



MITCHELL-LAMA RESIDENTS COALITION

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WEBSITE: www.mitchell-lama.org

Trump Administration's cuts to HUD may well destroy the very concepts of fair and affordable housing

A commitment to fair and affordable housing, embraced in theory if not always in full practice by both Democratic and Republican presidential administrations dating to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt years of the 1930s and 1940s, is under seemingly relentless attack by the present administration of Donald Trump.

In the first few months after taking office, the Trump administration has slashed or threatened to slash programs and employees of the federal department of Housing and Urban Development, the nation's lead agency regarding shelter for citizens in need.

For example, [the Associated Press](#) reports that it has obtained documents showing proposed deep cuts of HUD employees "who support disaster recovery, rental subsidies, discrimination investigations and first-time homebuyers."

Regarding discrimination, Trump has stopped HUD's funding fair housing nonprofit groups that monitor and enforce anti-discrimination laws. This may well result in, among other things, a return to redlining, the process banks have long used to deny traditional and affordable-

housing loans to neighborhoods that are not overwhelmingly white. Community groups in New York, Chicago and elsewhere have been fighting the practice since the early 1970s, which has helped diminish if not end it.

In addition, the funding cuts most likely will adversely affect residents who face housing discrimination on the basis of age and gender.

And according to the [Center on Budget Priorities](#), the administration has cut roughly about half the HUD staff administering Section 8 rental vouchers, Native American housing and traditional public housing.

Finally, according to the Center, "HUD has yet to deliver any of the \$3.6 billion in homelessness assistance funding awarded January 17, which communities are counting on to provide rental assistance, shelter, outreach, and other services to people experiencing homelessness.

"While HUD notified at least some grantees that they will begin to receive funds soon, the uncertainty has disrupted community planning efforts and the final awards may include abrupt policy changes that could complicate implementation."

MLRC, Tenants & Neighbors join to bolster rent increase exemptions for seniors and disabled renters

By Jorgy Flecha, Rebecca Nicol, Katy Bordonaro

A push to strengthen New York State's rent exemptions for seniors over age 62 and disabled tenants earning less than \$50,000 a year was started by the Mitchell-Lama Residents Coalition and Tenants and Neighbors, a leading activist organization in New York State.

The following has been reproduced, with minor editing, from T & N presentations:

Need to reform SCRIE and DRIE

Although the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) and Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) programs have helped keep thousands of seniors & disabled New Yorkers in their homes, many are still struggling with skyrocketing rents. The income cap (\$50,000/year) has not been updated in over a decade. Rapid inflation has excluded

(Continued on page 5)

MLRC honors six for service to tenants, cooperators, & affordable housing — Page 5

Strengthen MLRC. Join today (use form on page 2)

MLRC

**General Membership Meeting
will be held on Saturday, June 21, 2025
10 a.m. - Noon**

**The meeting will be held via Zoom. Members
will be informed by regular mail and by email.
Contact: Info@mitchell-lama.org**

Mitchell-Lama Residents Coalition
PO Box 20414
Park West Station
New York, NY 10025

Poverty in New York City rises to ensnare one out of four residents

In spite of continuing economic growth and rising employment, the increased cost of living in New York City plunged an additional 100,000 residents into poverty in 2023, the latest year for which data is available, according to the seventh annual report by [Robin Hood](#), an organization funding innovative anti-poverty programs.

As a result, the city's poverty rate hit twenty-five percent or one in four New Yorkers, up from twenty-three percent the year before, and nearly double the national poverty rate of thirteen percent.

In a [release](#), the organization said that the "data further show that of the 2.02 million New Yorkers now living in poverty, 1.6 million are adults and 420,000 are children.

"Poverty rates for adults (25%) and children (26%) each rose by one percent-

age point from the year prior, bringing the child poverty rate to the highest observed in Poverty Tracker data since the study began collecting data on child poverty in 2017."

Soaring increases in key elements of the cost of living during the year were to blame for the rise in poverty.

"In 2023, the cost of five basic necessities that make up the poverty line—food, shelter, utilities, clothing, and telephone/internet—outpaced income growth and the overall rate of inflation."

The organization's CEO, Richard R. Buery went on to endorse New York State's proposal to "expand the Empire State Child Credit and hope that the State will continue making progress toward implementing the recommendations of the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council."

