

New York City Council Updates

Int. 195-B: The New York City Council approved this bill, which gives tenants a path to report to Housing Preservation & Development (HPD) Housing Maintenance Code violations in vacant units in their buildings. This legislation codifies “the requirement for landlords to keep unoccupied units in good repair” and creates “a reporting mechanism that allows the inspection of vacant units that are negatively impacting quality of life”. **RSA provided a memo in opposition to the original version of the bill**, and holds the same sentiments to this updated version. This new inspection requirement for HPD – to inspect vacant apartments – is a waste of already limited staffing resources. Furthermore, HPD already has parameters in place to issue violations if conditions of a vacant unit are impacting occupied units and causing residents to suffer.

Int. 0632-A: Manhattan Council Member Keith Powers’ Criminal Background Check bill has been approved by the City Council. For years we have been carefully following and advocating against the various versions of this bill that would prohibit the use of criminal background checks in evaluating potential tenants. As written, many were harmful to existing tenants and practically unworkable which is why RSA coordinated citywide outreach to underscore problems with these earlier plans. The amended version that passed the City Council is more acceptable in that the proposal mirrors the recent state “Clean Slate Act”. Owners will be able to reject a tenant if they have any conviction registered on the New York sex offense registry maintained by the New York State division or on a register in any other jurisdiction for which an individual is required to register as a sex offender, have any other **misdemeanor conviction** under the laws of New York or another jurisdiction where less than three years **have passed** from (a) the date of

release from incarceration, or (b) the date of sentencing for an individual who was not sentenced to a period of incarceration, and lastly any other **felony conviction** under the laws of New York or another jurisdiction where **less than five years have passed** from (a) the date of release from incarceration, or (b) the date of sentencing for an individual who was not sentenced to a period of incarceration. This bill was sent to Mayor Adams for signature on December 20, 2023. Mayor Adams has 30 days to either sign the bill into law, veto the bill, or take no action. If he vetoes this bill, it will then be sent back to the City Council, which can override the Mayor’s veto with a two-thirds vote. If the Mayor does not act within 30 days it will automatically become law. Enforcement will begin 2025.

Int. 1031-A: Approved by the New York City Council and signed by Mayor Eric Adams, the bill will require city agencies to create and submit a fair housing assessment and plan every five years to the Mayor and Speaker of the Council. This assessment will include a citywide fair housing plan that will be coordinated with the requirements of the federal Fair Housing Act and be due October 1, 2025. One year later, the administering agency will submit an assessment for long-term citywide housing needs, five-year production targets distributed by the community district level, and a strategic equity framework that would report on the progress made towards the housing production targets set, strategies for furthering fair housing across community districts, preserving the affordable housing stock, and anti-displacement resources. An annual report will be required on the progress made by the City towards implementing strategies set out in both parts of the housing assessment. ■

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