

ALBANY HOUSING FOR ALL

2025 HOUSING PLATFORM

"HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT"

A Housing Champion Will:

Zoning:

- Will actively promote Albany city zoning legislation that would limit the number of short term rentals where the owner does not live in the premises to 100. The growing number of short-term rentals in the City of Albany is impacting both the availability of permanent rental housing and the quality of life in Albany's neighborhoods. (The recently enacted state law will help municipalities determine the number and type of short-term rentals in their communities.)
- Will ensure that the County of Albany does not opt out of the short-term rental Registry and enacts the legislation necessary to levy the hotel tax on short-term rentals.
- Will publicly support Albany's existing Inclusionary Housing Policy and take action to insure compliance, enforcement and monitoring by the city to insure that these units are occupied by income-qualified tenants on a permanent basis. To help address the shortage of affordable housing for lower wage workers, the Common Council expanded the number of affordable units required in Albany's Inclusionary Housing Policy to 7% in buildings of 20 or more rental units up to 13% in buildings of 76 or more units. The affordable units are to be rented at 60% of the HUD Area Median Income. For example, someone making \$49,000 per approximately \$1300 for rent and utilities rather than a \$2,000 market rent.
- Will advocate for an Albany City sponsored web page that lists all affordable housing units including eligibility requirements, rental office, location, # of units, etc. The website should list all such units whether sponsored by Albany Housing, private developers, not-for-profits, as well as inclusionary units.

Preserving and Proliferating Affordable Housing:

- Understands the need to maintain the existing affordable housing stock in Albany's neighborhoods. The City should continue to access federal and state resources for home repair, including lead abatement and lead advocacy efforts to encourage New York State to develop a program to assist small rental property owners with the maintenance of affordable rental stock.
- Works collaboratively with Albany County to create a Housing Trust Fund that provides a permanently funded, local resource to meet housing needs. A Housing Trust Fund can address a variety of housing needs throughout the county, including developing and maintaining workforce housing, and homeless

shelters, providing funds for home repair or subsidy for building new housing, or substantial renovation of vacant properties in partnership with the Albany Community Land Trust and other community based organizations. Albany County should consider investing any revenue received by them as a result of the tax on short term rentals as part of the permanent income stream for the Trust Fund.

- Advocates for streamlined processes for residents to apply for programs at agencies such as Albany Community Development or Department of Assessment. Advocates for NYS program changes to automatically register eligible seniors for property tax exemptions. Encourages home repairs to be completed by waiting to issue stop work orders only after building owners are given the opportunity to apply for the correct permit.
- Will work to promote permanent, *actually* affordable developments in the City of Albany including social housing.

Tenant Justice:

- Will commit to ensuring that the City of Albany, as a majority renter municipality, remains on the forefront of tenant justice issues across New York State.
- Will ensure all tenants know what protections they have, how they work, and how to respond to excessive and illegal increases of rent. As the first municipality to pass Good Cause Eviction protections in both 2022 and 2024, it is essential that every elected official knows the rights of tenants and actively educates all constituents about the protections available to tenant households. Even with Good Cause Eviction protections, tenants are still facing illegal rent increases and lease termination notices.
- Will pass policies clarifying the eviction process and bringing equity to an unequal playing-field. Specifically a housing champion will introduce and support a local law that requires each landlord /petitioner to provide a detailed arrears ledger attached to every non-payment petition for the month's in question. This adds clarification to the process and is helpful to the tenant and the court.
- Will advocate for the Rent Emergency Stabilization for Tenants Act (S.4659 / A.4877). The REST Act grants localities the ability to utilize publicly available data to determine the existence of a housing emergency, modernizes eligibility for rent stabilization from 1974 to 2009, and also gives localities the ability to increase eligibility for rent stabilization from "6 or more" units in an impacted property to something more aligned with its local conditions.

Justice for the Homeless:

- Will promote services for those without stable housing and/or incomes, and will not criminalize or penalize individuals asking for help. Homelessness is not an

issue that concentrates itself in low-income areas, but is furthered by unequal development and is most visible in areas of prosperity.

- Will promote safe and welcoming shelters for those without long-term housing, improve existing shelter conditions, and other needed services that follow an individual's right to self-determination, such as mental health and substance use treatments, and public bathrooms.
- Will work with New York State departments, state elected officials, the City and County of Albany, local electeds, non-profit organizations, community based organizations, neighborhood and tenant associations, and other interested entities to unite the City and forge a path forward built on trust and a shared vision of a successful City of Albany.

Housing Justice:

- Supports the development and active monitoring of Community Benefits Agreements negotiated with developers of major projects within the City that result in local hiring, affordable housing units and development that is responsive to community needs/preferences including but not limited to major projects such as the redevelopment of the St. Rose Campus, the Warehouse parcel, and the State infusion of monies to upgrade Downtown Albany.
- Review and reform the City's management and taxation of vacant buildings for greater effectiveness in promoting their redevelopment.
- Review and reform of the City Court and Corporation Counsel's involvement in building code cases so that cases are not subject to unreasonable delays.
- Will monitor and protect Albany's public housing stock and will advocate for the Albany Housing Authority to take advantage of state and federal grants to revitalize and beautify buildings and units, and insure that tenants feel safe, comfortable, and secure in their homes.
- Will familiarize themselves and work collaboratively with Albany's home grown not-for-profits such as United Tenants of Albany, the Affordable Housing Partnership, Albany Community Land Trust, the Community Loan Fund, Habitat for Humanity, Arbor Hill Development and many other locally based Albany housing nonprofits.