

Fulton Houses tenants say: ‘Keep public housing public’

written by Anne Pruden

June 4, 2019



Fulton Houses tenants say: ‘Keep public housing public’



Fulton Houses tenants say: 'Keep public housing public'



Fulton Houses tenants say: 'Keep public housing public'

Over 50 tenants left their homes at the Fulton Houses to unite outside of New York City Hall on May 29. They were rallying to challenge the privatization plan of local politicians and officials of the nearby New York City Housing Authority. "Keep public housing public!" they chanted.

Tenants of the Fulton Houses — a public housing complex run by NYCHA — face the loss of two of their high-rise buildings and other affordable apartment buildings in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood.

NYCHA was established in 1935, during the working-class struggles of the Great Depression. The Fulton Houses were opened in 1965, at the height of the struggle for civil rights. The tenants know their history and the fightback that was needed to win and keep public housing.

NYCHA houses approximately 400,000 tenants in the city's five boroughs.

For years, the local, state and federal government agencies that control NYCHA have delayed and prevented urgently needed repairs and refused to address lack of heat, unreliable elevators and lead paint in the apartments. Not to mention allowing the buildup of a waiting list of over 10 years for affordable housing in this ever more gentrified city.

Tenants have been protesting the government's deal with realtors to privatize NYCHA units: an unholy alliance called RAD — Rental Assistance Demonstration. It would remove 62,000 NYCHA units from public housing and move them to market rate, supposedly to subsidize repairs.

Calling this racist and unacceptable, tenant leader Louis Flores demanded: "Public housing residents should have a voice!"

Tenants demanded public hearings on the plan and called for repair costs to be covered by taxing corporations plus \$10 billion from the city's treasury.

The multinational rally was presented in three languages. It received media coverage and inspired tenants to continue organizing. The event was organized by [Fight For NYCHA](#).

As neighbor Linda said at the end of the rally: "Don't give up. It's our community! We walk another mile today ... joining all the way!"

SLL photos: Anne Pruden

