percent. This increased,
20 this increased amount is what would pay for my monthly eyedrops not
21 covered by my insurance. A freeze or rollback of rent is critical --
22 critically imminent, and is proposed by the people of New York.
23 Economic and housing conditions show tenants are overburdened while
24 landlords are operating costs or profits don't justify further increases. Rent
25 burdens, arrears and worsening affordability are some of the reasons we're

1 demanding of this board a rollback of rents. There are approximately two
2 -- 2.5 million rentals, 41 percent of rent stabilized units. Them also have
3 to juggle to pay rent increase or their meds. Fact, New York City global
4 economy drew more residents outpacing housing supply. In Q4 2025,
5 2026, median asking rents are \$3,585, up six percent. Manhattan, 7.3
6 percent, Brooklyn, 5.0 percent, Bronx, 4.42 percent. Queens one, two
7 point -- 1.2 percent. The majority of renters are consuming more than 30
8 percent of their income across all boroughs, spending 50 percent of their
9 pre-tax income in housing and unregulated units facing increases. Our
10 young people can't afford to be on their own. Growing families are
11 homeless, and while the city has almost regained all of its lost jobs during
12 pandemic, rents have risen so much because both the exodus and the
13 return to the city disrupting the norm and this gave the landlords the upper
14 hand in rising and setting prices. This trend, comma, fad, comma, must
15 hold now. And we, the people of New York, demand a rent-freeze and/or
16 rollback of rents from these boards. Housing is out of control --

17 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you, Carmen.

18 Ms. Mosca: -- and must be stopped.

19 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Next, we will have Bryan Fotino, Wanda Martinez, and Sean
20 Connolly.

21 Mr. Fotino: Wait. Sorry. You called Moreom Perven before, can she go?

22 Ms. Mitchell: Yes.

23 Ms. Perven: Okay. Good evening, member of the Rent Guideline Board. My name is
24 Moreom Perven. I'm a member of the Queens Tenant Coalition and have
25 lived in a rented -- rent stabilized apartment in Jamaica, owned by the Zara

1 Realty for 26 years. Rent increased by over 12 percent under Adams.
2 One landlord net operating income rose over 30 percent. Despite this
3 profit and the illegal deregulation of unit, tenants continue to face the
4 thousands of hazardous violation. Tenant are clearly overpaying and
5 underserved. In my building and countless rent stablshed building across
6 the city, we face crumbling walls, water leakage, and ceiling collapses
7 while basic maintenance requests are ignored for months. The HPD
8 complaint pace proves just how bad the situation is. It is clear that our
9 rent is not being reinvested into our home but is instead padding the
10 bottom line of landlord who treat our working-class communities of color
11 as a cash cow. In fact, my landlord, Zara Realty, just got approved for a
12 quarter of a billion dollars refinancing loan [unclear] [1:06:55.2] my
13 building and some other in the neighborhood while we are all continuous -
14 - continuing to suffer and being pushed out. The Mayor Office of Equity
15 & Racial Justice is stated that 62, 62 percent of New Yorker cannot truly
16 afford to live here. And the Citizen Budget Commission recently reported
17 that 114,000 people have fled the city due to the housing cost. I have seen
18 in my building that 25 of my neighbors in the building have left over the
19 last five years because they could not -- could no longer afford the rising
20 rent with the RGB increases and MCI. I am asking you to analyze real
21 data regarding landlord profits, not fall for the data you are being shown
22 on the supposed rising cost for things that impact a tenant just as much, if
23 not more. On June 25th, please stand with tenants facing shrinking wages
24 instead of protecting landlord investment, protect housing as a human
25 right and make this city affordable. Vote for a mandatory zero percent

1 rent-freeze. This is a bare minimum. What we really need is a rent
2 rollback. Thank you.

3 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. And are Daquon Llewellyn or Denise Espinoza back? Okay.
4 So, we'll go to Bryan Fotino, Wanda Martinez, and then Sean Connolly.

5 Ms. Martinez: Good evening, board members. My name is Wanda Martinez, and I live
6 in a rent stabilized apartment in Jackson Heights for the past 30 years. I
7 am here today to urge that the board freeze the rent on both one and two-
8 year leases. During the Adam's administration, the Rent Guidance Board
9 increased rent by 12 percent, while the landlord saw a 31 percent increase
10 in profits over the past three years. As a senior citizen on a fixed income,
11 freezing the rent will allow the share of my housing costs to remain stable.
12 And this, in turn, will free up funds for my ever-increasing groceries,
13 utilities and healthcare costs. But most importantly, a rent freeze can also
14 help to keep me from being forced to move because of unaffordable rent
15 increases. Having been priced out of two previous apartments, you can
16 appreciate my concern. Your vote will affect my present and future
17 wellbeing. So, please, do the right thing for New York City tenants.
18 Freeze the rent and grant us a rent rollback.

19 Mr. Fotino: Hello. My name is Bryan Fotino, and I'm a tenant organizer at the Queens
20 Tenant Coalition. I'm here today following the lead of the tenants I
21 organize, those in the pink shirts who are demanding a study on landlord
22 overcompensation and a rent rollback. For nearly all the tenants I meet,
23 their rent is already too damn high. Even if you freeze their rent, their rent
24 will continue to be unaffordable, and they will continue to struggle to
25 make ends meet. Juan (phonetic) fell off a ladder at work and broke his

1 back. He's on workers' comp, but it's not enough to cover rent. On top of
2 that, his building's boiler is broken and creates a constant loud noise in his
3 bedroom, forcing him to sleep on his living room couch every night.
4 Evidently, the 12 percent rent hike that previous iterations of this board
5 gave his landlord over the last four years hasn't gone to building
6 maintenance, but to lining his landlord's pockets. Now, Juan is strongly
7 considering leaving New York, his hometown, to live with family in North
8 Carolina. Mohammed (phonetic), an Uber driver, is in eviction
9 proceedings. In order to pay rent, Mohammed is putting off a knee
10 surgery he was supposed to get in March. He can't walk properly and by
11 not getting hi-- the surgery is risking his ability to walk whatsoever. In the
12 richest city in the world with 154 billionaires and the headquarters of 43
13 Fortune 500 companies, nobody should be forced to move to another State
14 or forego a medically necessary surgery because they cannot afford their
15 rent. In the richest city in the world, rent stabilization should not be yet
16 another system that helps the rich get even richer. That's why 65
17 organizations and tenant associations across the city are calling on the
18 board to commission a study, analyzing both present and historical profits
19 made by landlords and what rental adjustments are needed to make this
20 city truly affordable. That's why 65 organizations are calling on this board
21 to roll back the rent. Rent roll back, rent roll back.

22 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I will now call Sean Connolly and Samantha Kattan. Okay.

23 Ms. Kattan: Good evening.

24 Ms. Mitchell: Good evening.

1 Ms. Kattan: My name is Samantha Kattan. I am a tenant in Ridgewood, a new mom to
2 an 18-month-old daughter. I'm also running for State assembly in District
3 37, which covers Ridgewood, Maspeth, Sunnyside, and Long Island City
4 on a platform of protecting tenants and building social housing. I'm so
5 fortunate to live a five-minute walk away from my mom, an immigrant
6 from Mexico, who lives in a rent stabilized apartment. The only way I
7 have any confidence that she will be able to stay in this city and age in
8 place and be a part of my daughter's life is because she is a rent stabilized
9 tenant. I'm running for office because year after year, I see rents going up
10 for my family, neighbors, and friends, and incomes are not keeping up.
11 It's my first time testifying as a candidate, but this is not my first time at an
12 RGB hearing. I have worked as a tenant organizer and housing researcher
13 in the city for over a decade. I've helped tenants start tenant associations
14 to fight for better conditions in their buildings and respect from their
15 landlords. Landlord profits and rent stabilized buildings have increased by
16 more than 30 percent over the past three years of rent hikes. Meanwhile,
17 seniors and very low-income New Yorkers represent the bulk of rent
18 stabilized tenants, and they are already struggling to afford rent. Raising
19 rents would make the city's cost of living crisis even worse for them. I
20 believe we have a moral obligation to keep people in their homes and help
21 them afford to live good lives with their families. So, I'm here to ask for
22 one thing, a two-year rent-freeze. We need some breathing room. For
23 people who have never known what it's like to live paycheck to paycheck,
24 it's hard to comprehend the peace of mind that would come from knowing
25 that for two years, you will not have to recalculate your whole budget

1 based on a rent hike. This is why tenants across the city organize to elect
2 a rent-freeze mayor and we won't back down until we get a rent-freeze.
3 Thank you.

4 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Great. Yes. And while we have just a moment, I'm going to
5 do a couple reminders on announcements. Mainly, if you would like to
6 speak tonight, you do need to register with the staff who are here and you
7 can register until 8:00 p.m. to speak. But just another couple of reminders
8 that I announced at the beginning since folks have come in, board
9 members may need to briefly step away from the table during the hearing
10 to use the restroom or take an urgent phone call. We will keep the
11 meeting moving, giving time constraints and we are eager to hear from all
12 of you. We also ask that each speaker keep their remarks to two minutes
13 to give their testimony, and an additional two minutes of speaking time
14 will be given to those speakers who are using interpretation services, and
15 you can identify that interpretation need when you are at the table at the
16 front. We have both Spanish and Bengali interpreters here tonight. So,
17 it's just a couple of announcements that I made at the beginning that I want
18 to make sure to re-share. And yes, please. And we'll now have the
19 translation of those as well. Thank you. And now if Sean Connolly,
20 Daquon Llewellyn or Denise Espinoza are here, we'll have your
21 testimony? Okay. Well, as soon as Andrew's (phonetic) back with the
22 additional names, we'll get -- okay. We will now have testimony from
23 Sam Lee, Jeanette Hechavarria, Nazish Tisha, and Musfika Mosh--
24 Moshahid. Is Sam here? Okay. Jeanette?

25 Ms. Hechavarria: Yes.

1 Ms. Mitchell: Oh, yes. Welcome.

2 Ms. Hechavarria: Thank you. Alright. Good evening, board members. My name is Jeanette
3 Hechavarria. I'm a member of the Queens Tenant Coalition, and I live at
4 34-15 Parsons Boulevard in Flushing. My slumlord is A&E, and I'm here
5 to demand a rent rollback. Over half of New Yorkers are rent burdened,
6 including myself. I spend about 40 percent of my income on rent
7 monthly, and I have a professional salary as a respiratory therapist. Due to
8 this, I haven't been able to buy basic staples, such as fresh fruits and
9 vegetables. If a medical or family emergency were to occur, my current
10 savings would not even cover me for an entire month. Even with a rent-
11 freeze, rent would still remain unaffordable, and I would continue to
12 struggle to stay afloat. Meanwhile, my slumlord is collecting our rent and
13 not repairing our building. According to a 2026 report from CPC, even as
14 landlord incomes and rents have increased year after year, their
15 investments in repairs and maintenance has grown only one percent total
16 not accounting for inflation. Meaning in real terms, landlords are
17 spending less on repairs now than they were in 2020. The burden of that
18 falls on tenants like us. We have plumbing issues, roaches, mold, and rats,
19 and let's not forget the harassment and intimidation tactics. Instead of
20 maintaining our buildings, they're raking in the money to buy more
21 properties and line their pockets. We are here because the rent is too high,
22 and we are all struggling to make ends meet. Our wages are not
23 increasing while the costs of livings are. Meanwhile, the income made by
24 these landlords has risen over 30 percent in the last three years. And
25 because they won't open their books, the board doesn't know how much

1 profit they're really making. I'm asking that the board commission a study
2 analyzing both present and historical profits made by the landlords and
3 tenant rent burden and the rent rollback. Thank you.

4 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Nazish Tisha and Musfika Moshahid.

5 Ms. Tisha: Hello. Hi. My name is Nazish Tisha. Today, I am repre-- today I'm
6 representing tenants -- organized tenants from CAAAV Astoria Tenants
7 Union. Today, I'm here to demand rent-freeze, so no increases on all
8 leases for 2.4 million rent stabilized tenant. We can see that there's triple
9 threats coming towards working class people. There's federal SNAP and
10 benefit cuts, wartime inflation, and so many other things that is affecting
11 our life including rent hikes. Our leaders face landlord harassment,
12 eviction and neglect actually every day. And a lot of people have to be --
13 are getting displaced from their home and evicted. We have seen -- as
14 Jeanette said we have seen that landlords had made 30 percent net in
15 profits, and our rent has increased 12 percent in last few years, but we can
16 see zero percent re-- repairs and maintenance towards our units. So, we
17 demand rent-freeze so we can breathe a little and, and we can live with
18 dignity in our homes. We also -- I also urge other tenants to come
19 organize with us so we can demand more affordability from the -- from,
20 from the city. And I ask RGB -- and I demand from RGB a rent-freeze for
21 everyone so we can live in our homes. Thank you.

