RENT CONTROL POLICY PLATFORM

Keep rent controlled units affordable by capping annual rent increases at the level of inflation and eliminating the extra 2% allowed under current law.

Expand the scope of rent control to protect more tenants and preserve affordability:

- Protect renters in DC’s many 4-unit apartment buildings by modifying the “small landlord exemption” so that only owners of three or fewer units are exempt.
- Include properties built before 2005 in the rent control program, and make the date dynamic so that newly-constructed properties are subject to rent control after 15 years.

Eliminate vacancy increases, which rewards landlords financially when tenants are displaced.

Eliminate voluntary agreements: they do not promote landlord-tenant partnership; they are a tool to extract concessions from vulnerable tenants.

Close all the loopholes in the petition process:

- All Housing Provider Petitions:
  - Stronger DHCD audits of landlord petitions
  - Require that landlords maintain a capital reserve and comply with the housing code to qualify for petitions
- Capital improvement petitions:
  - Clarify what kinds of upgrades qualify as a capital improvement to avoid abuse of the petition process.
  - Define allowable costs for various upgrades
- Hardship petitions:
  - Limit the hardship increases to properties whose profit rate is less than the yield on a ten year U.S. treasury note (but capped at 5 percent)
  - Measure a property’s profitability by net income rather than rate of return on investment
  - Require implementation of hardship increases on a staggered basis at a rate of no more than 5 %t per year and termination of the hardship increase once the profit rate is attained
  - Hardship increases are temporary rather than permanent
- Substantial Rehab Petitions:
  - Increases allowed under a sub rehab petition are temporary rather than permanent.

Only allow one rent increase a year for all rental housing in DC with notice.