Rents in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens rose yet again in February, monthly and yearly

Whoever thought that the typical rent for an apartment in this city could not possibly rise any more than it has since the era of Covid, has a surprise coming.

As tabulated in the latest [Elliman Report](#), the median rent for an apartment in Manhattan leapt 3.4 percent in February in *one month* to an astounding \$4,500. That amount also reflects a whopping 6.4 percent over the rent from the year before.

Nor is Manhattan an outlier. Brooklyn's median rent jumped 2.9 percent in one month to \$3,600. And over February

2024, that borough's median rent jumped another 2.9 percent over February 2024.

Further, in both Manhattan and Brooklyn *average* rents, which are less typical than medians but are still informative, soared even higher both monthly and yearly.

Similar story in Northwest Queens: 1.9 percent median hike from a month earlier, and 7.0 percent over the year, and even higher in both cases regarding average rents. (Data for The Bronx and Staten Island were not available.)

UPCOMING EVENTS

MLRC

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will be held

Saturday, June 21, 2025

10 a.m. - noon

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Members will be informed by regular mail and by email. Contact: Info@mitchell-lama.org

Mitchell-Lama Residents Coalition, Inc.

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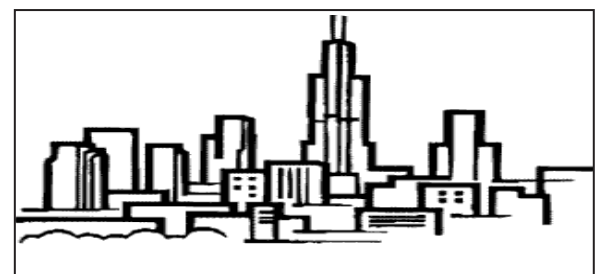
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2025

INDIVIDUAL: \$15 per year; DEVELOPMENT: 25 cents per apt (\$30 Minimum; \$125 Maximum)

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President's name _____

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HUD no longer provides program data to the public; it now offers broad statements largely condemning the Biden administration

Press releases from the federal department of Housing and Urban Development that for decades had informed the public about programs to aid tenants, grants to promote affordable housing development in underserved communities, and rules and regulations to combat racial and other forms of discrimination, have all but disappeared from the agency's website.

They have been largely replaced, under the Trump administration, with condemnations of the previous Biden administration's policies and procedures.

This type of "information" may well reflect a seismic change in how and what Trump allows a federal agency to communicate to the public: combining broad generalities on vague policy, rather than actual programs, with explicitly political attacks on a former administration.

From information to defamation

Here, for example, are portions of a recent HUD release—since removed from the HUD website—announcing a new Trump directive:

President Trump is ordering all Federal agencies to untangle the American economy from Biden constraints and improve affordability of necessary goods and services and increase the prosperity of the American workers.

ENDING BIDEN'S WAR ON AFFORDABILITY: The Biden Administration's destructive policies inflicted an historic inflation crisis on the American people. . . .

Unprecedented regulatory oppression from the Biden Administration has imposed almost \$50,000 in costs on the average American household, whereas President Trump's first-term agenda reduced regulatory costs by almost \$11,000 per household.

[Note: No evidence or specifics are offered for this statement.]

Americans are unable to purchase homes at historic rates, in part due to regulatory requirements that alone account for 25 percent of the cost of constructing a new home.

Biden's assault on plentiful and reliable American energy

through impossible, unnecessary, and illegal regulatory demands have driven up the cost of transportation and manufacturing.

New policy appears favorable to some real estate & construction

The change in information and presentation may also indicate the Administration's partiality to the construction and real estate industries, in which the Trump family has long been involved. This can be seen in the comment condemning "regulatory requirements," regarding safe construction practices and rent regulations.

A similar position is taken by the new HUD regarding replacing gas-powered autos with environmentally beneficial electric cars. Prior to his election, Donald Trump had railed against that transformation. This bias is also reflected in the release, although it is presented as a boon to everyday drivers:

The unlawful regulatory mandate on companies to eliminate gas-powered vehicles has resulted in artificial price increases in order to subsidize electric vehicles, largely disfavored by consumers.

Beyond cutting programs, the new administration "will let go of employees in offices that enforce civil rights laws, put together data about the housing market and pay to rebuild communities after disasters," according to information obtained by [Bisnow](#), a real estate reporting service. As of this writing, copies of HUD's former 2024 press releases were still available at the website's [archives](#).