22 Ms. Moshahid: Hello. My name is Musfika. I'm here today also as a representative of
23 CAAAV. I grew up in a one-bedroom rent stabilized apartment with my
24 two brothers and my parents. We -- because of rent stabilization, we were
25 able to live in a neighborhood that we loved, alongside my relatives and

1 all my friends that I had growing up. I'm here today to call in the RGB to
2 freeze the rent for one and two-year leases. Living in my apartment, it
3 was normal to have brown dirty water, to have no heat during winter, and
4 repairs that went on ignored. Although it was difficult, living in a rent
5 stabilized building allowed me and my family to live in a neighborhood
6 where my Bangla-speaking parents could find a doctor, find a school, find
7 a pharmacy where they could find somebody who spoke their language.
8 Last year, my family was able to fulfill a dream of theirs, and we were
9 actually able to move into a house. There, my mom gets to have a garden
10 that she's in love with. My dad gets to come home and find a garage to
11 park in after working all night as a taxi driver, instead of looking for
12 parking. And my brothers and I finally have our own room. My parents
13 have their own room. We were only able to save money to get a house
14 eventually because we lived in a rent stabilized building for more than 15
15 years, allowing us to save money. Although getting a house was
16 extremely difficult and we are still bank tenants, we were only able to
17 achieve this goal because of rent stabilization. Something as simple as
18 owning a home or live -- or owning an apartment is a far-off dream now
19 for many immigrants and working-class people. As a homeowner now, I
20 want every single person in the city, every single tenant to be able to have
21 housing that is dignified and be able to live in a way that allows them to
22 live in comfort, not just out of survival. I know the impact of being able to
23 live in a rent stabilized building, and I'm here toda-- today to call on the
24 Rent Guidelines Board to freeze the rent. We're facing a triple crisis,
25 right, like we mentioned. Wartime inflation, inaffordability, and ICE

1 kidnappings and disappearing's of our neighbors. Rent-freeze is the first
2 line of defense that we can have to create more stability so that we can
3 stay safe now, but also be able to plan for our future and what we can have
4 ahead. Thank you.

5 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. And I apologize for any name mispronunciations when I'm
6 calling you. I'm listening for the correct pronunciations when you come
7 up. So, thank you. Next, I will call Genevieve Rand, Johanna Puledo, and
8 Cesar Sped-- Spediacci. Is Genevieve here? Okay. Great. Thank you.
9 And we're going to have Genevieve. Next, we will have Johanna, and
10 then next we will have Cesar. No. That's okay.

11 Ms. Rand: Hello. My name is Genevieve, and I am not personally a rent-stabilized
12 tenant, but many people that I love and care about are rent stabilized
13 tenants. As someone who is not, my rent right now is \$250 more than it
14 was a year ago, and it is \$450 more than it was two years ago. And the
15 people that I love and care about, who are rent stabilized, could not afford
16 increases like that. They would have to move and leave their communities
17 and the places that they love. I participated in canvassing for -- to turn
18 rent stabilized tenants out to these hearings. And during that experience, I
19 would have people unprompted stop me in the middle of my like this is
20 happening, come to this. And these -- many of these were older people
21 who would tell me long stories of their lives and how there was no way
22 that they would be able to afford to stay in their neighborhoods if it were
23 not rent stabilization. I have canvassed for many things in my life, and I
24 have never had people just stop me and tell me, like, my entire life
25 depends on this. And some of those stories involved this board freezing

1 their rents during moments where cost of living was going up, and their
2 ability to meet those costs was not. And I know from the public data that
3 this board has released, that now is one of those times to step in and
4 protect people in a time of incredible increase in cost of living. While
5 their rent has gone up 12 percent over the last three years, their landlord's
6 net operating incomes have gone up over 30 percent in the last three years,
7 and their spending on repairs has gone down relative to those numbers. It
8 has gone up by only a few percent. It's incredibly important that this
9 board uses its power to protect New Yorkers in moments like this. And
10 I'm here to also ask that you freeze the rent for one and two-year leases.

11 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Next, we'll have Johanna Puledo and Cesar Spediacci.

12 Ms. Puledo: Good evening. My name is Johanna Puledo. I've been living in Jackson
13 Heights for more than ten years now. Just like many New Yorkers and
14 many immigrants in the city, we're going through lots of issues at this
15 moment. And I'm here in the hopes that this will help -- it help with the
16 issue which is the high rents that we're paying at the moment. At the
17 moment, I'm going through a very difficult situation with my husband who
18 is not able to work due to a health condition and we're trying to meet the
19 bare necessities as best we can. At this point, we're trying to cover rent
20 and food. Aside from this, we also have extensively high medical bills.
21 All human beings deserve a good life. And by this, I mean having a very -
22 - a safe home. And of course, food on the table. I ask you to not just think
23 of me, but to also take into consideration the elder -- elderly and also
24 many children that are going through this very same situation. Thank you
25 so much.

1 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

2 Mr. Spediacci: Good evening to all the neighbors and to the members of the board. We
3 are here to raise our voices and to tell the board that paying the rent on a
4 monthly basis has become practically impossible. And these are high
5 rents in order to live in apartments that are very poor quality. We need a
6 rent reduction or a rent rollback. And an, an access to a home or an
7 apartment that is worthy of living. I urge all of the -- all of our neighbors
8 that are here today, we need to form tenant associations, and we need to
9 work extensively and tirelessly so that we can make gains in the city by
10 participating and taking control of our own future. We want more public
11 housing. We work so hard and all we do is pay rent. No more rent
12 increases. We need to empower ourselves. Our future depends on us, and
13 strength is in numbers.

14 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Next, I'll call for testimony from Pierina Pighi, Jacklyn
15 Tomlin, and Raymond H. (phonetic). Is Pierina here? Oh, great.

16 Ms. Pighi: Hi. I have lived in Jamaica for two and a half years. My landlord is
17 Horizon House and Malek Management. To afford rent in New York
18 City, me and thousands of people have to work two or three jobs. We
19 don't have any free time. We love New York City, and we call it the
20 greatest city in the world. But what is so great about a city if having one
21 job or not even three jobs is enough to afford basic living conditions or if -
22 - what is so great if one has to be exploited to have just basic rights like
23 housing. There is absolutely nothing great about that. While rent is
24 unfairly high, there are lots of problems in our apartments and our -- in our
25 buildings that the landlords don't fix, like roach infestations, mice

1 infestations, and the absolute lack of heat in the winter. I pay rent on time
2 every month, but I don't receive the services I am paying for, which is why
3 we need a rent rollback. The rent is supposed to include heat, but since
4 Horizon House doesn't provide it, I have to use my own heater. Me and
5 my neighbors have to use my own he-- our own heater. And some of our
6 neighbors they even have to turn on their stoves, which is highly
7 dangerous to stay warm during winter. But not only in my building.
8 According to reports in the media, the city received nearly 80,000 calls
9 about lack of heat and hot water just in January, in one month. How much
10 many calls -- how, how much calls -- how much additional calls do you
11 need to act on bad landlords? Landlords complain that they can't afford to
12 maintain their buildings, but they have got rent increases year after year.
13 While our homes and buildings get worse and worse, and neighbors are,
14 are being displaced and even facing homelessness. So, there is nothing
15 great about a city that has allowed ban-- bad landlords to flourish, even
16 mobster landlords to flourish. There is nothing great about a city in which
17 fair housing is not a right but a privilege. So, we need the rent rollback
18 now.

19 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

20 Ms. Tomlin: My name is Jacklyn Tomlin, and I'm a community leader in downtown
21 Jamaica area. I live right down the block in Alvista Towers. I, I live in a
22 rent stabilized building that has one of the highest eviction rates in its
23 management's portfolio. The majority of the residents in the community
24 are black and brown families, seniors, people with disabilities, working
25 people, and individuals on a fixed income. Every day I see the reality

1 behind the housing crisis. I sat with seniors who were facing evictions. I
2 have helped single black mothers with rental arrears up to \$70,000 of -- or
3 more. I have worked with residents who are trying to understand
4 vouchers, rent-freeze programs, and benefits that they didn't even know
5 existed. I live down the block from the Department of Finance and people
6 don't even know what SCRIE is. You're doing a poor job. While we are
7 being asked to absorb another rent increase, many of our buildings are
8 struggling with basic conditions. We deal with maintenance issues,
9 service interruptions, sanitation concerns, and the daily stress of trying to
10 maintain ourselves in this community. The conversation cannot only be
11 about what landlord needs, it needs to be about what we need. There
12 needs to be accountability. If rents continue to rise, what protections are
13 being put in place to ensure we are okay and we are receiving safety in a
14 well-maintained housing space? My community does not need another
15 increase, we need relief. We need stronger enforcement. We need
16 accountability. We need investment in people who are already struggling
17 to survive in this community. As we go through a rezoning in the
18 downtown Jamaica area and we expand housing, we cannot leave behind
19 the communities that have carried this place for generations on our backs.
20 Enough is enough. Housing should be provided stability, dignity. We
21 should be given the opportunity to live here, not build, and then we got to
22 get pushed out. How dare you? I urge the board to consider the live
23 realities of tenants like myself. Those in this communities that have
24 nowhere else to go, that are being rejected from other communities. I

1 have a PhD and I am having to live here, and you're asking me to get my
2 whole salary to exist in this community. You all need to do better.

3 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. And next we'll welcome Raymond H., Sean Connolly, and
4 Sam Lee.

5 Mr. Connolly: Hi. I'm Sean, but I don't know if Raymond is here.

6 Ms. Mitchell: You could go ahead.

7 Mr. Connolly: Okay. Sorry, everyone. My name is Sean Connolly. I'm very happy to be
8 here. I'm here on behalf of the, the Party for Socialism and Liberation.
9 I'm very proud to be with so many tenants here. And I think it's just -- I
10 don't know, really amazing how many people have come out and are still
11 fighting for our rights as tenants and for, you know, basic consideration by
12 the city. I, I do want to urge though that, you know, we really shouldn't
13 have to be doing this every year. It's -- every year, it seems like we have
14 to come out and beg to this, you know, a board of bureaucrats. And I don't
15 mean any offense to bureaucrats, I think bureaucrats are important. But I,
16 you know -- I, I don't think unelected bureaucrats should be deciding the
17 future of millions of tenants in New York City. And what I, I honestly
18 find a little confusing is I thought there was already a mayoral election,
19 and I thought in that election that the mayor had run on a platform to
20 freeze the rent, and that we already voted for that mayor. So, it's a little
21 confusing to me why there's, like, still a question about this. It seems to
22 me like the only question that's legitimate is if there should be a rent-
23 freeze or a rent rollback. And that's, that's a legitimate question. I would
24 prefer a rent rollback personally, but I -- clearly either of those options is
25 better than a rent increase. But I don't understand why, why a rent

1 increase is even on the table because there was already a democratic
2 mandate issued by the people of New York City. And the only conclusion
3 I can, can come to is that, unfortunately, this board doesn't respond to
4 democratic mandates, at least not directly. And I think that's kind of a, a
5 real fundamental problem with the entire idea of the Rent Guidelines
6 Board. No offense, I'm sure you're all very good people. But the
7 institution as a, as a, body, I'm not quite sure responds -- is a de-- I think
8 it's not a democratic institution quite clearly because otherwise I don't
9 think we would be having this conversation. I think we need to move
10 towards a system where tenants who are the vast majority of New York
11 City, who are the majority of the population, have direct control over
12 decisions that impact them, including the rent. So, I think one way to
13 solve that problem would be for the Rent Guidelines Board to be a
14 democratic institution elected by tenants, run by tenants. So, I would --
15 that's what I would propose. And yeah, I -- but until that happens also,
16 just to be clear, you should also reduce the rent in the meantime. I would
17 urge, urge you to, to have a rent rollback. But then next year, we should
18 elect the Rent Guidelines Board. Thank you very much.

19 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Are Raymond H. and Sam Lee here? Okay. Great.

