

NEWS

FLAG FAMILY'S STARS & STRIFE – LANDLORD: LOSE OLD GLORY, OR ELSE

By [Leela De Krester](#)

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A patriotic family is being threatened with eviction for flying the American flag outside their East Side home.

Michael and Deborah Privitello are outraged after receiving a letter signed by landlord Francis Greenburger saying the flag displayed in front of their East 50th Street apartment breached their lease and must come down or the family will be kicked out.

“It’s un-American,” an angry Deborah Privitello told The Post.

“How can this man who says he is an American do something like this at this time when we have our troops at war?”

The Privitellos, who love the U.S. so much they got married on July 4, say they have displayed the Stars and Stripes in front of their rent-stabilized apartment for more than 12 years.

Their eldest son, Jack, 10, said he is so proud of the flag that he stood next to it and waved to Presidents Bush and Bill Clinton every time they drove past on their way the nearby United Nations.

“You shouldn’t take the flag down,” Jack said. “It shows we’re good Americans.”

But the day after July 4, the family of five say they got a call from an agent representing Greenburger, chairman of Time Equities, telling them it had to be removed.

Two weeks later, a legal letter arrived in the mail saying erecting the flag amounted to attaching a “projection” and had to go or the family would be out on the street.

When contacted by The Post, Greenburger said he was unaware of the details of the case, despite his name on the letter.

“I have 100 people who work for me who manage about 180 buildings. My name gets signed for legal reasons,” he said.

He passed The Post on to the president of Time Equities, Robert Kantor, who said the landlord had been involved in a long-running battle with the Privitellos.

“We feel we have no choice but to fulfill every single provision of the lease,” Kantor said.

The Privitellos – who pay just \$2,000 a month for the 1,800-square-foot home – say they have taken the landlord to court alleging their heat and hot water have been cut off and that they are constantly harassed.

So far, a search reveals no court judgments that have gone against the Privitellos.

Kantor claimed the family often paid its rent late, but they deny this, accusing the landlord of deliberately misplacing their checks to try and get them out of the house.