City seeks to transform 100 Gold Street into housing complex with perhaps 25% affordable

The building at 100 Gold Street in Manhattan containing several of the City's agencies, including the Department of Housing Preservation and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, may eventually be replaced by a housing complex comprising around a thousand units, of which a quarter may be defined as affordable.

In early March, the City sent out requests for proposals to transform the mid-1960s building, which the City purchased in

Likely cuts in HUD funding unite tenants, developers, and city housing officials

Fears over impending funding cuts to New York City by the Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Trump administration has led groups that are often antagonistic to each other to temporarily form an alliance. Among those groups are tenant activists and realtors.

At a meeting in the office of the City's Housing Development Corp. in late February, representatives of the Real Estate Board of New York met with pro-tenant groups such as the Legal Aid Society and the Community Service Society, along with some City officials, to discuss ways of responding to threats from the Trump administration to slash HUD's disbursements.

As reported by [The Gothamist](#), "Policy signals from the Trump administration and its allies indicate that drastic spending cuts are forthcoming. The participants [at the meeting] projected that the changes could result in the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars in funding for public housing, rental assistance and development programs."

Threats and responses

Among the specific threats from the new HUD are possible slashes in rental assistance to a family if any member does not have legal residence, and rent increases for Section 8 recipients.

Discussing ways to deal with the threats, participants at the meeting agreed to emphasize the impact of the cuts on the city as a whole, rather than simply on the most poor. Such effects might include "how housing instability, canceled development deals, and market uncertainty could affect business and the broader national economy."

1993 for almost \$37 million.

However, opposition to the proposal issued by the Mayor was expressed at a March meeting of Community Board 1. A [spokesperson](#) working for the area's Councilmember argued that "the mayor is proposing to sell off 100 Gold Street, with no restrictions on what can be built in its place. The RFP only mentions [a tax program for affordable housing]. But that's not actually required in the proposals; it's just an option provided to the developers."

Harrowing privatization battles at two M-Ls explored in new book

The ongoing, and sometimes vicious fights over privatizing two Mitchell-Lama developments are recounted in a new book issued in March.

Homes for Living: The Fight for Social Housing and a New American Commons, by urban historian Jonathan Tarleton, explores the battles in St. James Towers in Brooklyn and Southbridge Towers in Manhattan.

Key issue in going private

In both cases, as in all other such battles, the key issue over privatization was, and is, whether the complexes should remain affordable for other needy tenants forever, or whether those tenants who have long benefited shall be enabled to reap the unexpected windfall of the soaring value of their homes upon entering the private housing market.

In an interview at [MSN](#), "First Came a Vote to Privatize. Then Came the Death Threats," Tarleton explains how fraught were his experiences in researching the issues.

"I remember the first time I went down to Southbridge, right around the time of the final privatization vote. I was talking to folks, taking photos, and the management quickly shooed me off the property.

"There were death threats. There were people defacing flyers with attacks. These were spaces of deep mistrust and a sense of betrayal.

"What makes it even more fraught is how tight-knit these communities were prior to these debates. In many cases, there are dynasties of families with three generations living together. People have been there their whole lives, and they have known each other forever, and so when this thing comes to the fore, it's splitting families and friends down the middle."

Tarleton goes on to explore the differences between the two M-L developments.

"Southbridge was predominantly white for the majority of its time and, given its proximity to Chinatown, also has a very large Asian population. But for the most part, the original co-operators are immigrants or descendants of immigrants from Europe who are moving in from elsewhere on the Lower East Side. And St. James in Bed-Stuy, much to some of its creators' chagrin, ended up being a predominantly Black co-op. As with any housing topic in the U.S., race plays an important role in these stories."

Published by [Penguin Random House](#), the book sells for \$32.

NY State bill would make it easier for small cities to join rent stabilization

Municipalities outside of New York City may find it easier to enact rent stabilization if a bill in Albany, supported by Sen. Brian Kavanaugh and Assembly Member Sarahana Shrestha, is passed.

The Rent Emergency Stabilization for Tenants Act, which already has generated opposition from landlords, would eliminate the requirement for a local housing vacancy rate to be below five percent, as is the case in New York City.

Rather than requiring small governments to conduct an annual expensive vacancy study, the bill would let them use a variety of other factors to declare a housing emergency, which is required for entry. Such factors might include locality's eviction

rate, homeless shelter population, and renters' housing cost burdens, among others.