20 Mr. Lee: Hello. This is Sam.

21 Ms. Mitchell: Great. Thank you.

22 Mr. Lee: Hello, everyone. My name is Sam, and I'm a lifelong Queens tenant. I'm
23 an educator for the Department of Education, and I'm a member of the
24 Party for Socialism and Liberation. Every year, me and my fellow New
25 Yorkers come before the Rent Guideline Board to beg to not increase our

1 rent. For decades, cost and maintenance of our buildings only account for
2 62 percent of the slumlord's income. And yet the slumlord's leftover net
3 operating income is never spent or invested to repair or maintain our
4 buildings and our living conditions. And instead, their money goes
5 directly into their pockets. And that's a shame. Ye-- year after year, the
6 RGB vote to increase slumlord income because of inflation and increased
7 in costs. But why? Over one third of tenants spends over half of their
8 income on rent. So, why don't our wage increase when groceries prices go
9 up, every year that our gas goes up, every year that our rent goes up.
10 Where's our guaranteed net operating income after the cost of living?
11 Tenants fought for rent stabilized housing in New York City in 1969. And
12 in an undemocratic compromise, the RGB was formed where slumlord
13 representation on the board is equal to tenant representation. That does
14 not make sense to me because in New York City, tenants outnumbered
15 slumlords a thousand to one. This only makes sense in a government
16 where slumlord donor money and real estate corporations account for or
17 equal to the vote of a human being. Tenants fought so the RGB can
18 defend tenants' rights, and tenants can annihilate the RGB if the board no
19 longer meets the needs of New Yorkers. We, we need to build a system
20 that's truly democratic, that can protect us when another puppet of the
21 landlord class like Eric Adams comes into office. We need a permanent
22 solution. We need a rent rollback. We need a rent-freeze. But more
23 importantly, tenant needs to take over the RGB and have a system that
24 works and represents working class New Yorkers. Where you -- we don't

1 have to beg every single year for our humanity and beg for our dignity.
2 We need to organize for a sustainable future.

3 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. And I'm going to call once more for Daquon Llewellyn,
4 Denise Espinoza and Raymond H. Okay. Then I will invite Kristen
5 Kiernan, Tousif Ahsan, and Kasey McNaughton.

6 Ms. Kiernan: I'm Kristen Kiernan. I'm also an organizer with the Party for Socialism
7 and Liberation and a rent stabilized tenant in Astoria. Over the last four
8 years, my rent has increased by 12 percent, while meaningful repairs and
9 any improvements in my apartment have been hard-won if they happen at
10 all. Last year, I had a rare reaction to the flu where my liver cells started
11 dying and leaking into my bloodstream in mass. After spending a week in
12 the hospital, I returned home to find that my entire ceiling had collapsed
13 onto my bathroom floor. My building is over 100 years old. Years of
14 neglect caused the pipes to literally disintegrate and burst. I was forced
15 out of my apartment multiple times, all while being both a full-time
16 college student and worker, paying more than half of my income on rent.
17 It took more than four months for repairs to be completed. This year, a
18 rent-freeze could offer me and two million other New Yorkers long
19 overdue relief. And it would not have been possible without New York
20 City's tenant movement. If we win an end to rent hikes, it will only be
21 because of years of struggle by tireless tenants and organizers.
22 Unfortunately, this compares in comparison to what landlords actually
23 owe us. In fact, the entire Rent Guidelines Board process is designed to
24 benefit landlords at our expense while creating the illusion of being fair
25 and democratic. You are an unelected body whose sole purpose is to

1 protect landlord's bottom line. You use flawed metrics that merely
2 estimate the potential rise in property taxes and the potential rise in market
3 value of maintenance expenses. In reality, landlords often pay below
4 market rates for these goods and services through long-term contracts or
5 by neglecting necessary upkeep. Decades of historical data from your
6 own internal analyses indicate that you have overestimated landlord's
7 expenses by one percent annually. This is a permanent multi-billion dollar
8 transfer of wealth from us to our landlords. With your long-standing
9 awareness of these figures and the legal authority to institute a rent
10 rollback, you have never done that. And so, we're here to demand that
11 tenants are control of this process. Thank you so much.

12 Mr. Ahsan:

Hey, everyone. My name is Tousif Ahsan. I'm a tenant organizer with
13 Chhaya CDC, also a member of the Rent Justice Coalition and the Queens
14 Tenant Coalition. I'm really proud to have been able to grow up here in
15 New York City in Queens. I love the diversity of Queens, and I love that
16 it's represented here in this room. We organize a lot of neighborhoods in
17 Queens mostly rent stabilized buildings, where it's mostly immigrants,
18 people of color, and the reality is that when rents go up, when landlord
19 profit goes up, that means that when gentrification's happening, that's also
20 parallel to the displacement of immigrants, of people of color, of low-
21 income New Yorkers. And that's not right. And that's why we're here to
22 demand for the rent to be rolled back. Because when we're knocking on
23 the doors of tenants, especially during Zohran's mayoral campaign, we let
24 people know that there's a guy who's running to freeze the rent. And what
25 we heard from a lot of tenants was that's really great. And from a lot of

1 tenants, we heard that they wanted even more. That even if my rent was
2 frozen, it's already too high. And what they really need is for the rent to
3 go down. And so, that's why our demand is for the rent to be rolled back.
4 We are furious that the board is even considering any rent hikes. The rent
5 is already too high. If the rent is too high and it's frozen to a lot of tenants,
6 to a lot of people of color, to a lot of immigrants, to a lot of working-class
7 New Yorkers, that means that they're going to have to leave the city where
8 they built a home and they're going to have to find another place to live.
9 And that's not what we want. We're here to fight, to keep longtime tenants
10 who have been in their apartments for 10 years, for 20 years, for 30 years,
11 for them to stay for another 10 years, for another 20 years, for another 30
12 years. And for that to happen, we need meaningful rent relief. And so,
13 that's why we're demanding, from the Rent Guidelines Board, a rent
14 rollback. Thank you so much.

15 Ms. McNaughton: Hi there. I'm Kasey McNaughton. I'm a rent stabilized tenant in Astoria,
16 Queens, where I've lived for six years. My family lived in Bay Ridge,
17 Brooklyn for four generations until they could no longer afford to do so
18 and move down south. And that's just not right. Right now, I'm rent
19 burdened, and on Monday, June 1st, I spent time doing what I do on the
20 first of every month. I sat in my living room and decided which bill gets
21 paid late this month so I can make my rent. This month, it was a student
22 loan bill. Next month, I'll probably cancel the dentist appointment that I
23 made months ago so I'll be able to pay it. Every year my rent goes up.
24 My wage stays the same. And the gap between the life that I envision for
25 myself and the reality of my life grows really wide and wider every day. I

1 am forced to call 311 for water damage and heat violations every single
2 year, sometimes three or more. I spent nearly three weeks last winter sick
3 due to what my landlord called issues with the boiler, but I'm the daughter
4 of a tradesman, and I know that that's bullshit. Instead of using the money
5 from my rent and the rent hikes that have been placed on me by the Rent
6 Guidelines Board back into the building, the landlord instead gut
7 renovated the market rate units of my building and hiked up their rent
8 another \$1,500. My rent went to renovations I'll never see. Meanwhile, I
9 spent most of this year painfully pouring over my budget, figuring out
10 how long I can go without seeing my doctor. If I can go another holiday
11 without visiting my family and if I can work a third job without dropping
12 dead. I'm tired of waking up from nightmares. I'm exhausted by the
13 stress, and I am terrified that -- about the fact that year after year, I testify
14 at this hearing begging to be heard, and it is shameful to know that there is
15 a rent hike on the table. I'm demanding a rent rollback because I deserve a
16 life where I can do more than just make it through. The tenants in this
17 room are living data points, and every year they come and beg you for the
18 same thing. 2.4 million people's future rests in your hands. And we're
19 demanding a rent rollback because the data is clear we cannot survive
20 going on any longer.

21 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Thank you so much for all the testimony so far. Before I call
22 the next group of names, just a reminder for anyone who's here and hasn't
23 registered. If you would like to testify, please register with the staff in the
24 front. Even if you do -- did pre-register let them know that you're here so

1 we can get your name up here. Thank you. I will now welcome Michael
2 Satcher, Susan Shaw (phonetic), and Theresa Evangelista (phonetic).
3 Mr. Satcher: Good evening. My name is Michael Satcher, my name is Michael
4 Satcher. I've been living in Queens for about almost four years. I move
5 into a building on Archer Avenue. It was part of several buildings that's
6 new developments, five years old or younger. And it's one of those
7 buildings that's part of gentrification. It used to be that gentrification
8 displaced people who have been living in communities by bringing new
9 development. But now, the strategy is to build new developments, put
10 black and brown people in them, give them one, two and three-month
11 incentives to move in. But when gen-- gentrification is near completion,
12 they go all out with strategies to boost us out, to displace us. They -- by
13 holding back services. I live in a building that's 29 floors, five elevators.
14 For months and months, we only have one elevator, possibly two. And it -
15 - it's a health hazard. It's a safety hazard. People's trying to cram on there
16 to get to where they're going. You know, people are late for work, late for
17 moving their cars, from getting tickets. But also, there are other amenities
18 that were promised when you sign a lease, they don't fulfill. Whether it's
19 cleanliness with the trash supposed disposal, walking over -- stepping over
20 the dog poop, dog urine, laundry room not being serviced properly. And
21 then it's a 24-hour building with security person there. I say by eight
22 hours out of the day, there's no one there. It's not a security re-- area. It's
23 not secured. And we live in an area in Jamaica where it's a high crime
24 area. We had three stabbings in the building already. And so, I say that
25 for these kind of things where gentrification is, is active, people should not

1 only rollback their rent, freeze the rent, they should give pe-- people their
2 money back. At least half of it. If I make a purchase in a store and it's
3 defective, I get to take it back or get some type of credit. Where's the
4 credit when the services are not there? So, you got to consider that. This
5 is not just an issue for about money and affordability. It's about justice
6 and what's right. And so, I think that when you're displacing black and
7 brown people intentionally to fill in the building, to make sure the owners
8 get their money until the higher rent people they want in there are coming
9 in. That's wrong. It's about justice. Let's be fair. Rollback the rent. Give
10 money back to people who need it, so they can buy food and clothing and
11 medical issues and things like that. Thank you.

12 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

13 Ms. Shaw: Thank you, board members. My name is Susan Shaw. and I was born in
14 Queens and only ever lived in Queens for all of my 60 years on this earth.
15 I do not have a permanent place to live for the past ten years, but I've lived
16 and now couch surf at 80-30 Broadway in Queens -- in Elmhurst, Queens
17 and I've lived there on and off for 36 years. The building is rent stabilized
18 and has changed owners and names many times, but is currently Elmhurst,
19 Woodwa-- Woodside, LLC, part of First Queens Management. They own
20 about 100 buildings, all with many complaints and violations. I'm here to
21 demand a rent rollback and a study on landlord overcompensation. I
22 stopped being able to afford my apartment and now can only -- now can
23 no longer afford to rent a room. Storage rents also keep going up. All but
24 \$136 a month of my income goes to storage for my winter clothes,
25 important papers, family photos, furniture, dishes, and things from my

1 prior life. \$40 pays for my phone each month. I will lose food stamps at
2 the end of the month. I have few options. This winter, the Elmhurst
3 apartment had no heat between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Zero heat every
4 night. I had to stay at the 40 94th Street apartment, which is also rent
5 stabilized, but it has small owner, so they get heat. I also stay sometimes
6 in a Woodside while house sitting for a woman who travels a lot. She is
7 rent stabilized and she gets heat all the time. The inspectors come at 3:00
8 p.m. in the afternoon. We get no heat at all at night. We went the whole
9 winter with no heat. Elmhurst Woodside, LLC tea-- tells each tenant that
10 they are the only one to complain about the heat. Many use space heaters.
11 The electrical wiring is 100 years old and has never been updated. God
12 forbid, but one day there will be a fire, and I will lose my main place to
13 stay and shower and maybe even my life. Thank you.

