



UNITED FRONT AGAINST DISPLACEMENT

08/16/2022

Tenants of Manhattanville and Jackie Robinson Houses Oppose Privatization of NYCHA

Today, petitions opposing the privatization of New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) public housing, signed by 218 tenants of Manhattanville Houses in West Harlem, 74 tenants of Jackie Robinson Houses in East Harlem, and 81 community members, were delivered to elected politicians and city leaders. This follows mobilizations of NYCHA tenants across the city against the privatization of public housing. Most recently, tenants protested on July 14th at City Hall against Mayor Eric Adams' push to sell out NYCHA tenants via the ongoing PACT privatization program and the recently passed Housing Preservation Trust privatization plan. The privatization of NYCHA threatens to make hundreds of thousands of NYCHA tenants homeless and will create a massive wave of gentrification across the city.

While NYCHA claims to promote “resident engagement” and “community planning” through PACT meetings, the truth is it has consistently ignored the will of tenants, including opposition to privatization. NYCHA has clearly stated that it selects developments to be privatized with zero resident input. At recent NYCHA meetings about PACT at Manhattanville and Jackie Robinson, NYCHA officials remained silent as dozens of residents spoke out against privatization, exposing that this is a corporate takeover of public housing. NYCHA has also violated tenants' rights by denying tenants the right to organize and meet in tenant rooms.

As Paul, a resident of Manhattanville, said at the July 14th City Hall protest: “Let me ask you this: if it's truly, honestly, and sincerely a country, a civilization, a society of higher learning – since when does a country like this do these things to its citizens? We were told that this country is a democracy. It's supposed to be a democratic system. But when there's stuff like this is going on – to the elderly, not just here in New York City but in other states, across the country and even in other countries – with gentrification and privatization, we have to come to our senses and realize this is all a scam, this is a lie. There's no civil liberties when you do something like this. There's no constitutional rights for the individuals, when you allow corporations to strip people of their homes, and their land, and their personal belongings and their personal freedom.”

This petition has been delivered to elected politicians and city leaders, including Mayor Eric Adams, NYCHA CEO Greg Russ, the NYCHA Board, New York Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, Congressman Adriano Espaillat, State Senator Cordell Cleare, State Assemblymember Inez Dickens, all New York City Councilmembers, and Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine.

For more information, please contact:

Email: nogonyc@riseup.net

Phone: (646) 450-3880



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Manhattanville Resident Petition Opposing Privatization

We, the residents of Manhattanville Housing, oppose NYCHA's turning over of Manhattanville to private corporations. We have heard the horror stories from other NYCHA developments like Harlem River Houses and Ocean Bay that have been privatized under schemes like RAD/PACT, and we believe the privatization is a scam to gentrify the neighborhood and steal our homes. We are particularly concerned that our rights will be violated, that we will be displaced, that seniors will be preyed upon, that we will face health hazards during the renovations (as tenants at many other projects have), and that our rent will increase. We also oppose NYCHA's sale of the lot at 1440 Amsterdam to a real estate developer who plans to build a 26-story building of market rate units, which would further gentrify the neighborhood. Turning the project into a mixed income development has historically opened the door for more luxury developments.

By trying to privatize Manhattanville, NYCHA is selling residents down the river and making it clear that they prioritize the interests of the big banks and real estate developers over public housing tenants.

Jackie Robinson Houses Resident Petition Opposing Privatization

We, the residents of Jackie Robinson Houses, oppose NYCHA's turning over of Jackie Robinson Houses to private corporations. We have heard the horror stories from other NYCHA developments like Harlem River Houses and Ocean Bay that have been privatized under schemes like RAD/PACT, and we believe the privatization is a scam to gentrify the neighborhood and steal our homes. We are particularly concerned that our rights will be violated, that we will be displaced, that seniors will be preyed upon, that we will face health hazards during the renovations (as tenants at many other projects have), and that our rent will increase. We also demand that the scaffolding that has blocked off our community areas for over two years be removed and any necessary repairs be made.

By trying to privatize Jackie Robinson Houses, NYCHA is selling residents down the river and making it clear that they prioritize the interests of the big banks and real estate developers over public housing tenants.