



February 2, 2016, BRONX, NY—For the last decade, tenants at 888 Grand Concourse in the Bronx have waged and won court battles, and organized tirelessly against hazardous and inhumane conditions caused by neglect by the building's owner, Tiny Fiesta LLC. Even as Tiny Fiesta's mortgage lender began foreclosure proceedings, the tenants continued to pay rent to a landlord who refused to make necessary repairs, or even provide heat and hot water on a consistent basis. On Monday, however, tenants announced that they will be withholding rent as long as Tiny Fiesta continues to let this historic building fall apart. The tenants are supported by **Community Action for Safe Apartments (CASA)** and **Legal Services NYC's Bronx program**.

Press coverage: [Telemundo47](#) Earlier: [NY Daily News](#)

(Photo: Councilmember Vanessa Gibson, 3rd from right, with LSNYC's Elise Pajot, John Montoute, Shardae Rookwood, Bob Hammond, and Ian Davie at 888 Grand Concourse)

"I'm stopping giving him money until I get the services I pay for, so the message is that you're not going to get another dime from me," said **Carmen Vega-Rivera**, a tenant leader. "We've given you plenty of opportunities to meet with us and give us a plan for how you are going to repair apartments and the building. You've have plenty of excuses. How much more can we take?"

"Basically most of the tenants, including myself, are tired of him promising that he'll do repairs and provide hot water and all the services that we pay for and we never get them," said **Eloy Santana**, a longtime tenant and leader. "We're all tired. Waking up in the morning and not being able to take a shower, that's what did it for me. Standing in the classroom and being in front of my students and feeling uncomfortable because I haven't showered that day, that's an awful feeling."

The building, which was designed by famed architect Emery Roth and overlooks the Bronx Supreme Court, is included in the Department of Housing Preservation's Alternative Enforcement Program (AEP). This classification is reserved for NYC's 250 most distressed and hazardous buildings.

"I am saddened and upset that Bronx families at 888 Grand Concourse—an Art Deco building and part of the historical Grand Concourse—have been exposed to such harassment and negligence from landlord Jonathan Bombart. Having been a tenant my whole life, I will do everything in my power to rid our borough of these kinds of tenant harassment techniques and preserve affordable housing for all Bronx families," said **Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner** (D-Bronx, 77th AD). "Bronxites have a right to feel safe and secure in their home without fear of being priced out of the community they know and love. Yet, tenants of 888 Grand Concourse are being treated unfairly and I will not stand for it."

"When tenants get together and withhold their rent, they cut off their landlord's income—really hitting him where it hurts," said **Bob Hammond**, a staff attorney with **Legal Services NYC**. "These tenants have pursued every legal remedy available against Mr. Bombart and are now taking collective action to force a change in ownership. If he fights back and brings the tenants to court, we'll be right there with them."

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