14 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

15 Ms. Evangelista: Hello. My name is Theresa. I'm a Queens resident, and I organize with
16 the Party for Socialism and Liberation. Thank you to all the dedicated
17 tenants and organizers who showed up today to share your stories and
18 fight for dignified housing. Tonight, this board is going to hear us talk
19 about unaffordable rents and broken buildings. The same thing will
20 happen in every borough this month. And on June 25th, the best thing this
21 board will have to offer us is a rent-freeze. A rent-freeze. So, that folks
22 who are spending more than half their paychecks on rent can keep
23 spending more than half their paychecks on rent. A rent-freeze, so that
24 folks who live with roaches and leaks and broken elevators can keep
25 paying the same amount to keep living with roaches and leaks and broken

1 elevators. For already rent-burdened tenants a freeze is not enough. It
2 will offer some relief, but that relief will be temporary until next year,
3 when we all come back here again to do the same song and dance. Who is
4 ready to finally end this cycle? If you come to these hearings year after
5 year you know that this for-profit housing system is never going to work
6 for us. At best, it will only feed us crumbs. Who is ready to put
7 something new on the table? Like permanent and universal rent control
8 and real rent relief that's funded by the corporations and billionaires in this
9 city. If you're tired of feeding into this ridiculous undemocratic system,
10 join us for the final vote on June 25th and for a socialist housing forum on
11 June 27th. We're not waiting for the people in power to do us a favor,
12 we're organizing to build our own. Thank you.

13 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I will now welcome our --

14 Ms. Brown: Oh, hello. My name is Kendra Brown.

15 Ms. Mitchell: Hi. Kendra, yes. We're calling people in the order that they signed up.

16 Ms. Brown: Oh.

17 Ms. Mitchell: So, we will get to you, Kendra. Thank you so much.

18 Ms. Brown: Alright.

19 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I will now welcome Charles Gedinski (phonetic), Brandon
20 Morrell (phonetic), and Mejabin Habib (phonetic).

21 Mr. Gedinski: Good evening. I own and manage a 46-unit building one mile from here
22 in South Queens. My tenants have heat and hot water 365 days a year.
23 I've been with the building for over 30 years, close to 35 years. The
24 building was built in the 1920s. The infrastructure is very old. For the
25 first time in over 30 years, I had a cutback on improvements at the

1 building. The current three percent rent increase does not keep up with the
2 cost to run our blue collar rent stabilized building. This negatively
3 impacts our tenants. The proposed guideline increase of possibly a zero
4 percent increase will negatively impact the quality of life for working
5 class tenants in New York City. Mayor Mamdani ran a campaign
6 promising New York City rent stabilized tenants zero percent increase.
7 The ramifications of such a political promise will devastate quality of New
8 York City housing. A month does not go by where you do not hear a story
9 about poor conditions in New York City Housing Authority buildings,
10 especially in the winter. Do you want all moderate-income housing to fall
11 under the same disrespect-- disrepair as NYCHA buildings? Think about
12 this when voting on rent increases. I can sell my building and move on.
13 That's not what I want to do. Unfortunately, most of my tenants can't
14 move on. They rely on me to keep giving them a nice quality of life.
15 Without proper rent increase, I can't continue doing that. There should not
16 be a political vote, but a quality-of-life vote for tenants of New York City,
17 so the buildings they live in do not fall under disrepair. I don't -- I haven't
18 evicted a tenant in 20 years. Tenants that go into financial, we get them
19 on CityFHEPS, we get them on Section 8. We help them get programs
20 that will help with rent relief. I don't think I'm the exception to the rule. I
21 think there's a lot of people like me who care about the tenants. I also live
22 in Queens and I run again --

23 Ms. Mitchell: We're going to let everyone testify.

24 Mr. Gedinski: With those comments, I'll, I'll say goodnight. Bye.

25 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

1 Mr. Gedinski: It's beneath need me to respond to that.

2 Ms. Mitchell: I will now welcome Brandon Morrell and Meha-- Mejabin Habib.

3 Mr. Morrell: I'm going to do it in Spanish, so I'm going to need an interpreter. My
4 name is Brandon Morrell. I'm a youth, I am a student, and I'm part of this
5 Party for Socialism and Liberation. I'm here today because my father pays
6 60 percent of his salary in rent. I don't live in a rent stabilized apartment,
7 but I think that in this anti-democratic society, there are very few spaces to
8 be able to discuss why the cost of living is so high. The RGB is
9 supposedly an institution to help tenants but really what you do is to
10 optimize and make massive the profit of landlords. I'm demanding, I'm
11 not asking, I'm demanding that the cost of living go down. And I don't
12 think that it's only a rent-freeze or even a reduction of the rent, but that
13 this dictatorial institution has to be controlled democratically. The RGB,
14 it doesn't matter if there are more tenants or more landlords, this institution
15 has to be controlled completely, democratically. And this elite white man
16 who was talking before us who's supposedly talking in the name of
17 landlords shouldn't be here because the tenants -- the -- because tenants
18 should be democratically controlling the housing in New York. And I
19 urge all tenants, if they speak Spanish, if they speak any other language,
20 that they should organize themselves in their house -- in their buildings.
21 And finally, the Party of Socialism and Liberation doesn't propose a
22 reform to the reform which is the RGB. The RGB was born out of a
23 reform of the Rent Guidelines in New York. We propose a socialist
24 revolution in housing and that tenants have to control -- tenants have to

1 have control over housing. We need to have social housing, social
2 housing. Thank you.

3 Ms. Habib: Hello, members of the RGB. My name is Mejabin Habib, and I'm a youth
4 member from CAAAV Astoria Tenants Union. I've lived my entire life in
5 a rent stabilized apartment in Astoria. I'm here today to demand that the
6 RGB fo-- freezes the rent for one and two-year leases. To me, New York
7 City is home. It's all of our homes. But as of right now, the people are
8 being pushed out, not just by outside threats, but by the forces inside our
9 city that increase the rent. Under Eric Adam's administration, the rent had
10 been raised by over 12 percent, which is outrageous for the short term that
11 he was mayor. I love New York City, and I don't want to leave, but my
12 family is being forced to consider moving to Pennsylvania due to
13 increasing rent. The rent being raised doesn't just cause an in--
14 inconvenience, but a threat to our safety. Housing protects people,
15 whether it's from natural danger or ICE. As a US-born citizen who comes
16 from an immigrant family, I am still afraid of ICE. When ICE is detaining
17 any person of color on the street, I fear being outside my home. Now,
18 imagine the reality of what could happen to my family when we are forced
19 to on -- out of our homes onto the streets because of increased living costs.
20 I and all these tenants here today come before you not to beg for a rent-
21 freeze but to demand that you ensure no increases on our leases. We are
22 in the greatest city in the world. It is time that we act like it.

23 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I will now welcome Felix Andres (phonetic), Finducey
24 Begam (phonetic) and Pamvey Hasan. Yes, I'm sorry. Felix Andres --
25 Andrea (phonetic), yes. The first name is Felix Andrea.

1 Ms. Andrea: First person.

2 Ms. Mitchell: Oh, Pamvey Hasan, P-A-M-V-E-Y, H-A-S-A-N. And just before that is
3 Finducey Begam. Okay.

4 Ms. Andrea: Hi. My name is Felix. I'm a youth member at CAAAV. I recently moved
5 to New York with my family. I'm here today to call on the RGB to freeze
6 the rent for one and two-year leases. Our rent has gone up so much,
7 around ten percent while landlord profits is at all-time high. My mom is
8 the only one who is supporting my family, and more than 50 percent of
9 her income goes to rent. Despite this, we have so many issues in our
10 building. For example, our ceiling is leaking. Our door is broken and
11 hasn't been fixed. After all our of -- our ex-- expenses and high rent, we
12 have no saving. Now, my family and I are trying to move into a bigger
13 apartment, but we cannot afford this because of the high rent. So, I'm
14 calling on the RGB to ensure no increases on our leases. Thank you.

15 Ms. Begam: Hi. My name is Finducey Begam. I'm a tenant leader at CAAAV Astoria
16 Tenants Union. So, I've been living in rent stabilized unit for eight years.
17 90 percent of my income goes to rent. So, at this point, I pay all my
18 income to rent. They have been increasing our rent every year, but my
19 repairs are not done. Kitchen, doors, and ceiling, everything is broken.
20 We -- I have a patient at home. They have been living like this in this
21 situation. Because we don't get repairs and maintenance, it is very
22 difficult to live in these conditions. The -- I don't see the landlords or the
23 maintenance guy ever come to our apartment. Everything is broken, but
24 they are neglecting us again and again. It is very difficult to continue to
25 live in our current apartment. It is very difficult. If the rent is increased,

1 then we would have to leave to somewhere else, and I don't want to leave
2 my neighborhood. So, my income isn't increasing, but our rent is
3 increasing every year. It is a very difficult situation to live. So, my only
4 demand from RGB is to freeze the rent. We have been organizing tenants
5 for a long time so we can, we can win affordability in New York City.
6 Please freeze the rent. So, my -- again, my only demand is to freeze the
7 rent. We are here to freeze the rent. Thank you.

8 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Is Pamvey Hasan here? Okay. Next, I will welcome up John
9 Bolton (phonetic), Natalia Jay (phonetic), and Orendita Sarkin Onad
10 (phonetic).

11 Mr. Bolton: How you doing, members of the board? My name is John. I live in a rent
12 stabilized building in Elmhurst for 45 goddamn years. And I've seen a lot
13 of shit in that 45 years from a landlord that owns 50 buildings. I'm not
14 upset, I'm just angry. The building is a hundred years old. I urge you,
15 freeze this rent. Give us back the roll money -- the rollback money. I live
16 on a fixed income. I'm 72 years old, I'm a senior citizen. I get \$1,280
17 from Social Security. Thank you, Uncle Sam. \$200 of that goes to
18 Medicare, so I have health insurance to keep me healthy. Well, that's
19 going to end soon. SNAP, health insurance, bye-bye. I feel like we're in a
20 boat and we're all sinking, but you're going to save us, right, guys? Okay.
21 I got to hurry up. Right now, I'm in court with a landlord because I
22 haven't paid that bastard eight months' rent. And just to let you know,
23 only a judge can kick your ass out of your apartment if you're in a rent
24 stabilized building. That's right, and remember that. Okay. I'm in court
25 because of repairs that have not been done. And when they're done,

1 they're not done right, so they got to come back and do it again. My
2 bathroom looks like the Grand Canyon. And there's no heat. Well, here
3 we go. You ever get heat in the morning oh, that's good. 11:00 at night,
4 there's no heat. 6:00 in the morning., hell, I didn't have heat all night. For
5 two years, no heat. I let them know. I say no heat, they go, call 311. No
6 heat, have you tried closing the windows? Have you turned on the
7 radiators? Do you have a pet dog, a cat that ke-- keep you warm? Thank
8 God, I do. So, keep on fighting and we'll win. Don't raise the damn rent.

9 Ms. Mitchell: Alright. I'll welcome Natalia Jay and Orendita Sarkin Onad.

10 Ms. Jay: Hello, everyone. My name is Natalia Jay. I live in a rent stabilized
11 apartment. I've been told and made aware that this board does not take
12 accountability for maintenance issues which are affecting tenants as a
13 result of landlord negligence, though profits has been on a surplus as a
14 result of the Rent Guideline Board decision to increase the rent every year,
15 that is on one and two-year leases. We need a rent rollback and a rent
16 freeze which will help tenants with the rising economic cost. My slumlord
17 name is Raj Equities, care of Crosstown Companies located in Rego Park.
18 Additionally, landlords are aggressively harassing tenants, me in
19 particular, as present. Landlords are illegally self-affirming 311
20 complaints with heat and hot water. Therefore, heating violations are not
21 issued by the city, and maintenance issues are disregarded. Again, I ask
22 for a rent freeze and/or rent rollback. Though New York City, though
23 New York City DHCR has the data on rent stabilized apartments in New
24 York State, I will hope that this board familiarize themselves with the data
25 and see that the data of the rent during the time when these apartments

1 were on the market does not meet the current economic cost of living.
2 That is during the '70s, '80s, and '90s, there are no way that during this
3 time, rent has skyrocketed as a result of this board decision. Considering a
4 rent increase makes this a direct and purposeful machination that would
5 allow tenants to suffer during this economic turmoil. Okay? I demand a
6 rent freeze and or a rent rollback. Thank you.