Also, as noted by the online news source [City and State](#), under current law, "only buildings built before 1974 that have at least six units are eligible for rent stabilization; the new bill would expand eligibility to all buildings with less than six units and those that haven't been built or substantially renovated within the past 15 years."

Opposition to the bill has been voiced by the Real Estate Board of New York, claiming that it would only hurt small owners. Support comes from tenant activist groups like For The Many and Housing Justice For All.

Four out of five NY State residents support 'Good Cause' evictions

Almost four out of five New York State residents support "good cause" evictions, a legal policy that prevents landlords from evicting tenants for any reason other than "good cause" such as nonpayment of rent, dealing drugs, setting fires, etc.

As reported in [City & State](#), "Across all regions, demographics and party affiliations, support for either Good Cause or Rent Stabilization never dipped below 72%. Although the Republican Party remains fiercely opposed to measures like rent stabilization, the survey found that even 75% of Republican respondents 'definitely support' or 'probably support' rent stabilization."



MLRC Developments

These developments are members of the
Mitchell-Lama Residents Coalition

Individual Membership: \$15 per year
Development Membership: 25 cents per apt
(\$30 minimum; \$125 maximum)

Donations above membership dues are welcome

Adee Towers	Meadow Manor
Albany Executiver House Apartments	Michangelo Apartments
Amalgamated Warbasse	109th St. Senior Citizens Plaza
Arverne Apartments	158th St & Riverside Dr. Housing
Bethune Towers	Parkside Development
Castleton Park	Phipps Plaza East
Central Park Gardens	Pratt Towers
Clayton Apartments	Promenade Apartments
Coalition to save Affordable Housing of Co-op City	RNA House
Concerned Tenants of Sea Park East, Inc.	Riverbend Housing
Concourse Village	River Terrace
Dennis Lane Apartments	River View Towers
1199 Housing	Rosedale Gardens Co-op
Esplanade Gardens	Ryerson Towers
Franklin Plaza	Starrett City Tenants Assn
Independence House	St. James Towers
Tenants Assn	St. Martins Towers
Independence Plaza North	Strykers Bay Co-op
Inwood Towers	Tivoli Towers
Jefferson Towers	Tower West
Knickerbocker Plaza	Trinity House
Linden Plaza	Village East Towers
Lindsay Park	Washington Park SE Apts
Lindville Housing	Washington Square SE Apts
Lincoln Amsterdam House	Westgate Tenants Assn
Manhattan Plaza	Westgate
Marcus Garvey Village	Westview Apartments
Masaryk Towers Tenants Assn	West View Neighbors Assn
	West Village Houses

MLRC honors six housing advocates for years of service to tenants & cooperators

By Jackie Peters

Six members and supporters of the Mitchell-Lama Residents Coalition have been honored for their years of service, not only to MLRC itself, but to tenants, cooperators and affordable housing throughout the city. The honors will be granted at MLRC's April 'Meet & Greet' annual confab with public officials on April 26. The honorees are:

Katy Bordonaro, for endless and superior work as MLRC's Recording and Corresponding Secretaries, and as an active member of the editorial committee. She also serves as treasurer of Tenants and Neighbors, and on Manhattan's Community Board #2.

Barbara Collins, for her long service as member of the MLRC Executive Board and part of MLRC's Meet & Greet Committee which organizes this event annually. Barbara lives in the Big Six development in Queens.

Thomas DiNapoli, for his service as NYS Comptroller, and especially for his annual detailed reports on selected Mitchell-Lama developments. These

reports illustrate problems in need of correction and assure all M-L residents that the Comptroller supports the ML community.

Pam Lockley, for service as Member of the MLRC Executive Board and Co-chair of our Rental Committee. Pam is a leader at her own Brooklyn development, Linden Plaza, where she is in the midst of shepherding her community through a complicated change in ownership.

Michale McKee, for his decades as a crucial advocate in New York State's tenant movement. All renters in the state of New York owe Michael a debt of gratitude for his tireless leadership and advocacy for tenants of all types, including Mitchell-Lama residents.

Pierina Sanchez, for her service as Councilmember representing the 14th District of New York City, where she serves as the Chair of the City Council's Housing Committee. We welcome her partnership in protecting and strengthening Mitchell-Lama housing.

MLRC, Tenants & Neighbors join to bolster rent increase exemptions for seniors, disabled

(Continued from Page 1)

many tenants from receiving these life-changing benefits.

