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# Tenants Trying to Confront Controversial Landlord Get Booted From Office

By Allegra Hobbs (/WWW.DNAINFO.COM/NEW-YORK/ABOUT-US/OUR-TEAM/EDITORIAL-TEAM/ALLEGRA-HOBBS) | April 7, 2016 6:07pm

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Ayelet Parzecanski, Hazzan of the West End Synagogue, read a letter from 32 religious leader of all faiths outside the offices of 632 Realty after the group was refused entrance.

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NOHO — A group of tenants seeking reprieve from alleged harassment techniques were kicked out the lobby of their landlord’s real estate office and threatened with arrest when they tried to deliver a letter penned by citywide religious leaders demanding fair treatment.

Tenants of buildings across the city governed by controversial landlord Steven Croman — under investigation by the Attorney General for potentially illegal methods of booting rent-stabilized tenants — attempted to deliver the letters from 32 religious leaders and share their stories of harassment at the 632 Broadway real estate office on Wednesday.



Gwynne Hogan · DNainfo Reporter

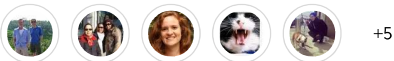
Do you live in one of Steven Croman's buildings? Tell us about it.

NEW YORK

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But the group was ejected from the lobby for trespassing after Croman's 9300 Realty refused to admit them.

"The tenants have a right to see their landlord," said Marc Greenberg of the Interfaith Assembly on Homeless and Housing, which rallied the coalition of faith leaders and led the charge to confront Croman.

The band of tenants, advocates and religious leaders were held in the lobby and were told by a security guard, who communicated with Croman's office by phone, that they would not be admitted to the elevators and that a representative from the real estate office would not come down to meet them.

A manager of the office complex then informed the group he had called the police and threatened arrest if they did not exit immediately.

"You're trespassing," said the manager. "The police are outside and you're all being arrested."

Hazzan Ayelet Porzecanski of the West End Synagogue read the interfaith coalition's plea on the sidewalk outside the building, imploring Croman to give up harassment techniques aimed at evicting rent-stabilized tenants.

"We ask that you, Mr. Croman, treat your tenants with dignity and respect rather than pressuring them to leave their homes," reads the letter, 32 copies of which will be printed and delivered to Croman's office bearing the name of each religious leader.

The gathered tenants shared their horror stories of enduring hazardous living conditions, aggressive eviction attempts, and being stripped of amenities.

George Tzannes, a tenant of 529 E. Sixth St. in the East Village, said he lived without cooking gas from December of 2014 through March of this year while dust and debris containing lead paint infiltrated his apartment due to demolitions and renovations of units below his. The building was slapped with a number of violations as a result, Department of Buildings records show.

"It was so bad I couldn't stay in two of the rooms," said Tzannes of the hazardous construction. "My eyes would burn."

The complaints echo those of other Croman tenants throughout the city (<http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20151109/hells-kitchen-clinton/landlord-accused-of-harassment-leaves-hk-tenants-without-gas-for-months>) who said they have lived without amenities and withstood aggressive buyouts.

Tzannes also claimed he was taken to court five times by Croman on phony charges — such as not paying his rent — in attempts to evict him, though the cases were dropped and never went to trial.

As for the realty group's treatment of the tenants at the Broadway office, Tzannes said it was unsurprising given Croman's track record of responding to tenant complaints.

"It's a typical reaction when you complain, which is they ignore you," he said. "So it's true to form."

A representative of 9300 Realty said Croman was not in the office at the time of the incident, and did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

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