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## **Happy Holidays From The Tenants of 325 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street!!**

**WHEN:** Tuesday, November 22, 2016 – 11:00am-12:30pm

**WHERE:** 325 East 12th Street, Manhattan

**WHAT:** Members of *The Toledano Tenant Coalition* and NYS Senator Brad Hoylman will share a “Toledano-Style Turkey Dinner” with a tour of the “gasless” Toledano/Brookhill building that has been under construction and in disarray for months!!

The tenants of 325 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street have been without gas for over 6 months, and now find themselves without cooking gas during the Holiday Season. Now eight of the tenants are fighting *Raphael Toledano* in court for an order to restore the gas—one that his lawyers are vehemently resisting. While Mr. Toledano and his agents are likely enjoying warm and cozy kitchens filled with the aroma of holiday cooking, the kitchens of 325 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street will be cold & empty... except, perhaps, for the echo of Mr. Toledano, spouting empty promises of gas restoration and better relations with his tenants. Mr. Toledano has refused to meet face to face with tenants and elected officials on two occasions and opted to send his legal team (*Belkin Burden Wenig & Goldman, LLP*) instead.

Many of the tenants in other Toledano buildings have also complained of poor services and unbearable harassment by Raphael Toledano and his agents. Here are just a few of the complaints:

- Vermin
- Dumpster Apartments\*  
(\*Rather than lease a dumpster for rubbish, we believe Toledano & Co. uses empty apartments instead.)
- Frivolous Lawsuits & Non-Renewal of Leases
- No Cooking Gas
- Construction As Harassment

Back in August, Toledano & his Brookhill Properties tried unsuccessfully to bribe the tenants of 325 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street with Ben & Jerry's Ice cream instead of gas! Now the tenants believe that Mr. Toledano is trying to push rent regulated tenants out of their apartments so that he can destabilize buildings and flip them for profit.

In a story published by The Real Deal, June 2016, Mr. Toledano or "Rafi" as he likes to be called, said the following:

"...I take every concern seriously and work immediately and tirelessly to remedy any situation brought to my attention that merits remediation or repair." ... "We pride ourselves in the integrity we maintain at Brookhill Properties in all of our business relationships. Our top priority is to provide tenants with a residence that meets the highest standards of health, safety and comfort."

### **The tenants of 325 East 12<sup>th</sup> Street speak out:**

- "When they gutted the one apartment beside me, they broke through the bottom shelf of my original built-in kitchen cabinet. At the beginning of construction, tenants had to call Brookhill and the city 311 to get them to hire a cleaning crew to mop twice a day to keep the lead dust down—a legal requirement. It took two calls to 311 and two visits by city inspectors until Brookhill finally had a handyman plug up holes in my apartment and brought in an exterminator for the mice. The work crews cleaned out fridges in empty apartments and left the food in bags in one apartment to rot... tenants had to repeatedly call the city before it was finally removed. There's one apartment where they piled broken furniture, cardboard boxes, old wood; that serves as a breeding ground for all kinds of pests. It's been that way for months! The only good that's come out of this is that we've built a strong TA that works together to invoke the city's legal protections from unsafe construction and illegal harassment." – Elizabeth Haak
- "Not only has the No cooking gas been an inconvenience and an additional eating out expense, it is been **extremely** dangerous using the hot plate that keeps getting hotter and hotter. I'm Feeling very harassed by this negligence from Toledano. Now they are showing apartments and the hallways are covered in construction dust while brokers are leading people through the halls..." – William Engel
- "The Toledano Tenant Coalition believes that Mr. Toledano continues to harass tenants by unreasonable non-renewal of leases and through slow, poorly managed building construction designed to make tenant's homes unlivable. The coalition also asserts that Mr. Toledano has irresponsibly forced both stabilized and market rate tenants to live for months without cooking gas in buildings overrun with vermin. The coalition remains committed to ending what they see as Mr. Toledano's campaign against the tenants that call his buildings home." – *Toledano Tenants Coalition*

**"The Village as a whole has got beautiful tenants," ... "I've come to know my tenants, and they're wonderful people whom we've developed good relationships with as human beings." - Raphael Toledano**

After the press conference, the tenants of 325 East 12<sup>th</sup> will proceed to Housing Court where they will bring their demands for cooking gas before Judge Wendt. The tenants will be represented by Stephanie Rudolph of the *Community Development Project (CDP) at the Urban Justice Center*.

**Housing Court, 111 Centre Street  
Part B, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 1166**

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2016 – 2:00PM**

**ABOUT THE TOLEDANO TENANTS COALITION:**

***The Toledano Tenants Coalition*** is a coalition of over 20 buildings owned by Raphael Toledano.

The Mission of the Toledano Tenants Coalition:

- Educate tenants about their rights under NYC rent-regulation and harassment laws;
- Organize tenants to be strong and united in their dealings with Mr. Toledano and Brookhill properties;
- Support and advocate for tenants by continuously making city agencies, elected officials, and the press aware of violations.

**ABOUT THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (CDP):**

***The Community Development Project (CDP) at the Urban Justice Center*** strengthens the impact of grassroots organizations in New York City's low-income and other excluded communities. CDP partners with community organizations to win legal cases, publish community-driven research reports, assist with the formation of new organizations and cooperatives, and provide technical assistance in support of their work towards social justice.

**ABOUT THE COOPER SQUARE COMMITTEE (CSC):**

***The Cooper Square Committee*** works with tenants to contribute to the preservation and development of affordable, environmentally healthy housing and community/cultural spaces so that Lower East Side remains racially, economically, and culturally diverse. CSC is a proud member of ***Stabilizing NYC***.

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