

01/07/22**Testimony in favor of Good Cause Eviction (Senate Bill S3082)****Written and submitted by Johanna Monge, Program Manager, JustFix**

JustFix is a civic tech organization that co-creates housing justice tools with tenants, organizers, and legal advocates for the tenant movement. Our goal is to fight displacement and achieve stable, healthy housing for all.

JustFix tools are widely used by not just NYC tenants but statewide! Hundreds of thousands of tenants use our tools, and over 40,000 tenants have accounts with us. To reach our goal of fighting displacement and achieving stable, healthy housing for all New Yorkers, we must stand by the Good Cause Eviction bill [proposal introduced](#) by State Senator Julia Salazar of Brooklyn and Assembly Member Pamela Hunter of Syracuse.

Some of our most popular tools, the Letter of Complaint and the Emergency HP Action tool (now deprecated), garner over 7,000 users. Of those users, 12% self-identify as living in market-rate or *unregulated* housing. The JustFix team has put stopgaps, such as warnings within these tools for specifically market rate or unregulated tenants due to the reality and severity of retaliation by landlords when tenants choose to enforce their rights. Unregulated tenants without the right of a lease renewal potentially face losing their homes for simply notifying their landlord of egregious or outstanding repairs in their homes. Through user feedback of our tool, the Letter of Complaint, we have identified over 200 cases of retaliation by the landlord or property management staff. Retaliation may be illegal, but without a right to a lease renewal and the potential for exorbitant rent increases, unregulated tenants do not have guaranteed housing if they decide to enforce their rights in any capacity. Landlords benefit from an endless demand for housing and people willing to go to lengths to secure housing even if it is only for a year, mainly impacting low-income communities of color incapable of competing in this housing market.

Moreover, JustFix worked alongside Right to Counsel NYC and Housing Justice for All at the start of the pandemic in 2020 to create an online version of the NYS Hardship Declaration form, protecting tenants statewide from eviction. Since its inception, over 20,000 tenants have submitted a Hardship Declaration using [EvictionFreeNY.org](#). Tenants who submit this form face financial and/or health hardship and are at risk of losing their homes once the statewide eviction protections or the COVID-19 Emergency Eviction and Foreclosure Prevention Act (CEEPPA) expires **on January 15, 2022**. As stated previously, and reflected in our [Worst Evictors Interactive Map](#), the risk of eviction is disproportionately felt by low-income communities of color that are also most impacted by the COVID 19 virus.

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Every time there is an extension to the statewide eviction protections or CEEFPA, JustFix will do a push in our advertising efforts to ensure that as many tenants as possible are aware of the existing protection and can take advantage of it before it expires. And every time, we are bombarded with user sign-ups for the tool. Tenants live with constant anxiety and fear that they will lose their homes once the eviction protections expire. Tenants are tired! They deserve long-term protections, such as Good Cause Eviction, so tenants can have a right to a lease renewal while working out relief for their outstanding rent. Continuing to rely on extensions is unsustainable- a permanent solution is necessary!

JustFix stands in support of State Senate Bill S3082 and asks that legislators fight and support the bill.

Thank you,

Johanna Monge (she/her)
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