

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**February 12, 2017**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**RIGHT TO COUNSEL COALITION APPLAUDS THE MAYOR, THE SPEAKER AND  
THE COUNCIL FOR THEIR HISTORIC AGREEMENT TO PASS LEGISLATION  
GUARANTEEING LOW INCOME NEW YORKERS LEGAL COUNSEL WHEN THEY  
FACE EVICTION FROM THEIR HOMES**

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The New York City Coalition for a Right to Counsel in Housing Court congratulates and thanks Mayor Bill de Blasio, City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Councilmembers Mark Levine and Vanessa Gibson and the 40 other Councilmembers who have co-sponsored Intro 214-A for reaching an agreement of historic proportions that will, in time, assure all low-income New Yorkers that they will have legal representation if they face eviction from their homes.

Today's agreement to pass legislation guaranteeing that the poorest New Yorkers have counsel in eviction cases is a model for the rest of the country, and an enduring legacy for future generations. The agreement is an example of what government can and should do to reduce economic inequality and treat all of the City's residents with dignity and respect.

No one who faces eviction should be denied the benefits of legal help simply because he or she is too poor to pay for counsel. The Right to Counsel Coalition has fought long and hard for this measure that will giving families a fighting chance to remain in their homes and communities, stem the tide of gentrification and displacement, protect families from the devastating effects of eviction and homelessness and

reduce public expenditures on the shelter system and the many long-term public costs associated with eviction and homelessness.

Today's landmark agreement sends a strong message to the City's poorest residents that their lives, homes and communities matter, that the City won't stand by as they are forced to navigate the courts without representation and that they will be protected. Today is a huge step forward towards creating a more equitable and just city.

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**The Right to Counsel NYC Coalition** is a broad based coalition made up of legal services providers, academics, community based groups, tenant advocates and unions who are working together to pass Intro 214.

[www.righttocounselnyc.org](http://www.righttocounselnyc.org)