7 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

8 Ms. Onad: Hello, good evening. My name is Orendita, and I'm here with -- today
9 with CAAAV. I live in Astoria with my partner. Because of rent
10 stabilization, I was able to live in a wonderful apartment for one year.
11 And I am here today to call on the RGB to freeze the rent for one and two-
12 year leases. Landlord income is already up 30 percent over for four years.
13 Their money comes out of the pockets of tenants like me. While landlords
14 enjoy a steady growth of income, I pay over 60 percent of my income to
15 rent. All costs are up for tenants, groceries, transportation, medical care,
16 and more. Every month, I must make decisions between paying for
17 groceries versus paying rent. The RGB has already raised rents by 12
18 percent over the past four years, but these rent hikes go into landlord
19 pockets, not repairs for my home. While landlords use our rent money to
20 buy up more buildings, rent hikes will displace me and my community.
21 Landlords have one job, take care of their buildings, but instead of using
22 our rent for repairs, they use it to gamble. They use our wages and
23 savings to leverage their debts, buy up more and more buildings, and pay
24 off mortgages. Our rent should not pay off their debts. While tenants face
25 a historic affordability crisis, landlords see our homes as investments and

1 expect to turn a profit every year, but our buildings are not landlord
2 investments, our buildings are our homes where we rest, raise our family,
3 and build our community. Rent stabilization is what makes my
4 neighborhood home. It is time for the city to use rent stabilization for its
5 true purpose, to stabilize the rent for 2.4 per million plus tenants. No
6 increases on all leases. Tenants need relief now. We call on the board to
7 freeze the rent for one- and two-year leases. Thank you.

8 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I will now welcome Erin Williams (phonetic), Farnhama
9 Rahman (phonetic), and Putul Begum. Is Erin Williams here? Okay.
10 Erin? And can we get the second microphone? I apologize. I think
11 there's a microphone over there.

12 Ms. Rahman: Hi, my name is Farnhama Rahman. Today I'm here with organized
13 tenants, CAAAV Astoria Tenants Union. Today, I'm here to demand rent
14 freeze. Like everybody has already said, that landlord had made 30
15 percent income -- 30 percent profits off our 12 percent rent hikes. So,
16 today, I'm here to tell stories about so many Farnhama's. I -- we only have
17 one person who's the breadwinner. My son is student and I'm a housewife
18 taking -- because of health issues, I can't work right now. My husband
19 works seven days a week, 12 hours -- 12 to 16 hours. For my husband, it
20 becomes very difficult at the end of every month to pay the rent. So, we
21 can see the triple threats making our life more difficult. We can see the
22 benefits and SNAP cuts in federal -- from federal government. We can
23 see the ICE escalation in our neighborhoods. We can see the wartime
24 inflation affecting our life in very difficult ways. I want to tell all the
25 RGB members that, do you guys know that we can't really go to, to a

1 vacation with our family because we are always paying our rents? So, I
2 want to demand a rent freeze from RGB members. Please support the
3 tenants and not the greedy landlords and the developers. Through RGB, I
4 als-- also want to amplify my voice to mayor and all other tenants. Please
5 re-- freeze our rent, so we can have some mental peace of mind. Okay.
6 Thank you. Thank you, everyone.

7 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I'll welcome Erin Williams and then Putul Begum.

8 U/F: How many [unclear] [2:22:57.1]?

9 Ms. Mitchell: I don't know exactly, but we're going to get to everyone.

10 U/F: Before 8:00?

11 Ms. Mitchell: We won't leave until we get to everyone.

12 Ms. Williams: Alright. Good evening, everyone, members of the board. My name is
13 Erin. I am a lifelong Queens girl, living in Flushing, and is very much a
14 part of my identity. I am also a member of the Queens Tenant Coalition
15 over here. And as someone who is currently unemployed and caring for
16 an aging and disabled parent, even a rent stabilized home, times and
17 finances are uncertain. Even when I was working, I hadn't seen a wage
18 increase over \$2,000 in maybe three years. And, and my rent sure has
19 increased. So, according to the mayor's office study on the true cost of
20 living here, the real wages of rent-stabilized tenants have declined by
21 about 0.4 percent this year. Meanwhile, inflation in New York City has
22 increased by four percent and continues to decrease our purchasing power.
23 At the same time, we are told that rent, that rent increases are necessary
24 because of landlords' costs are rising. But if they're failing us by refusing
25 to make timely repairs and keep conditions safe and livable, are increases

1 actually warranted? If our landlords are harassing us and trying to
2 manipulate and intimidate us into signing documents working against our
3 own interests and preying on this city's most vulnerable, as in the case of
4 my household, what increases are justifiable at all? Rent continues to rise
5 faster than my income. It is increasingly difficult to afford life in this city
6 that is so much a part of who I am. And what I am is one of the 62 percent
7 of New Yorkers who can no longer afford to live here. This raises an
8 important question. If landlords, particularly corporate landlords like
9 mine, re-- if their revenue -- if their revenues are increasing while ours are
10 failing further and further behind, are additional rent increases justified?
11 The Queens' Tenant Coalition does not feel that way. And in fact, we are
12 calling for a rent rollback. So, as members of the Rent Guidelines Board,
13 you are trusted with making decisions that affect millions of New Yorkers,
14 and I urge you to examine landlords' financial reports with greater scrutiny
15 and to seek more complete data on the gaps between tenants' income
16 trends, inflation, and landlords' actual profits across all sources of their
17 buildings' incomes. Rent stabilization is a safeguard intended to keep
18 working class New Yorkers in their homes. For many of us, that safety
19 net is unraveling.

20 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you, Erin.

21 Ms. Begum: Hi, my name is Putul Begum, and I'm here today with CAAAV [unclear]
22 [2:26:36.8] Communities. I live in Astoria for more than 15 years.
23 Because of rent stabilized, I have been able to live here for more than ten
24 years. I'm here today to call on the RGB to freeze the rent for one and
25 two-year leases. Landlord income is already up 30 percent over last four

1 years. Their money comes out of pockets -- out, out of the pockets of
2 tenants like me. While landlords enjoy a steady growth of income, I pay
3 over 50 percent of my income towards rent. All costs are up for tenants
4 like groceries, transportation, medical care, and so many more. Every
5 month, I must make decisions between paying for grocery versus paying
6 rent. Rent hikes only reward landlord greed. It doesn't really make any
7 help for us. Landlords have one job. They -- that is to take care of our
8 buildings but instead, they don't take care of our buildings. Instead of
9 using our rent for repairs, they use it to gamble. They use our wages and
10 savings to leverage their debts, buy up more buildings and pay off
11 mortgages. Our rent should not pay off their debts. So, I want to say
12 again, like many other people, while tenants face a historical affordability
13 crisis, landlords see our homes as investments and expect to turn a
14 profit every year. But our buildings are not landlord investment. Our
15 buildings are our homes where we rest, raise our family, and build our
16 community. Rent stabilization is what makes my neighborhood home. It
17 is time for the city to use rent stabilization for its true purpose. To
18 stabilize the rent for 2.4 million tenants across New York City. No
19 increases on all leases. Tenants need relief now. We call on the board
20 to freeze the rent for one and two-year leases. Thank you.

21 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. And I just want to make a final reminder to folks if you have
22 not already registered to speak, register.

23 Ms. Begum: No increase on all leases. No increase on--

24 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

25 Ms. Begum: -- all leases. No increase on all leases. Thank you.

1 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. So, I want to make a final reminder. If you have not yet
2 registered, registration will close at 8:00 p.m., but the board will be here to
3 hear from folks who are registered by 8:00. So, so, I would now like to
4 welcome -- oh, oh, yes. I'm sorry, the translation. Thank you.

5 Interpreter: It's okay.

6 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I would now like to welcome Shifa Tasnim (phonetic),
7 Ishmael Atif (phonetic), and Kendra Brown.

8 Ms. Brown: Hi.

9 Ms. Mitchell: It's Shifa Tasnim.

10 Ms. Brown: Oh, she go first?

11 Ms. Mitchell: Yes. We'll go in that order. Shifa, then Ishmael, and then Kendra.

12 Ms. Tasnim: Hello, hello. My name is Shifa Tasnim. I am here with CAAAV, ATU. I
13 live nearby. I li-- I've been living in Jamaica for the past four years, I
14 believe. I'm a minimum-wage worker, and almost 75 percent of my
15 paycheck goes into the rent. Over the few years, my stove -- one of my
16 stove is not working. The oven in my home does not work. I have black
17 molds that got painted over instead of being taken care of by
18 professionals. I have -- I've had a washroom that had not been repaired for
19 three days. The repair -- the technicians came after three days because I
20 kept having to bang on my landlord's door. This is the state we live in.
21 After spending 120 hours of my month on the pa-- rent, I get this kind of
22 treatment from the landlords. So, I ask the Rent Guidelines Board for a
23 rent freeze because I hope this will help people like me make ends, ends
24 meet nicely. I won't have to wo-- worry about groceries at the end of --
25 beginning of the months. I won't have to starve myself. I won't have to

1 think about taking a day off from work because I don't know if I take the
2 day off, I -- if I'm -- like, if I take the day off, I don't know if I'm going to
3 make rent. So, thank you. That's all.

4 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

5 Mr. Atif: Good eve-- good evening, everyone. My name is Ishmael Atif. I live in
6 Astoria with my family, and I have been living in a rent-stabilized
7 apartment. I am also a member of CAAAV, an organization, an
8 organization that works alongside tenants and working-class families to
9 fight for affordable housing and tenant rights. I'm here today as a tenant
10 because rising rent combined with the increasing cost of living are a major
11 concern for ordinary families like mine. My main concern is that the cost
12 of living continues to rise, but most people's increase -- incomes are not
13 increasing at the same pace. The cost of food, transportation, healthcare,
14 childcare, and essential expenses like grocery have been increasingly
15 difficult for many families to manage. In this situation, even a small rent
16 increase can place a significant financial burden on households. Many
17 peoples are forced to cut back on basic necessities or rely on debt just to
18 make ends meet. According to recent data, landlords' profits on net
19 operating inc-- income has -- have increased by more than 30 percent over
20 past few years. During the same period, rents for tenants have increased
21 by approximately 12 percent. This means that property owners have
22 already seen subs-- substantial financial gains while tenants continue to
23 face growing financial pressure. I respectfully ask RGB to freeze the rent
24 on all rent-stabilized leases. When landlords' incomes have already
25 increased significantly and tenants are struggling with rising living costs,

1 another li-- another rent increase would not be fair. A rent freeze would
2 provide relief to millions of New Yorkers, help families remain in the -- in
3 their homes, and make, make it easier for them to achieve financial
4 stability. Thank you for listening to, to my testimony. I hope the RGB,
5 RGB will consider the real challenges facing tenants and vote to freeze the
6 rent for two years. Thank you.

7 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. We'll have Ke-- Kendra Brown, then Cristina Jeffers, then
8 Salsabil Chowdhury.

9 Ms. Brown: One second, one second. So, I just want to say that I'm not understanding
10 how America steal our culture, like our food. Have us grow food like our
11 Mexicans. Have our -- bring our culture food to America to build
12 America, have my Mexicans, my Mexicanas build buildings in the hot sun
13 and stuff like that. We're mad. Us, Americans, we -- the people that live
14 in America that didn't make it yet, we're mad because, like, you know, I
15 just honestly feel like it's not fair for us, you know? Like, how you steal
16 our food, our culture, and have my people build their buildings -- build
17 your buildings and stuff like that, and then, and then have us work so hard.
18 Like, we wake up 6:00 in the morning. We come to work 7:00 in the -- at
19 night. People that go to college, they're not graduating until years. 7
20 years, 8 years, and stuff like that. Like, this is not fair. Where's our
21 reparations? We built America. And I feel like everybody should get
22 reparations. You know what I'm trying to say? And that's what I want to
23 say. And I feel like we should have everything free. Our rent should be
24 free, food should be free. Everything sh-- it's not fair. We built America.
25 They don't got no black clothes. I had to fit today. They don't got no

1 black clothes in the stores. Old Navy. They, they want us to look up to
2 these white people. You know what I'm trying to say? This is not fair.
3 The beauty supply store, they, they -- we got to buy our culture back. No,
4 cut us a check, and yeah, that's what I want to say. We -- you know, it's
5 not, it's not fair. We angry, we angry as Americans and, like, this is not
6 fair for us. We angry as Americans. Like, you know, because we built
7 America and we working so hard to pay our rent. We working so hard to
8 pay our rent. We want to -- like, college is not for everybody. You know
9 what I'm trying to say? Not everybody's smart, smart to go to college.
10 You know what I'm trying to say? Like, it's not fair. Life's not fair. It's
11 crazy, you know? That's it.

12 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you, Kendra.

