

Lawsuit against landlord Steve Croman receives class action status

Watchdog group Housing Rights Initiative claims Croman illegally deregulated majority of building's 92 units

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Steve Croman and 326-340 East 100th Street (Credit: Getty Images and Google Maps)

More than 100 current and former tenants of an East Harlem building can join a civil lawsuit that accuses landlord [Steve Croman](#) of illegally deregulating apartments.

Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Franc Perry granted the tenants of 326-340 East 100th Street class action status in a lawsuit brought against Croman by the watchdog group Housing Rights Initiative, the New York Daily News reported.

That means Croman can now be sued by each tenant who was affected

leases with tenants and failed to register the deregulated units with the state, allowing him to continue collecting tax benefits, the lawsuit claims.

If Croman is found guilty, Housing Rights Initiative estimates the rent refunds could amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Nicole Sosnowski, an attorney for Croman, argued in court that “Allegations regarding ‘Croman’s past conduct’ are more prejudicial than probative,” and further argued that DHCR should assess rent overcharge claims, not the court.

HRI originally [filed the lawsuit](#) back in 2018, when Croman was still in jail on mortgage and tax fraud charges. The [multifamily landlord](#) was released in June 2018, and was recently involved in the \$14 million purchase of the [literary haunt White Horse Tavern](#).

In 2017, he [agreed to a deal with the New York state Attorney General’s Office](#) to pay a record \$8 million in restitution to the tenants that were harassed. It was the largest settlement with an individual landlord in New York history at the time. An independent manager was put in charge of more than 100 of his buildings, and the court appointed a monitor to ensure compliance. [\[NYDN\] – Erin Hudson](#)

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