



TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS RELEVANT TO TENANT SAFETY AND BUILDING SANITATION IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

June 29, 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to testify as the City Council explores the topic of tenant safety and building sanitation during the COVID-19 public health crisis.

The members of the Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) and SEIU 32BJ have worked tirelessly since the start of this crisis to help New Yorkers stay safe and healthy in their homes. As essential workers, residential building managers and building service workers have been on the front lines of combatting COVID-19. We are immensely proud of the work of our members and grateful for the sacrifices they and their families continue to make during these difficult times, particularly those who lost their lives.

REBNY and SEIU 32BJ are proud to have worked together during the crisis to adopt aggressive health and safety protocols for residential buildings. As New York State on Pause was put into effect, we quickly worked to provide our members with the most up-to-date guidance available to ensure the appropriate cleaning and disinfection and safety protocols were followed in residential buildings. Based on these experiences, we then worked collectively to inform the State's interim guidance for residential buildings, which establish strong protocols that residential buildings must follow as part of the reopening of the State's economy.

Based on the State's interim guidance as well as the recommended practices of federal and local public health authorities, we, along with the Realty Advisory Board on Labor Relations (RAB), released industry wide guidelines for safety in market-rate residential buildings including multifamily rentals, cooperatives, and condominiums. These joint guidelines provide comprehensive strategies for property owners and managers to help protect the health and safety of residents, staff, and visitors as New York City resumes greater professional and social activities. The guidelines cover topics including building system operations, screening outside vendors, entry and exit procedures, protection of building service workers, amenity spaces, signage, and cleaning and disinfection. These guidelines are being updated as new recommendations and rules are established by public health authorities and a copy of the most recent update is attached to this testimony.

While New York City has come a long way since the depths of the crisis, we know that we all must continue to diligently follow the recommendation of public health authorities for progress to continue. As

always, we stand ready to assist our policymakers and government to keep all New Yorkers healthy and safe. Together, we are committed to doing so.

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