13 Ms. Chowdhury: Good evening. My name is Salsabil, and I'm an organizer for CAAAV
14 Astoria Tenants Union. I am the proud daughter of Bangladeshi
15 immigrants, and I was born and raised in Queens, New York. As an
16 organizer and as a fellow New Yorker and a tenant, I am witness to the
17 suffering of our people. New Yorkers are currently faced with the triple
18 crisis of the federal administration's budget cuts, the wartime inflation, and
19 ICE escalation, all during an ongoing affordability crisis. We are here
20 today to demand a zero percent increase on all leases. This is the bare
21 minimum that the RGB can do for working class New Yorkers. The real
22 estate industry has greedily been taken advantage of the working class
23 who have be-- been putting their lives on the line to make ends meet while
24 they continue to hoard wealth. Our people, the working-class people, are
25 what makes New York the best city in the world, and we're here today to

1 remind the RGB, as well as the real estate industry, that we are here to
2 stay in the city that we've built. No increases on all leases. Goodnight.

3 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I'd like to welcome Cristina Jeffers, Fariha Hader, and
4 Krishna Parmeswar.

5 Ms. Jeffers: Good evening. My name is Cristina Jeffers, leader of the Coalition of
6 Tenants in Queen, And I come here to ask for what we really need, which
7 is a reducti-- which is a rent rollback. I've lived for more than 20 years at
8 94-25 57th Avenue in Elmhurst. My landlord is Zara Realty. I pay more
9 than 40 percent of my salary and rent.

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CERTIFICATE OF ACCURACY

I, Gabriela Rodriguez, certify that the foregoing transcript of 2026-057588 for the audio file *June 4, 2026 RGB Queens Public Hearing-Part 1 - Moston, R.* was prepared using the required transcription equipment and is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Certified By

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gabriela Rodriguez', is written above a horizontal line.

Date: August 10, 2026

Geneva Worldwide, Inc.

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NEW YORK CITY
LAW DEPARTMENT

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RGB Queens Public Hearing-Part 2:

KENILWORTH HOLDINGS LL, ET AL. VS. RENT GUIDELINES BOARD

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Date: June 4, 2026

In the Matter of: Kenilworth Holdings LLC, et al. vs Rent Guidelines Board

Reference Matter Number: 2026-057588

Transcribed by: Geneva Worldwide, Inc.

1 Ms. Jeffers: And we have more and more people living in the streets every day.
2 According to the ex-president of the board, Tim Collins, since 1990, the
3 board has granted rent increases which were 30 percent more than what
4 was necessary for maintenance. The board needs to do a complete study,
5 not only of small increases for -- to cover maintenance costs but also, the
6 mountains of profit which landlords have increased, have -- which
7 landlords have accumulated and all of the increases that tenants have had
8 to suffer through.

9 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you, Cristina.

10 Ms. Jeffers: Thank you.

11 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

12 Ms. Jeffers: Just one more thing. A rent freeze will keep things just like they are, but
13 the real relief and justice would be from a rent rollback.

14 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I will now welcome Fariha Hader, Krishna Parmeswar, and
15 Fredlynn Mompont.

16 Ms. Hader: Hi, good evening. I'm Fariha. I've lived in Queens my entire life, and I've
17 got into canvas with the Queens Tenant Coalition the past year. We've
18 knocked on countless doors throughout Queens and spoken with many
19 tenants who have voiced that while a rent freeze is a step in the right
20 direction, the rent as it is now following the 12 percent increase under the
21 Adams administration is unbearable. Buildings remain in disrepair and
22 deplorable conditions. The cost of living has increased overall, and
23 tenants are facing significant burden, having to choose between paying
24 rent or other bills, groceries, healthcare, childcare, and other essential
25 needs. The data the board has been presented with is skewed toward

1 landlord costs and not accurately representative of tenant needs, with only
2 one study ref-- reflecting tenant incomes. Again, a rent freeze would help
3 in preventing further hikes. However, a rollback or a reduction is
4 imperative for undoing past increases and providing necessary relief. Rent
5 hikes should have never even been in consideration. I implore members
6 of the board to act on the testimonies heard today with the urgency they
7 demand. Thank you.

8 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

9 Mr. Parmeswar: Hi, my name is Krishna Parmeswar. I -- basically, I just want to hi-- I am
10 close to retirement age, so I'm -- I just want to highlight the effect of your
11 -- what you're going to do on the seniors and people who are living on
12 fixed income. For them, they pay more than 40 percent of their income
13 towards rent, and they, they are not also earning, and they --

14 Ms. Mitchell: If you could hold the mic just a bit closer, Krishna.

15 Mr. Parmeswar: Okay.

16 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

17 Mr. Parmeswar: They are not earning as much as they did in their younger days. So,
18 they're relying on pension interest, Social Security, and more they draw
19 from there, more taxable it becomes for them. So, it's, you know, a big
20 burden for them. So, the other thing is I, I just want to mention, like,
21 today to rent a one-bedroom apartment is, like, \$2,600 in my
22 neighborhood in Woodside, Queens, I'm not talking about Manhattan now.
23 So, you have to earn times -- 40 times or 30 times, they say. That's like,
24 you know, once these people -- you know, if you -- so that's like you have
25 to earn like \$100,000 to get an apartment. So, seniors don't make that kind

1 of money. So, if they are pushed out from the apartment, they will be
2 dependent on the State. State will have to take care of them before
3 everything. So, that's one thing you should keep in mind. Also, like, I am
4 not in a rent-stabilized apartment, but I am having issues with my landlord
5 because you're going to set the market rate, and he wants the market rate.
6 And, you know, -- so that kind of affects me in, in a way. So, so, also, the
7 landlords, I, I hear they make -- they not just make on the operating
8 income, they also make on the capital gains. So, you should take that into
9 consideration like the landlord, the gentleman who was here before said
10 he's not worried about himself, he's worried about the tenant because he's
11 not worried about himself because he will get his cost, his o-- everything
12 that he paid. The capital improvement he made, he gets an increase in
13 rent, and also when he sells it, the value goes up. So, there's a lot of things
14 like that you should take into consideration. That's my request to you. So,
15 try to keep it down. I know they have to make a profit too. So, you, you
16 should take the full picture. They should -- tenants require to show their
17 tax inco-- income, taxes, bank statements, all those things. And they
18 should also show it to you if they, if they want -- they should open the
19 books, not just the profit and loss, the balance sheet also. They make
20 money both ways. They sell and make money, and all kinds of things
21 happen. So, I, I urge you to look at the whole picture, you know, make the
22 whole thing transparent and make a decision based on that.

23 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

24 Mr. Parmeswar: Thank you, thank you.

1 Ms. Mompont: Hello. Good evening. My name is Fredlynn Mompont. I'm a resident
2 here. I've lived in this neighborhood for over 20 years. I'm a single mom.
3 I have four children. I am surprised that we're here discussing rent
4 increase because I really believe when we voted for the mayor, that that
5 would have been something that's totally off the books. I -- personally, I
6 have two jobs. Sometimes I have to work three jobs just to pay the rent.
7 And I'm surprised, like, some people, they say, oh, they have a surplus for
8 this, a surplus for that, I have no surplus. I stay in the negative because
9 this rent is ridiculous. And my apartment is rent stabilized but it's like you
10 can't feel that it's rent stabilized because the rent is still so high. So, it's
11 not even like I want a rent freeze. I would love a rent rollback to
12 something that's feasible, that's something that I can handle. I don't
13 understand how we're here. It should be -- your one job should be able to
14 pay your rent, your living, your food, your everything and I cannot do that.
15 The landlord was speaking about, oh, you can get CityFHEPS, you can get
16 -- he can assist them to get Section 8, I cannot get that because my income
17 is too high to qualify for CityFHEPS, but my income is too low to get any
18 of those lottery apartments. And I put lottery in quotations because they're
19 not affordable, they are not affordable. So, I pray that you guys will really
20 decide that we deserve a rent rollback. We cannot, cannot sustain. I
21 cannot sustain with the rent freeze. I'm barely making it now. And like I
22 said, I have two jobs already. Whenever I can grab another job, do
23 somebody's hair to get some kind of income, that's what I do to sustain
24 myself and my four children. Thank you.

1 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I will now welcome Abdur Rahman, Kit Lee (phonetic), and
2 Ana Hilarion. Is Abdur Rahman here?
3 Interpreter: Yes.
4 Ms. Mitchell: Oh.
5 Interpreter: Can we get a second mic?
6 Ms. Mitchell: Can we get the second microphone? Thank you.
7 Interpreter: Is it on?
8 Mr. Rahman: My name is Abdur Rahman. I have been a resident of Queens for 35
9 years. I am honored to be able to speak in front of RGB about the rent.
10 For some years, we have been hearing about the rent increasing, but the
11 rent not decreasing because of inflation. Because the financial situation is
12 not only bad in New York, it is bad everywhere. The gas bill, the electric
13 bill are both high. When people are not being able to pay their expenses,
14 they are taking more credit cards out, they are taking more loans out, and
15 they are not being able to pay their rent or expenses. Not only residential
16 rent, a lot of businesses are not being able to pay the rent and are shutting
17 down. I am just a small home owner. I have a son and now I am retired.
18 I have two tenants. Both tenants are currently unable to pay rent. One of
19 the tenants has not paid rent for seven months because he does not have a
20 job. The other tenant has not been paying for three months since his
21 business has gone bad. I am not being able to seek any help from the
22 laws. My tenants are good people, however, but they are not being able to
23 pay the rent. At this mo-- at this moment, I am not able to pay my taxes. I
24 am not able to pay the taxes because I don't have the money as I am not
25 receiving any rent. So, that is why I am pleading. I am pleading to the

1 members of RGB to freeze the rent or give a rollback, please. Thank you
2 so much.

3 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I'll welcome Kit Lee, Ana Hilarion and Sora Ferraro. Is Kit
4 Lee not in here right now? Okay. We'll go to Ana.

5 Ms. Hilarion: Good evening. My name is Ana Hilarion. I am a member of the Coalition
6 for Tenants here in Queens, and I've come to demand a rent reduction this
7 evening because the rent is entirely too high. I've lived for more than 30
8 years at 150-11 88th Avenue here in Jamaica, and my landlord is Zara
9 Realty. My husband and I work, but of course, we live month to month in
10 order to make payment -- rent payment, which is entirely too high, as I
11 mentioned before. And of course, Eric Adams increased our rent by 12
12 percent, which, of course, accounts for the fact that whatever's left from
13 our income, we need to use for our basic necessities, especially for our
14 groceries. We don't have a savings account, and for this reason, we live
15 ch-- check to check each month. So, like I said, my landlord is Zara and
16 they have over 40 buildings and they, of course, make profits of hundreds
17 of millions of dollars because every single year, they just literally increase
18 their coffers. Aside from literally expressing or killing us with MCIs, they
19 don't offer us good maintenance. For example, in my apartment, I was
20 forced to have to buy a, a stove and a refrigerator on credit because Zara
21 gave us secondhand refrigerators and stoves, which, of course, were
22 plagued with roaches. We are also plagued with the constant harassment
23 on their part, as well as many of my neighbors, who have been denied
24 keys to their very own apartments, forcing us to pay \$200 for one single
25 key in order to have access to our apartments. Not even speaking of the

1 danger that my daughters -- I have two daughters, the danger that they
2 face. Whenever they come back from school, they have to wait outside
3 until they are let into the, the building. So, currently, we're also -- so at
4 the moment, we cannot use the ramp to the back door, we don't have
5 access to that. Aside from that, illegal soldering is being done in our
6 basement, which, of course, is exposing us to dangerous toxins. And
7 there's also the risk of an explosion occurring at the moment. The RGB
8 needs to carefully study and look at all of the outlandish earnings that the
9 majority of the tenants -- or excuse me, landlords in this city have
10 accumulated across the last few years. They do not need all of these
11 increases. In fact, we, the tenants, are the ones that are constantly
12 suffering. So, a rent freeze is not enough, we need a rent rollback now.

13 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I welcome Sora Ferraro, Kit Lee, and Evelyn Lampkin.

