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Westminster Cares – About Who?!

Outraged Tenants of Jared Kushner Call Out "Westminster Cares" Event as a Total Cover Up

If You Want a Clean Image, it Starts at Home, in the Buildings You Own and Manage!

New York, NY – Tenants of landlord **Jared Kushner**, who have faced harsh conditions under his ownership, are calling out their landlord for trying to cover up his record as a bad actor by hosting a superficial volunteer event.

In recent years Kushner tenants have faced a multitude of problems and potentially dangerous conditions in their buildings, including:

- No cooking gas
- Collapsed ceilings
- Questionably safe electrical systems
- Mounting trash
- Deprivation of heat
- Apartments entered without notice
- Blocked mail delivery
- Vermin

Tenants believe Kushner's New York City real estate company, Westminster City Living, is hosting a "Westminster Cares" event under the guise of repairing Kushner and Westminster's image. Westminster City Living notified tenants about the event a week before Election Day with this flyer below:



Under Westminster City Living's ownership both rent regulated and market rate tenants have had grievances. Tenants of 118 East 4th Street in the East Village took Kushner to Housing Court earlier this year calling for the immediate restoration of essential services and for living conditions to be rectified. The tenants there endured bouts of no heat during some of the coldest spells of winter, mounting trash, and had been without cooking gas for over five months.

Tenants at 170-174 East 2nd Street endured even worse while Westminster attempted to renovate their building. Throughout 2014, tenants at 170-174 East 2nd Street had gas outages, collapsed ceilings, hallways strewn with dust and debris, and numerous lawsuits brought against them (some of whom were seniors and 40+ year members of the community). These buildings represent just a few of the scenarios that tenants have faced under Kushner's ownership.

So after the experience they've had living under Westminster City Living's ownership, tenants are left asking: Does Kushner and Westminster care? And if so, who is it that they care about??

"The Westminster Cares party michigas is hilarious. Westminster City Living didn't seem to care when we had no heat on the coldest day of last year or when there were mountains of trash and rodent carcasses!" **said Jennifer Hengen, a tenant for over 25 years at 118 E 4th Street.** "After we reached a legal settlement with Westminster City Living, earlier this year, they did move quickly to rectify dangerous situations. For the moment, we no longer have mountains of trash and are able to enjoy basic amenities like gas, heat and hot water. Unfortunately, no one seems to stay a Westminster City Living employee for long. That results in a lot of confusion and chaos over rent money, bureaucracy and work orders. I don't even know who my super is."

"Every single rent stabilized tenant I know in our building has had issues with their lease renewal. Something that should be automatic becomes an ordeal that can last for months in some cases. After wasting time and energy chasing down my own renewal two years ago, I discovered that there were errors in the percentage increases which would have resulted in sizable overcharges. Every failed step in the process was described as an 'honest mistake' " **said 120 E 4th Street tenant Ted Osborne.** "I find the timing of this event suspect and its title disingenuous. I have friends in the Westminster building next door who spent an entire winter without cooking gas and many freezing nights without heat. Nobody at Westminster City Living seemed to care until the tenants took them to court."

"Over the years we've seen nothing from Westminster that makes us think they care about anything more than making sure they provide the absolute minimum amount of services (sometimes less) and keeping their buildings full of high-rent paying tenants," **said Brandon Kielbasa, Director of Organizing and Policy at the Cooper Square Committee (CSC).** "Every week we (CSC) have Kushner tenants calling our office to get issues resolved. The problems they face range from not getting security deposits back, not getting lease renewals, having chronic mixups with their rent payments, and having difficulties getting repairs. If Westminster really cares, they need to get better at managing their properties."

ABOUT THE COOPER SQUARE COMMITTEE

The Cooper Square Committee (CSC) works with area tenants to contribute to the preservation and development of affordable, environmentally healthy housing and community/cultural spaces so that the Cooper Square area remains racially, economically, and culturally diverse. The Cooper Square Committee has spearheaded significant neighborhood victories in its history, comprising 50 years of tenant organizing, community-based planning, advocacy and development. They rely on the active involvement of their members in the organization's work to advance its affordable housing agenda.

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