



New York Is Our Home



**REAL
RENT
REFORM
CAMPAIGN**

IT'S NOT JUST A MANHATTAN ISSUE

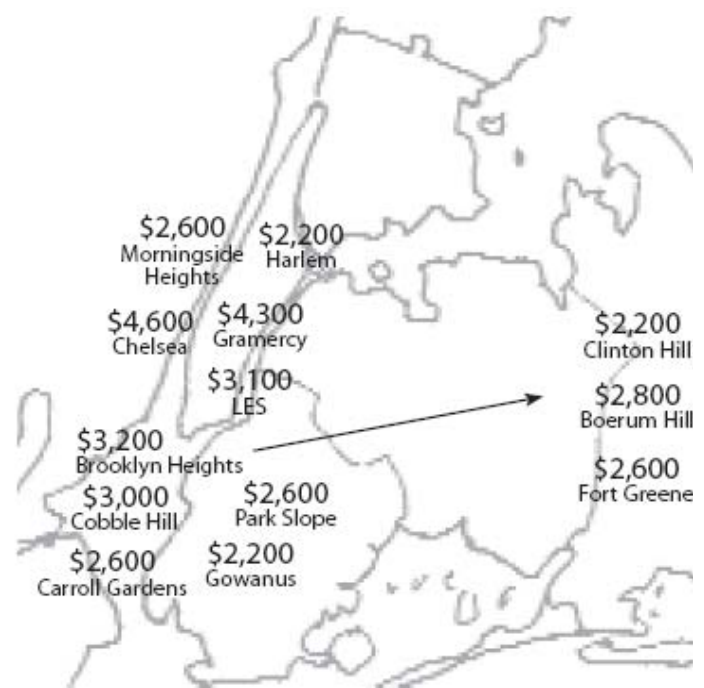
Landlords and their allies often claim that the provision in the rent laws allowing vacancy decontrol only affects the high-rent areas of Manhattan. The truth of the matter is that apartments are rapidly being deregulated in every neighborhood of every borough, and in the suburbs as well.

Vacancy decontrols is a provision of the law that lets owners take apartments out of the rent regulation system and convert them to market rate housing when the apartment becomes vacant. In order to decontrol the unit, the landlord must register the rent as \$2,000 or more. When a rent regulated apartment becomes vacant, the landlord gets an automatic 20 percent rent increase and can raise the rent even more by making improvements. Every apartment can potentially be deregulated on vacancy.

The issue of vacancy decontrol becomes more complicated due to the difference between registered rents and asking rents. This inconsistency occurs because landlords do not need to find a renter willing to pay \$2,000 in order to deregulate the unit. In neighborhoods where asking rents for some apartments are not yet \$2,000, landlords are still registering the legal rent for vacant apartments as over \$2,000, deregulating the units, and then renting them for less.

Once an apartment is deregulated, new tenants have no protection against a high rent increase or a baseless eviction. This lack of tenant protections provides landlords with incentives to deregulate apartments and raise the rent as they please.

The map shows data published in a recent Rental Market Analysis by CitiHabitats that illustrates the fact that asking rents on vacant apartments throughout Manhattan below Harlem have long since passed the \$2,000 mark. In these areas, and in large apartment complexes built to provide affordable housing such as Stuyvesant Town, Park West Village, and The Riverton, virtually every vacant apartment is deregulated, regardless of the rent paid by the previous tenant.



Midrange asking rents for 2-bedroom apartments

Asking rents have passed \$1,000 for a 2-bedroom apartment everywhere and have passed the \$2,000 mark in traditionally low-income neighborhoods in Upper Manhattan. According to the 2008 Rental Market Report published by the Ideal Properties Group, asking rents have also surpassed \$2,000 in vast areas of Brooklyn. In places where apartments aren't yet renting for \$2,000, landlords are deregulating units in order to cash-in when the market rises further in the future.

Apartments in New York City and surrounding areas are at an immediate risk of being deregulated and added to the hundreds of thousands of units of affordable housing that have already been lost to vacancy decontrol. Vacancy decontrol is a clear and present danger to communities in the New York metropolitan areas that have traditionally been affordable to people of moderate means. Vacancy decontrol must be repealed now.

Data source: CitiHabitats Rental Market Analysis; Ideal Properties Group Rental Market Report

REPEAL VACANCY DECONTROL

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