14 Ms. Ferraro: Hi. My name is Sora and I am -- I'm a student in School of Visual Arts. I
15 have lived in Astoria my entire life. Like me, my dad is an artist who also
16 went to the same college. He has worked in museums like the Met and the
17 American Museum of Natural History for over 40 years. He was forced to
18 retire just recently by the Trump administration. They threw a small
19 amount of money at him to leave and if he didn't take it, they would have
20 made him retire some other way. It was either he took it then or left a bit
21 later with nothing. Taxes took half of that money away from him. He is
22 now going through with major apartment and renovations that had to be
23 done, or major leaks and pipe bursts would have happened. These
24 renovations are causing a lot of financial strain for us. My dad has been
25 working since he was ten years old. He's the most hardworking person I

1 know, and all I want in -- all he wants in his life is to have his own studio
2 space to make art. Although we are homeowners, the rising rents impact
3 us because we can't even find anything close to his price range to be able
4 to ful-- fulfill his dream. With years of family problems at home, all we
5 want, both of us, is to get out and have our own space to be able to do the
6 things we love and have a peaceful place to call home. It's a struggle to be
7 at home most of the time because of all these family problems. All we
8 need is to be able to get out and find a place that is affordable but seems
9 im-- that seems a-- impossible as of right now. New York City has always
10 been home to artists, and the city needs to continue to support them. We
11 need a rent rollback, and if not, just stop increasing the rent unless you
12 want to kick all of us out. Thank you.

13 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Do we have Evelyn Lampkin or Kit Lee? Is Evelyn here?

14 Ms. Lampkin: Yes.

15 Ms. Mitchell: Oh, great. Thank you.

16 Ms. Lampkin: Good evening, everyone. You never know when you're traveling down
17 the Yellow Brick Road to go home what you might run into. It's here. So,
18 I came in and I'm putting voice to action.

19 Ms. Mitchell: Welcome.

20 Ms. Lampkin: My name is Evelyn Lampkin, Evelyn Alva (phonetic) Lampkin, also
21 known as Lady Alva. I'm the CEO and founder of the Hummingbirds
22 Network. I'm getting a little nervous. It's an emotional thing for me and
23 it's okay. And I -- oh, thank you. I advocate -- advocating for women
24 living positively with HIV, creatively and empowering. So, to you guys,
25 increasing rent in New York City doesn't just raise numbers on paper. It

1 creates real harm. It causes instability, more stress, and more societal
2 mischief, especially for women living positively with HIV. Our quality of
3 life matters. Many of us rely on subsidized, subsidized rent to survive, to
4 stay stable, and to stay healthy. Owning rental property is a service first.
5 It is a promise to care for the people who call those buildings home before
6 profit, before business, before numbers. There are human beings whose
7 lives depend on stable, safe, dignified housing. And for women like me
8 living with HIV, that stability is not optional. It is part of our health, our
9 survival, our ability to live with dignity. And for us, the people, the
10 renters, our humanity is at stake similarly. We, too ,must care for the
11 properties we rent and the communities we live in. When rent goes up, it
12 doesn't improve our living conditions. It only greases the pockets of
13 landlords who do not care about the wellbeing of their tenants.

14 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you, Evelyn.

15 Ms. Lampkin: They care about profit. Meanwhile, many of us are living in apartments
16 that are not cleaned, not sanitized, not freshly painted and not kept up to
17 basic standards of dignity. The rent increases that you approve go directly
18 into their pockets, who are not held accountable and it directly controls
19 our quality of life.

20 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

21 Ms. Lampkin: This is not fair, this is not justice, and it is not New York City we claim to
22 be.

23 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you, Evelyn.

24 Ms. Lampkin: Last and but not least. So, today, I am asking you to remember this,
25 housing is humanity and when you raise the rent without the standard of

1 care, you are not just adjusting numbers, you are adjusting lives, our lives,
2 and we deserve better.

3 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I will now welcome Cynthia Nixon, Wilson Alvarez, and
4 Myla Bravo. I'm sorry? Okay. I'll call them again at the end. Is Cynthia
5 here? Okay. Wilson? Is Wilson here?

6 Ms. Alvarez: Hello there. My name is Wilson. To that Yellow Brick Road, as she
7 mentioned, that's not a lie. I literally hopped off the bus when I passed by
8 because this is the opportunity a lot of people don't have.

9 Ms. Mitchell: Welcome.

10 Mr. Alvarez: So, I'm happy. Thank you. And also, in relation to someone that
11 mentioned that dentist appointment being canceled, I had to literally
12 cancel surgery for last Monday for a hernia. And I know that I won't be
13 able to -- go ahead, pause. I know I won't be able to reschedule for next
14 month because I had to pay my rent. So, I have to choose between rent or
15 my life and that I chose rent. Okay? I know I won't be able to reschedule
16 it. I'm sorry. And after this, I'm actually having to walk to 200 Street in
17 Hollis because I can't afford transportation right after this. Okay? That's
18 not right. Check to check, I'm living day to day, if not minute to minute
19 right now. But I'm not here for one person myself, I'm here for the 2.5
20 million and the few hundred in this meeting who need a voice, and I'm
21 more than happy, grace, and honored that I have that opportunity. Wynn,
22 Smyth -- sorry if I butcher your names. Wynn, Smyth, Sinai, Melodia,
23 McLaughlin, Mitchell, Mancilla, Gupta, and Sharma, I'm asking, no, I'm
24 calling, no, demanding for a rent rollback. Apologies, I'm asking for a
25 basic living need is somehow too much for civility. We're only humans,

1 right? The last increase pushed tenants past what they call realistically --
2 what they can realistically afford, if not to the limit of survival, like we're
3 in The Hunger Games. That's not right. Every essential cost in the city
4 has gone up. Food, transportation, utilities, especially personal expenses
5 like healthcare. Again, healthcare. The freaking care of our health, so we
6 can keep coming back here year after year fighting the same fight. That's
7 not right. People are falling behind, not because of irresponsibility but
8 because the cost of living grows faster than our paychecks every single
9 time and they have to make decisions that no one should. A roof for
10 shelter or food to live. That's not right. The Rent Guideline Board was
11 created to protect affordability for tenants, not to fill the pockets of those
12 lords of the land that are known as landlords. When rent goes up, it's not
13 just adults who suffer, it hits the elderly on fixed incomes and children and
14 struggling families the hardest. They're already hurting. And an-- and
15 another increase would make their situation even worse. It's unacceptable
16 and it's not right. A rollback would give people a chance to feel
17 financially safe. Financially safe. I hate saying that because that shouldn't
18 be a thing. Instead of living check to check or even worse. Sorry. It
19 would let families breathe a sigh of relief for the first time in a while. The
20 suffering of 2.5 million are in your hands. In Kingston, New York, they
21 organized and won a re-- a rent rollback of 15 percent in 2022. It was
22 exactly the relief the community needed. We're following in their
23 footsteps and hoping you choose what's right for the people who actually
24 live here. They say one doesn't understand someone's struggle until they

1 walk in their shoes. I have an extra pair of shoes if you guys ever feel like
2 it. Thank you.

3 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Do we have Cynthia or Myla Bravo? Okay. Orlando Henao,
4 Douglas Ostling, and Won Hak Chung are next.

5 Ms. Bravo: Hello. Good evening. My name is Myla Bravo. Good evening, members
6 of the Rent Guidelines Board. I am a single mother raising my daughter,
7 and I am also the primary caregiver for my 86-year-old mother who lives
8 with me. I am here today because I need rent relief now. I have worked
9 as an architect for more than 15 years. I am a professional who has spent
10 my career helping design and improve buildings and communities, yet,
11 despite my education, experience and years of hard work, I find myself
12 struggling to afford the very thing that should be basic and attainable, a
13 safe and stable home. Every year, rents continue to rise, while tenants are
14 expected to absorb the increasing cost. At the same time, food, electricity,
15 healthcare, transportation, and insurance costs are skyrocketed. My
16 income has not kept pace with these increases. As a result, I am forced to
17 make difficult choices every month while supporting my daughter and my
18 cari-- and caring for my elderly mother. What is most frustrating is seeing
19 landlords continue to seek higher rents while many tenants are barely
20 staying afloat. If a working professional with over 15 years' experience
21 struggling to afford rent, imagine the hardship faced by senior service
22 workers and families living paycheck to paycheck. Housing should not be
23 treated as a vehicle for endless profit, while tenants bear the burden. Rent
24 has reached a level that is simply unsustainable for many New Yorkers. I am
25 not asking for a favor, I am asking for fairness. I am asking for the

1 opportunity to remain in my home without the constant fear and be-- of
2 being priced out of my community. I cannot afford another rent increase.
3 I need a rent reduction or rollback. The financial pressure on tenants is
4 real, and it is happening now. Every increase pushes more people closer
5 to the edge. I, respectfully, urge the board to reject any rent increase and
6 approve a rent reduction or rollback. Please consider the realities faced by
7 hardworking tenants like me who are doing everything right and still
8 struggling to keep ro-- a roof over our heads. Thank you for your time and
9 consideration.

10 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I'll now welcome Orlando Henao, Douglas Ostling, and Won
11 Hak Chung.

12 Mr. Henao: Good evening, everyone. My name is Orlando Henao. I live 140-60
13 Beech Avenue in Flushing for seven years until moving from Jackson
14 Heights after 38 years. My landlord is Zara Realty, and I am here to
15 demand rent rollback. I spend 50 percent of my income on rent every
16 month and for that reason, my family struggles to buy enough food, to pay
17 for medicine and co-payment, and to pay for utilities. I am sure also that
18 many families cannot even save \$1 a month for the future education of
19 their children. All of this leads to a critical and very sad situation for all
20 families in New York. Landlords face a lot of big violation, like no
21 repairs, broken intercom, and broken main entrance, lock in my building,
22 for instance, right now. Landlords make a lot of money every year and
23 they don't spend money for maintenance and repairs in our buildings. We
24 demand the board to study on landlords' expenses. We also are here to ask
25 the board to reflect on our diffi-- difficult situation to pay very high rents

1 that is causing, as a result, emotional damage to most families. So, I am
2 asking the board commission study and analyze both present and historical
3 profits made by landlords and want, and want rental adjustment are needed
4 to truly make this city affordable and, and we want a rollback rent.
5 Finally, dear members of the board, we are not here not to beg for favors
6 but instead to demand that our rights to be honored and re-- and respect.
7 Thank you very much.

8 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Do we have Douglas Ostling and Won Hak Chung next?

9 Ms. Ostling: Good evening. My name is Doug Ostling, living in a rent-stabilized
10 building in Flushing. I'm a retired facilities manager living on a fixed
11 income, over 40 percent of which goes to rent. Social Security can't keep
12 up with the rampant inflation and the rent increases of over 12 percent in
13 the last four years alone. Every month, I have to juggle household
14 expenses and choose between rent, buying my med-- prescription meds,
15 and putting food on the table. Landlords, meanwhile, are living large.
16 They've seen net inc-- an in-- increase of operating expenses of over 31
17 percent in just the last three years. Landlords plead poverty and say they
18 lack the money to make repairs, but they find plenty of it to buy new
19 buildings to exploit. My rent's already too hi-- too damn high and raising
20 it further, is going to put me in a cardboard box on the street or drive me
21 out of the city entirely. I face the grim prospect because you, this board,
22 has routinely rewarded landlords at the expense of us tenants. You've
23 taken the financial pressures landlords claim to face while totally
24 disregarding the financial plight we tenants face every day. More and
25 more properties are being gobbled up by the top five percent of landlords,

1 who now own almost 90 percent of all rent-stabilized buildings in this
2 city. And they can use their political clout, their accountants, their tax
3 shelters, their loopholes to hide their profits and achieve economies of
4 scale to reduce actual, not reported, operating expenses. I know, I've done
5 it. They pass the cost of the few repairs and improvements they do make
6 onto tenants in the forms of MCIs and I-- IAs. The deck's been stacked
7 against tenants for decades in the city, but you have the power to change
8 that. You can give us a fair shake and, and account for the dire plight of
9 working people and give it equal weight to the reported claims and
10 misleading claims of landlords. And you can demand full responsibi-- full
11 accountability and transparency when reviewing their cookbooks and
12 bogus claims. If you do, you will conclude that simply freezing the rent
13 isn't enough. We demand a rent rollback in order to help the working
14 people of this city stay in it.

15 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you, Doug.

16 Mr. Ostling: Thank you. I also have, I also have printouts for each of you citing the
17 reasons why a rent rollback and not a -- simply a rent freeze is warranted.

18 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I'll now welcome Won Hak Chung.

