

# BuzzFeed

## One Of New York's "Worst Landlords" Is Facing 25 Years In Prison

In March, Steven Croman's college student son was filmed calling his Uber driver a "minimum wage faggot."

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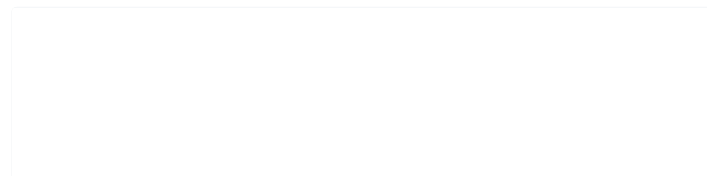
Steven Croman and his wife Harriet Croman in 2013. *Astrid Stawiarz / Getty Images*

A New York City businessman who has appeared on "[worst landlord](#)" lists is facing up to 25 years in prison after being charged Monday with 20 felonies over alleged loan fraud.

Steven Croman — who owns more than 140 buildings in Manhattan — is also facing a civil suit from the New York Attorney General's office, which alleges he used harassment, coercion, and fraud to force rent-regulated tenants out of his properties in order to lease them to higher-paying individuals.

After a two-year investigation into his firm, Croman Realty, Croman was indicted by a grand jury on charges of grand larceny, falsifying business records, scheming to defraud, falsifying instruments for filing, and criminal tax fraud.

He allegedly submitted false mortgage documents to banks that showed a higher rental income than he actually received in order to receive more than \$45 million in loans.





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His mortgage broker, Barry Schwartz, was also charged with 15 felonies, while his private investigator, Athony Falconite, was named as a defendant in the civil suit as Croman's alleged enforcer.

Falconite, a former NYPD officer, was said to routinely threaten tenants.

The lawsuit alleges Croman, seeking to flip rent-regulated apartments into high-rent units, routinely performed illegal construction and exposed tenants to harmful lead dust in a bid to force them out.

The Department of Housing found one woman had to move her disabled infant grandchildren out of the apartment because of the hazardous dust.

"My message to unscrupulous landlords is simple: if you put your own profits over your tenants' legal protections, we will investigate you and prosecute you to the fullest extent of the law," Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said in a statement. "No one is above the law – no matter how rich or powerful."

In a statement provided to BuzzFeed News, Croman's lawyers said he had pled not guilty to the multiple criminal charges.

"The charges in this case are defensible and Mr. Croman intends to address all issues in a responsible fashion," his attorneys said. "The criminal charges have nothing whatsoever to do with allegations relating to tenant harassment."

**The charges were announced less than two months after Croman's family made national news when one of his children was [filmed berating an Uber driver](#).**

Artur Zawada / Via youtube.com

Artur Zawada / Via youtube.com



Jake Croman, a student at the University of Michigan, was recorded calling his driver a “minimum wage faggot” in a [video that went viral](#).

“You’re working all day? Guess what? I’m going to sit on my ass and watch TV. Fuck you,” he screamed.

Jake Croman told BuzzFeed News his outburst was the result of alleged anti-Semitic remarks from his driver, who denied such behavior.

Both the University of Michigan and Croman’s fraternity, Tau Kappa Epsilon, said they were “extremely disappointed” in his behavior.

David Mack is a reporter and weekend editor for BuzzFeed News in New York.  
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Tagged: [landlord](#), [manhattan](#), [social news](#), [uber](#)

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**Garth Hanson** · Los Angeles, California

Looks like his father may be able to sit on his ass and watch tv all day now too.

Like · Reply · 55 · May 10, 2016 12:37pm

**Theodore Gordon**

Good. Lock him up and throw away the key. This guy put people through hell, entire families through hell. He can rot in jail for all I give a fuck.

Like · Reply · 18 · May 10, 2016 1:39pm

**Ian Parker** · Works at VH1

That video of his son was beyond disturbing, what a piece of shit. You're a rich spoiled kid who literally didn't do ANYTHING to get to where you are today. When you insult someone because they are not as privileged as you (Whether it be in terms of sexuality or income) you hit the bottom of the barrel.

Like · Reply · 10 · May 10, 2016 4:58pm

**Steve Sherwood**

Cut that punk kids balls off so he can't contaminate the rest of the world with those garbage genes.

Like · Reply · 7 · May 10, 2016 4:50pm

**Juniper Edith**

His kids go to Columbia Prep too. Same school Trump donated money too. Those slumlords like to stick together.

Like · Reply · 14 · May 10, 2016 2:34pm

**Theodore Gordon**

Really? You had to drag politics into something that has literally NOTHING to do with politics? Huh okay then. God this kind of BS behavior gets old. Stop dragging politics into everything people god dam!

Like · Reply · 1 · May 10, 2016 2:48pm

**Amanda Watson** · Computer Lab Technician at Newman Crows Landing Unified School District

Theodore Gordon Not sure how mentioning that Trump donated money to a school as bringing politics into the conversation.... he has done a lot of things that have nothing to do with his political life. Trump was considered a slumlord by many people prior to running for office. You are the one making that mental leap of Trump and politics being synonymous.

Like · Reply · 9 · May 10, 2016 4:02pm

**Dave Walsh** · T. C. Williams High School

Couldn't happen to a nicer guy. Lock him up in general population.

Like · Reply · 13 · May 10, 2016 2:26pm

**Sarah Bonse** · Owner at Visual Echoes

Sounds like a really SUPER group of people!!!!

Like · Reply · 9 · May 10, 2016 3:11pm

**Danielle Labuscagne**

Asshole genes seem to run in the family.

Like · Reply · 5 · May 10, 2016 4:47pm

**Andrea Lafayette**

Spoiler alert . . . . This pig won't serve one day in prison. Much ado about nothing.

Like · Reply · May 10, 2016 11:20pm

**BK Hart** · Atlanta, Georgia

Oh snap.

Like · Reply · May 10, 2016 8:17pm

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