Expanding SCRIE and DRIE will stop low-income tenants from being forced to choose between food, medicine, and housing. Seniors and disabled tenants are among the most vulnerable to displacement. Keeping them in their homes reduces shelter costs, hospital visits, and strain on social services.

Bills supported by MLRC and T & N:

- S561 Kreuger (A1863 Rosenthal) would provide notices for all eligible tenants informing them of SCRIE and DRIE benefits.
- S1457A Kavanagh (A5344 Glick) would increase the income threshold to \$67,000 and index it to a cost of living adjustment moving forward.
- S2451A Kavanagh Would allow localities to reduce rent to one-third of house hold income for tenants on SCRIE/DRIE.
- S3563 Cleare (A2367 Epstein): Includes the parent or guardian of a person

with a disability in the disability rent increase program.

- S4252 Parker: Allows continuation of SCRIE benefits after a period of ineligibility Medicare taxes are counted as income for SCRIE/DRIE eligibility, which prevents many seniors from enrolling. We are working to create legislation to address this issue.

Income issues

- The income caps should be raised to \$67,000/ year and indexed to rising costs of living SCRIE and DRIE should freeze rents at one-third of a tenant's income.
- All eligible tenants should receive notice of the programs in accessible formats. Medicare taxes should not be counted as income. Caretakers for those with disabilities should be included in the program.
- Temporary increases in income should not make tenants lose eligibility.
- Caretakers for those with disabilities should be included in the program.
- Temporary increases in income should not make tenants lose eligibility.

Public Advocate releases 100 worst landlords list

A list of the city's worst landlords of 2024, an exposure begun decades ago by the late Jack Newfield of the Village Voice, was released in January by the office of Public Advocate Jumaane D. Williams.

Number one on the list is Barry Singer, whom Williams described as having "a long, documented history of egregious neglect and misconduct dating back decades."



Based on violations compiled by the city's Department of Housing Preservation and Development, the list takes into account such factors as "heat and hot water outages, rodent infestation issues, and collapsing infrastructure."

This past winter, the Advocate's office said, heat and hot water outages accounted for a large proportion of violations. Given the winter's frosty weather, heat outages were extremely dangerous, because they can lead to "unsafe usage of space heaters in buildings, sparking deadly fires like those we have seen in the Bronx. The safety of New Yorkers facing extreme cold."

The top fifteen worst are, in order:

Barry Singer
Alfred Thompson
Karen Geer
Melanie Martin
Claudette Henry
David Tennenbaum
Sam Klein
Robert Kaszovitz
Yonatan Bahumi
Joseph Emile
Adam Bailey
Evan Wiederkehr
Bijan Nassi
Maria Notias
Andres Feldman

Tenants in Singer's buildings have lodged numerous heat complaints, the Advocate's office said. "Over the eight months of the heat season included in this year's list, Singer received 121 heat/hot water complaints over his seven buildings on the list.

Clash over short-term rentals bill leads to some odd coalitions

The battle around City Council bill Intro 1107, which would ease restrictions on homeowners and landlords who wish to rent out some of their rooms on a short term basis to tourists, has led to some alliances which are, to say the least, unusual.

These include long time pro-tenant and affordable housing groups allying with mega-rich hotels who charge as much as \$1,000 per night, versus small homeowners and large landlords allying with the giant AirB&B, whose latest financial filing shows a profit of almost \$2.2 billion (for the third quarter of 2024).

Opposition from tenants and large hotel chains

Introduced last year, the bill has sparked demonstrations by groups who support low-, moderate- and middle-income tenants—and also from luxury hotel chains.

At a January rally at City Hall, for example, the group Tenants Not Tourists—which represents such long time activist organizations as Metropolitan Council on Housing, Housing Justice for All, the Legal Aid Society and scores of others—argued that Intro 1107 "threatens to worsen an already dire housing crisis by allowing landlords to withdraw significant portions of their rental units from the market," as reported by [AMNY](#), a city daily.

Large luxury hotel chains, which would appear to have nothing in common with tenant activist groups, are also against the bill, largely because it provides more competition for tourists. Renting a room in someone's home obviously

costs a fraction of what a hotel would charge.

Support from homeowners, large landlords, and AirB&B

On the other side are some small homeowners, who often say they depend on renting out a spare room to afford basic necessities.

