

February, 2021

Testimony of Florencio Gil

Social Services Hearing 2-9-21

Good day, my name is Florencio Gil and I'm a CASA member. I live at 1050 Carroll Pl in the Bronx, and my landlord is Yechiel Weinberger, I have lived in the building for 33 years. I'm testifying because since the beginning of the pandemic my neighbors and I have had a hard time, many of us have lost our jobs and we can barely afford food, we need to worry about paying gas, electricity, phone bills and also rent but we simply don't have the money to cover all these expenses. We have a tenant association in the building and we are on Rent Strike, the landlord has started Court Cases on many of my neighbors and now they are facing eviction. I know them personally; I know their children and feel their stress and panic when they get this Court Documents. Now they not only have to worry about finding a job, taking care of their kids but also being evicted. What is going to happen to them? Where are they going to go? We don't have enough help from our Elected Officials, a housing crisis is coming and you have the power of preventing it.

1.3 million households are behind on rent most of them being Black and Brown community. over 40,000 cases have been filed in NYC's Housing Courts, with the highest number of cases being filed in the Bronx compared to other boroughs. We are suffering while the billionaires grow their pockets.

Today I demand:

- Pass the Rent & Mortgage Cancellation Act (Niou/Salazar) and protect all New Yorkers from eviction and rent debt
- Instead of putting the burden on tenants to apply for rent relief, the State should use the federal stimulus money to create a hardship fund that landlords should have to apply to make up lost rent
- Pass the Invest in Our NY platform for the remaining funds needed to cover the total rent owed across the state

Thank you for giving me the chance to testify and share our story, I hope you give us your support.