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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

April 1, 2020

Honorable Andrew Cuomo, Governor
State of New York
Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

Last year, public meetings and hearings for New York City Rent Guidelines Board's 2019-2020 rent increase determination began on April 4, 2019 and concluded on June 25, 2019 with a public meeting for the final vote. This two-month process allowed housing experts, tenants, property owners, and members of the general public to engage with members of the Board as they deliberated on the appropriate amount of rent increases for 2019-2020 lease renewals.

With New York State on PAUSE continuing through April 15 and the federal government extending social distancing guidelines until April 30, the Rent Guidelines Board will not be able to fulfill its public meeting obligations as mandated by state law. While holding meetings via an online platform is technologically possible, it will restrict the open-meeting nature of public meetings, since not everyone who would otherwise attend and testify at Rent Guidelines Board public meetings and hearings have internet access or the knowledge to navigate online meeting technology.

In light of the above constraints, I urge you to suspend the New York City Rent Guidelines Board deliberation process for this year and extend a rent freeze to all rent-regulated tenants with lease renewals due between October 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gale A. Brewer".

Gale A. Brewer
Manhattan Borough President

cc: David Reiss, Chair, NYC RGB