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**IN FIRST TENANT-LED TEST OF NEW YORK'S NEW TENANT
PROTECTION LAWS, RESIDENTS OF STUY TOWN LAUNCH LEGAL
ACTION TO PROTECT MORE THAN 6,200 APARTMENTS LIKELY
FACING ILLEGAL DEREGULATION**

*The Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village Tenants Association Filed An Action In
New York State Supreme Court Asking For Declaratory Judgment On Whether New
Rent Laws Apply To Residents Of New York's Iconic Middle-Class Housing
Development*

*Senator Brad Hoylman, Assembly Member Harvey Epstein, Council Member Keith
Powers, Comptroller Scott Stringer, Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, Speaker
Corey Johnson and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer Joined Stuy Town
Residents At A Press Conference To Announce Beginning Of Historic Legal Action*

NEW YORK— Today, the Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village Tenants Association filed legal action in New York State Supreme Court to protect more than 6,200 apartments likely facing illegal deregulation. The Tenants Association's action represents the first major tenant-led attempt to validate the intent of New York's historic tenant protection legislation, the Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act (HSTPA) of 2019.

A Volunteer Organization Representing Our Community's Tenants Since 1971

Starting on July 1, 2020, more than 6,200 of the rent-regulated apartments at Stuyvesant Town–Peter Cooper Village could be subject to illegal deregulation by Blackstone, the complex’s current owner. Deregulating these units would be in clear violation of the HSTPA, which established that any apartment that was rent regulated when the law passed – on June 14, 2019 – would remain subject to rent regulation. Since these 6,200 apartments in Stuyvesant Town–Peter Cooper Village were protected by rent regulation when the law passed last year, deregulating these units in 2020 would clearly be illegal. Blackstone has committed to not raising rents beyond Rent Guidelines Board thresholds until the legal matter has been decided.

After years of legal disputes and illegal deregulation, the landmark *Roberts v. Tishman Speyer* case established that thousands of apartments in Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village were subject to rent regulation. In the 1990s and early 2000s, former owners of the complex illegally deregulated apartments while receiving J-51 tax benefits, which are specifically designated for landlords of rent-stabilized buildings. Tenants successfully sued their landlord in *Roberts*, where the court ruled these apartments had been illegally deregulated and must subsequently be re-regulated. As a result of this case, 4,300 apartments were re-regulated in 2009 and nearly 2,000 more have been re-regulated over the past decade.

Susan Steinberg, president of the Stuyvesant Town–Peter Cooper Village Tenants Association, said: “After decades of uncertainty, the Stuyvesant Town–Peter Cooper Village Tenants Association drew a breath of relief when the State Legislature passed the historic Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act. This law meant thousands of our neighbors could now plan on staying in their homes, protected by rent regulation. We are not about to see them made orphans of the new rent laws when these laws are clear and unambiguous.”

At a press conference today, members of the Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village Tenants Association rallied with local elected officials fighting to protect thousands of middle-class New Yorkers who live in the complex. Senator Brad Hoylman and Assembly Member Harvey Epstein, who helped pass the HSTPA through the State Legislature, joined City Council Member Keith Powers, a lifelong Stuy Town resident, to rally in support of these middle-class tenants. Comptroller Scott Stringer, Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and representatives from the office of Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney joined as well.

Senator Brad Hoylman said: “The principle at stake in this tenant-led lawsuit is nothing less than the future of affordable housing at Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village. We took action last year in Albany to protect subsequent generations of New Yorkers from housing insecurity by passing the landmark Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act, ending deregulation once and for all. I’m extremely proud of the STPCV Tenants Association for taking pre-emptive legal action to stop Blackstone from deregulating apartments at Stuy Town and force them to comply with the HSTPA. I join my colleagues Assembly Member Harvey Epstein and Council Member Keith Powers in demonstrating our support for this legal action and urging Blackstone to stand down and follow the law.”

Assembly Member Epstein said: “After dozens of hours of hearings and floor debate, the legislature overwhelmingly approved carefully considered legislation last June to protect the long-term affordability of rent-stabilized housing and prevent the deregulation of units and a resultant worsening of the State’s homeless crisis. Despite being the wealthiest landlord in the world, Blackstone must also follow the law. I applaud the Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village Tenants Association for taking the initiative to ensure that no units are illegally deregulated so their neighbors and future tenants have an affordable place to call home. I look forward to working with Senator Hoylman, Senate leadership, and Council Member Powers to uphold the law.”

Council Member Powers said: “Since its opening, generations of middle class tenants have been able to build a home in Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village. I know firsthand that it is a unique community, a true neighborhood, here in New York City, made possible because of strong rent regulations. It is critical to ensure that apartments at Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village are protected under the Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act of 2019. I thank my colleagues and the Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village Tenants Association for fighting for tenants.”

Comptroller Scott M. Stringer said: “If we’re going to create the affordable housing we need, we must preserve the affordable housing we have. New York City’s mounting affordability crisis won’t be solved if we allow landlords to find new loopholes to deregulation. I proudly stand with the local community in the fight to protect affordability for tenants.”

Public Advocate Jumaane Williams said: “For as long as I’ve been an organizer, landlords have used a wide range of tactics to deregulate units, raising rents and profits at the expense of tenants. Over a decade ago, when I was the Director of Tenants and Neighbors, I stood with tenants after the *Roberts v. Tishman Speyer* decision, when we declared that we would not allow people to be priced out of their homes. Eleven years later, after our state

has enacted some of the strongest protections I've seen in all my time as a tenant organizer, I'm proud to still be here, helping make sure tenants can be too."

City Council Speaker Corey Johnson said: "New York City faces a housing crisis, and it's critical that we take all necessary steps to protect tenants. I stand proudly with the Stuy Town-Peter Cooper Village Tenants Association and their elected officials and firmly against the deregulation of rent-stabilized apartments. Tenants across New York City deserve affordability and stability, and landlords need to follow the tenant protection laws we fought for so hard for in Albany last year."

"Blackstone is arguing that the historic Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act of 2019, enacted to protect rent stabilized tenants, does not apply to them," **said Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer.** "They are wrong. Blackstone's effort here in Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village would throw thousands of tenants into uncharted waters, and we will help them fight this."

"Stuy Town/Peter Cooper Village is truly an oasis in a crowded and increasingly unaffordable city. But it's been a fight to keep it affordable, a fight against some of the biggest, most powerful real estate and financial players in our state. I stand united with the Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Tenants Association, Association President Susan Steinberg, and a strong coalition of elected officials against Blackstone's efforts to deregulate rent stabilized units and lose real affordability in the neighborhood forever. The Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act of 2019 was a massive victory for affordable housing and tenants in New York State, and we need to ensure its provisions are upheld. I'm confident justice will prevail," **said Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney.**

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