

Mayor's short-sighted cuts forfeit chance to create up to 200,000 basement apartments in NYC

JUNE 14, 2020 | Currently Mayor de Blasio is putting the East New York Basement Pilot on the chopping block to save a mere \$1.09 million. **This is a drop in the bucket for the city budget, but would amount to the erasure of an innovative affordable housing tool promised to the East New York community.**

It's not just East New York that could lose out. If this pilot goes citywide, **over 200,000* buildings could potentially have legally-recognized basement and cellar apartments**, providing safe, healthy and affordable housing for immigrants, essential workers, low-income households and communities of color. **Imagine a city where even 25% of those homeowners convert their basements - that's 50,000 new affordable, safe apartments!**

Tenants unable to find legally-recognized housing that's affordable have been living in basement apartments for years. Homeowners struggling to make ends meet have found relief by renting their basements. Destroying the long-term potential of the basements pilot denies the lives of these individuals, their very real needs, and the lack of housing opportunity currently available to them.

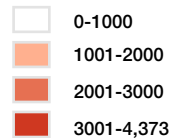
The racialized health impacts of COVID-19 are compounded by these housing vulnerabilities. Even as laws are passed to protect other tenants, basement tenants remain vulnerable to DOB vacate orders, putting them at risk of overcrowded living situations or homelessness. Overcrowding greatly reduces people's ability to safely shelter-in-place, making it all the more important to use every tool at our disposal—including basement apartments—to create more affordable housing in disproportionately impacted neighborhoods.

Tell your Council Member: Save the Basement Pilot

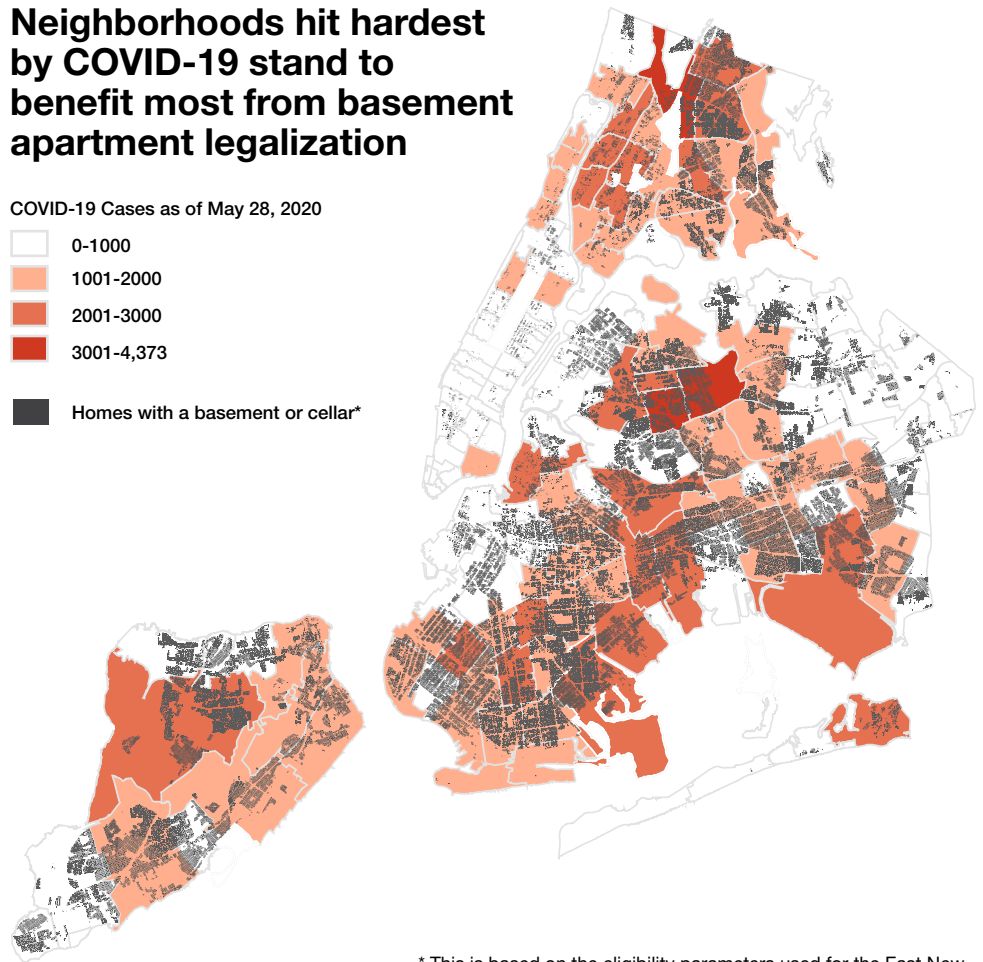
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Neighborhoods hit hardest by COVID-19 stand to benefit most from basement apartment legalization

COVID-19 Cases as of May 28, 2020



■ Homes with a basement or cellar*



Data Sources: NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene, PLUTO 2018 v2

* This is based on the eligibility parameters used for the East New York Basements Pilot, as set forth by NYC HPD, and extrapolated out to the city as a whole, and includes one-, two-, and three-family homes with basements or cellars; View the full set of parameters and interact with our basements map online at prattcenter.net/basementsportal