

Stabilize Rochester Campaign

City-Wide Tenant Union of Rochester

The City of Rochester's housing policies have destabilized our community and put for-profit investors first. That's why the tenants of Rochester are calling on the city to Stabilize Rochester through a set of five key local reforms. We've had the [tenth highest rent increases in the country](#), leaving [48% of families of color](#) in Rochester severely rent-burdened. Yet the City gave developer Andy Gallina a \$17 million tax break to gentrify our community and build luxury apartments with rents of \$2,950 a month.

Decades of racist housing policies have blocked most Black and brown residents from homeownership and opened the door for mostly white investor-landlords from outside of the city to buy up our homes for profit. The City of Rochester must shift from its Investor-First approach, which emphasizes tax breaks and protections for slumlords, gentrilords, and other for-profit housing investors. Tenants make up 64% of the city's residents -- that's why we need to take a Resident-First approach by enacting tenant protections and reversing racist housing practices, thereby giving residents control of our neighborhoods. This shift begins with the 5 Stabilize Rochester reforms:

1. Rent Stabilization (Opt in to the Emergency Tenant Protection Act)

Opting in to the [Emergency Tenant Protection Act](#) (ETPA) allows rent stabilization and enhanced eviction and maintenance protections for approximately 30,000 residents. See [ETPA FAQ Sheet](#).

2. Pass the Good Cause Eviction Protection Law

By ending no-cause evictions for over 100,000 residents, this law would give tenants the right to renew their tenancy, protect their right to organize, protect against excessive rent increases, and enhance living conditions. See [Good Cause Eviction Protection Handout](#) and [Legislation Proposal](#).

3. Pass the No C of O, No Eviction Law

The City has allowed hundreds of landlords to rent out and evict tenants from buildings without a Certificate of Occupancy (C of O). Some occupied rental buildings have gone without C of Os for 8 years. Requiring a C of O to file an eviction would put real teeth behind the law, giving landlords more of an incentive to make repairs and decreasing evictions from the worst slumlords in the City.

4. Enact the Rochester Tenant Right to Counsel Law

Stem the tide of illegal evictions by passing a local ordinance permanently guaranteeing every tenant a right to counsel in eviction and habitability cases. See [Principles and Key Components in Right to Counsel Legislation](#).

5. Repeal the City's Luxury Housing Tax Break Program (Opt out of 485-a)

End the City's policy of subsidizing large developers (the 485-a tax break) to build luxury market rate housing, which drives up rent costs throughout the city. Currently developers are getting tax breaks of up to \$17 million to create luxury housing. See [Background on 485-a Tax Break](#).

How Can You Help Stabilize Rochester?

1) Call or e-mail City Council and Mayor Warren to demand that they enact all five Stabilize Rochester reforms. Make your message personal!

Script:

Hello **[Mayor Warren/City Councilmember]**,

My name is **[your name]**, and I am asking you to enact all five Stabilize Rochester reforms: (1) stabilize rents by opting into the Emergency Tenant Protection Act; (2) pass the Good Cause Eviction Protection Law; (3) pass the No C of O, No Eviction Law; (4) enact the Rochester Tenant Right to Counsel Law, and (5) repeal the Luxury Housing Tax Break Program (485-a).

We are facing skyrocketing rent increases and an eviction crisis. Meanwhile, through the 485-a tax break, the City gave developer Andy Gallina a \$17 million tax break to build luxury apartments.

[Share your story -- have you had trouble finding affordable apartments? Have you dealt with an unjust eviction or an unreasonable rent hike?]

We need to Stabilize Rochester now. Please pass all five Stabilize Rochester reforms.

2) Attend our upcoming [teach-in](#) on Tuesday, August 3 at 6:30 pm at 540 West Main St.

3) Organize with your neighbors to fight back against your landlord. Contact us for support.

4) Get involved with our work: DM us on social media, e-mail citywidetenantunion@gmail.com, or call (585) 210-0705 to get connected. If your organization is interested in signing-on to the Stabilize Rochester Campaign, please [fill out this form](#). There's room for everyone in the movement!

5) Donate to our Venmo: @Roc-TenantUnion.

6) Elevate tenant's stories and perspectives on social media.

For more information, DM us on social media, e-mail citywidetenantunion@gmail.com, or call (585) 210-0705.