

High-flying New York City landlord faces 25 years in jail for 'swindling \$45 MILLION in fraudulent loans and paying cops to scare rent-controlled tenants out of their homes'

- Steve Croman owns 140 buildings in gentrifying areas of Manhattan
- He is charged with inflating his rent income to get loans worth millions
- Authorities also claim he paid a cop to intimidate tenants out of homes
- NYC landlords can only raise the rent if tenants leave and it is renovated
- Croman's son Jake made headlines in March for abusing an Uber driver
- The family is worth millions, they party with the elite in the Hamptons

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A wealthy New York City landlord faces 25 years in jail as he is charged with fraud and intimidation.

Steve Croman, 49, gradually snapped up 140 buildings in Manhattan's gentrifying areas over the last few years.

The lucrative portfolio pushed him into the upper echelons of New York's social circuit, mingling with the elite in the Hamptons.

But on Monday his success streak came to a grinding halt as he was arrested at dawn then sat handcuffed in court to be charged with 20 felonies.

He is accused of deliberately driving 'countless working-class and low-income families out of their longtime homes' while lying to authorities to amass a million-dollar fortune.



Charged: Steve Croman faces 25 years in jail for allegedly lying about his income and driving working-class tenants out of their homes. He is pictured (center) sat next to his employee Barry Swartz, who is also charged



Croman's lucrative portfolio pushed him into the upper echelons of New York's social circuit, mingling with the elite in the Hamptons. He is pictured with his wife Harriet at a pre-Art Basel event in Miami last year



Facing 25 years in jail: Attorney General Eric Schneiderman branded Croman 'unscrupulous'

A grand jury found Croman and an employee Barry Swartz, a 53-year-old mortgage broker, had inflated their rent income between 2012 to 2014 to land \$45 million in fraudulent loans.

Croman was also slapped with a civil lawsuit, accused of paying a police officer-turned-PI Anthony Falconite to intimidate tenants into leaving their rent-controlled apartments.

Under New York City law, a landlord can only raise the rent on a rent-controlled apartment if the tenants willfully leave and the property requires substantial renovations.

Residents in the once-gritty, now-gentrified Lower East Side and uptown's Spanish Harlem have been pressured to move out of their homes for small cash pay-offs, authorities claim.

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There is even a [website](#) and a support group for the thousands of affected tenants, with a complete [list](#) of all Croman's properties.

Croman was released from police custody on Monday afternoon after each posting \$500,000 cash bail.

Swartz, who is charged with 15 felonies, posted \$250,000 bail.

It comes less than two months after Croman's son made headline news for abusing an Uber driver.

Addressing the landlord case on Monday, Attorney General Eric Schneiderman slammed Croman as 'unscrupulous'.

'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,' Schneiderman said in a statement.



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