At a City Hall rally the previous December, a supporter of 1107 carried a sign that read short term rentals helped her pay for "childcare, health insurance, a new roof, kids' tuition, a new water heater."

Another supporter held a sign that read "I'm a homeowner and your neighbor, not an investor."

These small owners are often in conflict with large landlords and developers, whose massive construction plans can threaten the owners' very homes.

A current example of that scenario is evolving in Manhattan's Tribeca area, where a major developer, Vornado Real Estate Trust, plans a massive 94-story luxury apartment building smack in the center of a mixed-income former Mitchell-Lama complex, which abuts individual homes. Small homeowners and others in the community are allied with tenants in opposing the plan.

Along with the small homeowners, of course, support comes not only from the giant AirB&B, but also from the very large landlords for whom renting out apartments on a short term basis is far more profitable than leasing them long term, a lure that sharply reduces the availability of long-term affordable rental units.

State orders LeFrak to stop charging rent-stabilized tenants for water

Rent-stabilized tenants in LeFrak City, a 40-acre, 4,605-unit sprawling complex spanning parts of the Corona and Elmhurst neighborhoods in Queens, have been paying the landlord fees for water for the past several years, a huge violation of New York State law, according to the Division of Housing and Community Renewal's Office of Rent Administration.

In January, the Office had ordered the owner to cease the practice, which may have begun several years ago, according to a report by David Brand in [The Gothamist](#). The state says that charging for water violates the "essential services"

clause of NY State law required of all landlords.

In response, LeFrak is suing, arguing that the state "erroneously, irrationally and arbitrarily failed to follow its own precedent—without any explanation as to why—which has always provided that rental agreements between the owner and tenant is determinative as to whether the tenant is responsible to pay for utilities such as water."

A tenant lawyer noted that the state's order "reiterates what should be a bedrock principle: Landlords can't charge tenants for water."

Exhibit: Herman Jessor, architect of M-L and other affordable housing co-ops

An exhibition honoring Herman Jessor, the architect who designed thousands of cooperative housing in the city, including Mitchell Lama developments in the Bronx and Manhattan, opened in February at the Cooper Union, where Jessor was a student. The exhibit lasted until March 28.

Born to a Jewish family in Ukraine in 1894, Jessor emigrated to the United States at the age of twelve, studied architecture and engineering, and came of age as an architect in the 1920s, working for the local firm of Springsteen and Goldhammer, whose founders were also Cooper Union graduates. Jessor eventually took over the firm, according to an article in [The Architectural Review](#).

The Review article went on to note that Jessor's "most enduring association was with another Jewish migrant from Ukraine, the trade unionist and cooperative activist Abraham E. Kazan. As an official first in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, and then in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America under its socialist leader Sidney Hillman, Kazan represented the workers of New York's textile sweatshops."

Affordable co-ops throughout the city

During his working life, Jessor designed "Seward Park Houses, Hillman Houses on Grand Street, East River Houses on the Lower East Side of NYC, Penn-South complex from 23d to 29th Streets between Eighth and Ninth Avenues in Manhattan, CO-OP City in The Bronx, Starrett City in Brooklyn and Rochdale Village in Queens," as reported by the [New York Times](#).

Among his innovative designs for the working class families who would inhabit the buildings he designed were entrance foyers, cross ventilation in bedrooms for those who could not afford air conditioning, and eat-in kitchens to compensate for the absence of separate, and expensive, dining rooms.

His contributions reverberate today. As noted in the Cooper Union exhibit: "Amid a devastating housing crisis in New York City, politicians today are increasingly interested in revisiting the United Housing Foundation, Jessor's client, and the Mitchell-Lama program, which created thousands of affordable, subsidized homes."

Affordable Housing News from Around the Nation

National: How HUD cutbacks will affect affordable housing

For an overview of the Trump administration's slashing of HUD employees will affect fair and affordable housing, see page 1. Here is another summary, from the [Turner Center for Housing Innovation](#): "Laying off thousands of HUD employees en masse would be detrimental to communities across the country. Shelters will close, federally funded housing construction projects will get pushed back, potential homebuyers may find themselves unable to qualify for mortgages, households receiving rental assistance may face rent increases or evictions, and communities impacted by disasters may not be able to promptly access the resources needed to rebuild. It's a challenge to succinctly summarize (or even know for sure) the manifold ways in which crucial supports will weaken."

National: Owning in much of USA still more affordable than renting

For those who can afford a down payment, owning a home in much of the United States is, surprisingly, more affordable than renting a three-bedroom apartment.