19 Mr. Hak Chung: Hello, my name is Won Hak Chung. I am a member of the Queens Tenant
20 Coalition. I've been living on Colden Street in Flushing for over six years,
21 and I'm here today to ask for a rent rollback and for a study to understand
22 the overcompensation of landlords. So, like more than half of the tenants
23 in New York City, my rent burden is immense. Because I spend so much
24 on rent, I can barely afford my electricity bill, my phone bills, cable, and
25 so many other expenses. It's already hard for me to, to afford. And even

1 with a frozen rent, I can't afford it and I will continue to struggle this way.
2 Meanwhile, tenants like me experience discrimination and harassment
3 from landlords. So, many Korean American tenants like myself feel
4 isolated facing such mistreatment from landlords. Must we face a rent
5 increase while experiencing this type of treatment? And that's why we
6 need a rent rollback. Is it fair that landlords stuff their own pockets while
7 tenants are facing these situations? We are all here today because our rent
8 is too high, and we are struggling to make ends meet. Our wages are not
9 increasing, and the cost of living keeps going up. And meanwhile, we all
10 know that landlord incomes have risen over 30 percent in the last three
11 years. Yet, this board sees study after study on landlord expenses, but
12 only one on tenant burden. So, I'm asking that the board commission a
13 study analyzing present and historical profits made by landlords, and I'm
14 calling for a rent rollback.

15 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Next, I will welcome Kyong S. Choe, Sheila Rasouli, and
16 Mark Johnston.

17 Ms. Choe: Hello, my name is, Kyong Sun Choe, and I'm a member of the Queens
18 Tenant Coalition. I've been living at 35-55 73rd Street in Jackson Heights
19 for over 40 years, and I'm here to demand a rent rollback and a study to
20 understand landlord overcompensation. Like many New York City
21 tenants, I am also rent burdened. I pay over 55 percent of my monthly
22 income towards my rent, and this means I can barely afford medical costs,
23 medication costs, paying for clothes, cable, electricity, my phone. And
24 this is why even with a rent-freeze, I will still continue to struggle, and my
25 rent will still be unaffordable. At the same time, there are so many

1 problems in my apartment. I have a leak in my kitchen and in the
2 bathroom, and I pay my rent, but I don't get the services I'm paying for and
3 that's why we need a rent rollback. Landlords complain that they can't
4 afford to maintain their buildings, but they've gotten rent increases year
5 after year while my house gets worse and worse. They don't spend those
6 rent hikes to maintain my apartment, instead, they just lie in their own
7 pockets. All the tenants here are here because our rent is too high and we
8 are struggling to make ends meet. Our wages are not increasing, and the
9 cost of living keeps going up. Meanwhile, landlord incomes have risen
10 over 30 percent, and this board only sees study after study on landlord
11 expenses and only one, only one on tenant burden. I ask that the board
12 commission a study analyzing present and past profits made by landlords
13 and decide what rental adjustments are needed to make the city affordable,
14 and I ask for a rent rollback.

15 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

16 Ms. Choe: Thank you.

17 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. I'll now welcome Sheila Rasouli, Mark Johnston, and Zoila
18 Makaiias (phonetic).

19 Ms. Rasouli: Thank you. I'm here in solidarity as a tenant from the State of Michigan
20 and the Ann Arbor Tenants Union. And I can tell you many of the stories
21 I've heard tonight, feel all too familiar. Rental prices skyrocket and
22 families are forced to accept lower standards of living. Collapsed ceilings,
23 black mold, cockroaches, no heat, no water and environmental health
24 concerns. Tenants are stuck between living in a unit that takes more than
25 50 percent of their paycheck while harming the health of their children and

1 homelessness. But what happens when that rent becomes 60 percent or 70
2 percent? Where does that money even come from? In Michigan, a father
3 told me his kids know they will not be able to eat what they want. He told
4 me we are all hungry, but it is what we have to do right now to afford rent.
5 To be honest, I didn't plan to speak tonight. I'm not from here but sitting
6 here, listening to people's stories has made me increasingly frustrated
7 because this is not Michigan where rent control is illegal. It doesn't need
8 to be like this here. New York City can do something about this. You
9 sitting there, you can do something about this. You have the power that so
10 many States don't have. You can stop the ever-increasing percentage that
11 prevents families from going to the doctor, prevents families from buying
12 groceries or advocating for better housing conditions. As the biggest city
13 in America, other States look to you to lead the way in tenant protections.
14 A rent-freeze in New York City is not just felt here, it is felt by legislators,
15 tenant organizers and everyday families struggling across America. You
16 can set the standard. New York City can be the model we look at in
17 Detroit, in Chicago, in LA. You can make this city one that empowers its
18 tenants. Not just in word, but in practice too. And you can do that by
19 rolling back the rent right now.

20 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Mark Johnston?

21 Mr. Johnston: Good evening. I live at Parkhill City. It's a large unit down the street.
22 We have 490 units. The owner has -- Plaza Management, I think is their
23 name, they have over 2,000 units citywide. I wish to read an open letter
24 that our -- 80 of our tenants wrote to Councilperson Williams, Mayor
25 Mamdani, State Senator Comrie. These signatures were delivered today.

1 We, the residents of Parkhill City write to you collectively because the
2 conditions in our community have deteriorated to a level that is no longer
3 tolerable, lawful or safe. The issues described below have been repeatedly
4 raised through management channels but have not been meaningfully
5 remediated. We now seek your direct intervention. Number one,
6 inadequate heating in the childcare area. The childcare room routinely
7 fails to meet minimum heating standards. Temperatures have fallen to
8 levels unfit for infants, toddlers and staff. This is not a mere
9 inconvenience, it is a persistent violation of basic health and safety
10 concerns. Children cannot be left in cold rooms while management does
11 temporary fixes or makes excuses. Number two, dilapidated and unsafe
12 common areas. Carpeted hallways and shared facilities have been allowed
13 to decay. Dog urine and feces are left uncleaned. These conditions
14 undermine the dignity of the community and contradict the standards that
15 any residential complex should meet. Number three, truth in heating
16 violations. Residents are neither provided with heat nor advised of
17 estimated seasonal heating cost resulting in outrageous ConEd charges.
18 Number four, illegal evictions and retaliatory practices. Several residents
19 have faced eviction attempts that appear -- sorry, that appear to violate
20 procedural requirements and in some cases, seem retaliatory. These
21 actions destabilize families, erode trust and create a climate of fear rather
22 than cooperation. Number five, improper fees and unauthorized auto pay
23 billings. Residents involved in auto pay have been double-charged,
24 assessed with insufficient funds and late fees that were never disclosed,
25 approved or contractually authorized. Attempts to obtain explanations or

1 corrections have been met with delays, deflections or silence. These
2 practices constitute improper billing, and in some cases may constitute
3 unlawful collection activity. Number six --

4 Ms. Mitchell: Thank, thank you for your testimony.

5 MR. JOHNSTON: -- I want to mention there's racial discrimination. White people don't have
6 to pay agent fees, black people do.

7 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you, thank you. And I'll now welcome Zoila Makaia and MD
8 Khayrul Islam. Is Zoila here? Okay. We'll welcome Md.

9 Mr. Islam: My name is Khayrul, Khayrul Islam. I am a Bangladeshi immigrant and a
10 tenant living in New York City from 1995. And I live in a --

11 Interpreter: You said one bedroom or studio?

12 Mr. Islam: Studio. I live in a studio apartment right now. So, when I first moved into
13 the studio, the rent was \$500, and now it's \$1,800. There is so many
14 problems in my unit. It feels like my building is 150 years old. When I
15 first moved into the apartment, the stove and all the appliances are still the
16 same. They haven't been changed at all. When I asked them to change
17 my appliances, they ask us to leave. So, I found out that my apartment has
18 a gas leak. The dog who lives upstairs actually figured it out that we have
19 a gas leak. I did not unders-- I did not know that I had a gas leak in my
20 apartment. Then the fire services came in my apartment. It was 3:00 a.m.
21 in -- 3:00 a.m. at night, and they were knocking at my door. And they
22 found out that the gas is leaking. Then they turned off the gas, and they
23 left. So, for six months, I haven't had gas. I don't have gas right now. I've
24 been cooking with electric stoves. They gave me an electric stove, it
25 doesn't work properly. It, it starts and then it turns off. So, my daughter

1 actually bought a new stove and then set it up. So, so, I'm an old person.
2 I'm above 70 years old. I have applied for Section, Section 8 housing and
3 affordable housing, but nobody has reached out to me. I'm not getting any
4 houses -- available unit right now. So, I love this country, and I don't want
5 to leave my neighborhood and my house. And my, my wife di-- passed
6 away in this same unit that I'm living right now. So, there was a bicycle
7 that hit my wife and she passed away because of that. My wife was in, in
8 a state of coma for two years. I did not complain to anyone. So, I can't
9 leave anywhere right now. I really asked the RGB to fi-- figure something
10 out for old people like us. We need -- we, we are suffering in our homes.
11 It would be helpful if we get homes from the city or get jobs that will help
12 us. So, last thing I want to say is please do something for old, old senior
13 tenants. I am here with CAAAV Astoria Tenants Union, and I ask you all
14 to do something about this crisis that we are facing and please freeze the
15 rent. Thank you.

16 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you for your testimony, and I'm so sorry for your loss. I'm going to
17 do a final call of these folks who didn't come up. Please come now if
18 you're here. Cynthia Nixon, Kit Lee, Pamvey Hasan, Daquon Llwellyn,
19 Moreom Perven, Raymond H., and Zoila Makaias.

20 Mr. Sandaler: Everybody, as-salamu alaykum. My Name is Parveja Sandaler (phonetic).
21 I'm a CAAAV leader, and I have been here for four years. I'm here today
22 to request something from RGB. The RGB knows a lot of things. You-all
23 hear a lot of things, and you-all understand a lot of things. Today, you all
24 have heard and understood a lot of -- a lot from us. So, the people who
25 have spoken here today, you will give us the result of what we spoke

1 today here. I also want rent-freeze. So, so my application to honorable
2 mayor when he first stood for his campaign, he promised us childcare, fast
3 and free buses and rent-freeze. So, when I was campaigning for
4 Mamdani, a lot of people asked me at doors, at streets like, is this
5 possible? It's not easy to actually win all these things. So, when I came
6 here to sign in and testify, it feel -- it felt like these, these things are
7 actually very challenging. So, I don't want to say more things, but I just
8 want to tell that you have heard everything, you understand everything,
9 please freeze the rent, at least. If not, rent rollback. Everybody, thank
10 you, and as-salamu alaykum.

11 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you.

12 Ms. Aktar: As-salamu alaykum. My name is Aisha Aktar (phonetic). I am a CAAAV
13 Astoria Tenants Union, member and leader. I've been living in my current
14 rent-stabilized unit for last 12 years, which is in Astoria. And last 12
15 years, I've seen rent hikes. So, whatever I make, the household income,
16 almost 50 percent of that goes to our rent. Because of these rent hikes and
17 rent, we are having problems in other expenses like groceries and
18 transportation. So, my roof has been leaking. Two places in my house
19 have been leaking. We asked our landlord, he didn't do anything. We had
20 to put pol-- poly bags plastic to, to save us from the leak. They don't, they
21 don't do any repairs or maintenance. They don't fix our kitchen or
22 bathroom. We have to actually renovate it ourselves. But if we, if we --
23 if, if we're late giving our rents, they call us three to four times every day.
24 In this same apartment, I didn't have gas for one and a half years. In last
25 two years, my apartment lacked heat, warm water, hot water and also ga--

1 we didn't have gas for two years. I have a, I have a young ch--
2 granddaughter. When I took her to -- she was sick and when we take her -
3 - took her to doctor, they told us they found lead in, in his -- in her body.
4 Then we asked the landlords to paint our houses because we found lead in
5 our house. So, the landlord actually sent few people. They did a little
6 painting but actually didn't really work. So, after hearing -- after all this, I
7 just want to say we want to freeze the rent and fix our circumstances. That
8 is my request to RGB. Thank you and as-salamu alaykum.

9 Ms. Mitchell: Thank you. Thank you to everyone who's provided testimony tonight. To
10 the translation staff, the RGB staff, the security personnel, thank you all.
11 Do we have a mo-- a motion to adjourn?

12 U/M: So, moved.

13 Ms. Mitchell: A second?

14 U/M: Second.

15 Ms. Mitchell: We are adjourned. Thank you, and we'll see you all next week in the
16 Bronx.

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CERTIFICATE OF ACCURACY

I, Gabriela Rodriguez, certify that the foregoing transcript of 2026-057588 for the audio file *June 4, 2026 RGB Queens Public Hearing-Part 2 - Moston, R. (Job ID 756393)* was prepared using the required transcription equipment and is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Certified By



Date: August 10, 2026

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