A [report](#) by ATTOM, a real estate analytics firm, showed that while "both owning and renting remain difficult for average U.S. workers [consuming 25% to 60% of wages . . .], major ownership expenses on typical single-family homes nevertheless require a smaller portion of average wages than renting three-bedroom residences" in well over half the counties studied. This is the case even though "median home prices [were] generally rising faster over the past year than average rents around the country."

Colorado: Cities divided on laws promoting affordable housing

Several cities in Colorado have openly said they will resist new state laws promoting changes needed for affordable housing. Such laws require "more accessory dwelling units, apartments, townhomes, duplexes, and other multi-family dwellings, and less parking in certain areas," according to [CPR news](#). Among those cities are Westminster, Arvada, Colorado Springs, and Northglenn.

Cities complying with the state's law include Boulder, Broomfield, Fort Collins, Longmont and Denver.

Austin, Tx: City tops nation in affordable construction

Austin leads the nation in affordable housing construction, according to a study by Yardi Matrix, a commercial real estate research firm. Last year the city constructed around 4,600 units of below market rate units, and is projected to build more in the coming years. A report on radio station [KUT News](#) noted that such homes are slated for those earning around 60 percent of the area's median income, or around \$76,000 for a family of four.

Kings County, Seattle; Gov't opens over 1,000 hotel units for homeless

More than one thousand units of housing for homeless people have been opened by the government, according to a report in [The Seattle Times](#). By the end of 2025, another three hundred should be open. Funding for the program, begun during the Covid epidemic, is secured via a 0.1 percent sales tax, which generates around \$70 million per year. A survey last year showed more than 16,000 people were homeless on any one day.

In a related development, voters in the state approved a proposition to tax 5% on total earnings of employees making more than \$1 million per year. The funds, as reported by television station [K5.com](#), will be used to develop social housing.

Atlanta: City coordinates land owned by separate departments to construct affordable units

A program to coordinate the disparate lands owned by various city departments—such as Fire, school districts, and transit authority—and use those lands for affordable housing has resulted in forty projects now underway with 10,000 new affordable housing units finished or under construction, as reported in [The Guardian](#). The effort entailed creating a housing strike force and a non-profit agency, the Atlanta Urban Development Corporation, to attract private financing.

NJ Builders seek permission to build more affordable housing

Builders in New Jersey are suing municipalities that are trying to limit the amount of affordable units required by the state's "fair share" obligations. The cities are asking a judge to dismiss the suit, according to [The Gothamist](#).

Local Housing Briefs

Group offering to help M-L fire victims spent little of money raised

To aid the tenants victimized by a fire three years ago at the Twin Parks M-L complex in the Bronx, a community foundation set about raising funds, during which it received strong support from the Mayor's and Governor's offices. But by the end of 2023, "more than \$389,000 in fire relief funding remained unspent," according to a [report](#) in NY Focus.

Linden Plaza M-L will be renovated by Camber Group

The Linden Plaza network, a Brooklyn Mitchell-Lama complex of eleven buildings that has been in serious decline for several years, will be rehabilitated following a deal with The Camber Group, one of the more prominent affordable housing developers in the city. Loans from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development and the Housing Development Corp. will fund the \$945 million agreement.

Renovation will entail new kitchens and baths and other improvements. Tenants whose apartments will be under renovation will receive funding for temporary lodging, according to a report in [The Brooklyn Eagle](#).

CityPHEPS voucher holders largely concentrated in two boroughs

Although vouchers are designed to enable NYC tenants to live where the rent can be met in all five boroughs, an analysis by Patrick Spauster in [City Limits](#) found that last year the vast majority of holders were concentrated in certain neighborhoods of the Bronx and Brooklyn, "where there are lower incomes, higher poverty rates, and more people of color." One statistic shows that the Bronx "has 16% of the city's population, but 46% of CityFHEPS voucher holders."

City mulls plan to convert mid-Manhattan office buildings

An ambitious plan to convert office buildings lining several large areas of mid-Manhattan to residences was introduced at a Planning Commission hearing in January. If passed by the City Council and approved by the Mayor, the plan would allow for the creation of around 9,700 units, of which around a third would be defined as affordable to low- and moderate-income tenants, according to a report in the [New York Times](#). The areas affected would apply to scores of blocks around Bryant Park and 21st to West 23rd Streets at Sixth Avenue.

'One-House' Assembly proposal includes \$750m for M-Ls plus maintenance

Official negotiations over the next state budget for 2025 can begin soon, as Assembly member Steven Raga, representing several Queens communities, introduced a "one-house budget proposal that includes \$750 million in funding for the preservation of Mitchell-Lama housing throughout the state. The proposal also calls for an additional \$100 million for M-L preservation and operating expenses

Such proposals are technically intended as a rebuttal to the executive budget proposals put forth by Gov. Kathy Hochul.

"The lack of investment from

the state has led to thousands of Mitchell-Lamas becoming privatized, further worsening the housing affordability crisis. I am very happy the Assembly has recognized the need for a timely investment," Raga said, as reported by [QNS](#) an online news source.

Raga also welcomed the inclusion of the New York Works tax credit and the NYC Renters Tax Credit, which compares to Hocuul's earlier proposal for a reduction of shelter rent taxes of up to fifty percent.

Raga's Assembly district includes the communities of Woodside, Elmhurst, East Elmhurst, Maspeth, and Jackson Heights.

Trump's head of housing finance agency cancels Biden's renters bill of rights

The Trump Administration's assault on tenant rights and protections goes beyond its slashing employees at the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (see story page 1).

Towards the end of March, the new head of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, Bill Pulte, has rescinded the organization's 2023 requirement to promote renter protections and limit overly-sharp rent increases for any building financed with a mortgage backed by the quasi-public agencies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

The goals of the policy, part of a Biden Administration plan to establish a [renters bill of rights](#), were also designed "drive the public and private

sectors to strengthen tenant protections and encourage rental affordability."

As reported by [Bisnow](#), the former policy "was opposed by industry groups like the National Apartment Association and the National Multifamily Housing Council."

Perhaps not coincidentally Pulte's father had been a major force in the home building industry, heading the third largest home construction company in the US, as measured by number of homes built.

Prior to his appointment to the FHFA, Pulte's career included founding a private equity firm, Pulte Capital Partners which, in 2011, reported profits of \$30 million in revenues and a staff of 200 employees.

Albany may revisit 'Good Cause' eviction law for technical changes

New York State lawmakers may consider changes to the Good Cause Eviction law, which prevents owners from evicting tenants for any reason other than "good" cause, such as nonpayment of rent, destructive or illegal behavior, etc., and which limits increases to either ten percent or inflation plus five percent.

But the changes, if they are made, will most likely be limited to clarification of some of the terms and for reduction of paperwork, according

to a report in [State of Politics](#).

Lawmakers queried on the potential changes said it was unlikely that even minor revision will be made this year.

Support for consideration of changes has come from the New York Apartment Association, representing owners of affordable apartments, and Housing Justice for All, a pro-tenant group, whose director said "she'd support clearing up language that exempts new construction."

Stringer, Mayoral hopeful, calls for a 'Mitchell-Lama 2'

Scott Stringer, a former NYC Comptroller who has entered the current Mayoral electoral campaign, has presented his views as a kind of "Mitchell-Lama 2," as termed by a story in [Brick Underground](#).

Following is a selection of his specific positions, all of which can be found on his [website](#).

Take Back Neglected Properties:

We'll use eminent domain to seize properties from landlords who repeatedly fail to meet safety and housing standards. Owners will be compensated fairly—but we'll deduct unpaid taxes, fines, and penalties first. These properties will be transferred to responsible developers with a proven track record of creating affordable housing.

Turn Problems into Solutions: Once reclaimed, these properties will be renovated and turned into affordable rentals or cooperative housing [e.g. like Mitchell-Lama] that working New Yorkers can actually afford.

Community ownership models, like land trusts and nonprofit-led developments, will ensure affordability for generations to come.

Hold Slumlords Accountable: Bad landlords shouldn't profit from neglect. We will strengthen penalties for housing code violations and create a "slumlord registry" to expose the individuals hiding behind anonymous holding companies. This transparency will ensure the public knows exactly who is failing their tenants. Tenants displaced by mismanagement will be prioritized for newly renovated homes, so no one gets left behind.

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Partner with Communities: Reclaimed housing will be tailored to meet neighborhood needs. That means working with local leaders to integrate community spaces, green infrastructure, or mixed-use developments where they're most needed.



Eviction of tenant family in the West of Ireland, Irish History, 1880s, Vintage illustration