

Housing Court, as we know it today, was created in 1973. By 1985, Housing Court Answers formed, advocating for changes to the court and calling the court an eviction mill.

In 2012, Community Action for Safe Apartments (CASA) started a campaign to reform the Bronx Housing Court and Brooklyn Tenants United started a campaign to reform the Brooklyn Housing Court.

In March of 2014, the RTCNYC Coalition formed and worked with New York City Council members Mark Levine and Vanessa Gibson to introduce Intro 214, a piece of local legislation that would make the city responsible for providing low-income tenants with representation in Housing Court.

In December of 2014, we held a day-long forum at New York Law School that drew over 450 people and featured prominent speakers such as then Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman, New York City Human Resources Administration Commissioner Steven Banks and many more.

In 2015, we took Comptroller Scott Stringer and Public Advocate Tish James on a tour of the Bronx Housing Court.

From March-June of 2015, we held four town halls in four different boroughs, which educated and engaged over 500 tenants and dozens of elected officials about the need for a right to counsel.

In May of 2015, we released our own report about RTC called “Housing Justice: What the Experts are Saying on New Yorkers Right to Counsel in Eviction Proceedings,” at a press conference in front of Manhattan Housing Court.

We developed a wide base of supporters that includes landlords, bar associations, unions, advocates for homeless people, advocates for seniors, advocates for disabled people, almost every civil legal services agency in the city, and many more.

We made presentations to community boards throughout NYC, which resulted in all 42 community boards in Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx, as well as the borough boards in those boroughs passing resolutions in support of RTC.

We collected close to 7,000 signatures on petitions addressed to the Mayor and Speaker in support of Right to Counsel.

We gathered close to 100 signatures to a letter from Faith Leaders throughout the city, urging the Mayor to support Right to Counsel.

We worked with the New York City Bar Association to commission a [study](#) of the financial costs and savings of implementing the Right to Counsel, which showed that Right to Counsel would not only pay for itself but also save the city an additional \$320 million/year.

We rallied and organized a press conference and hearing on the bill in September of 2016, packing the steps and the chambers of City Hall to capacity. We coordinated a diverse set of panelists representing NYCHA, youth advocates, racial justice and civil rights advocates, women's rights advocates, international human rights perspectives, health perspectives, labor support and many others, to demonstrate widespread support.

After 8 hours of testimony, 78 people testified in support of the legislation and none testified against it.

On that day, #RTCNYC trended on twitter.

In December of 2016, we organized and interfaith forum at the Mt. Olivet Baptist Church in Harlem with the Interfaith Coalition on Housing and Homelessness that called on the city to move forward with right to counsel as a moral imperative.

In December of 2016, we organized a press conference on the steps of City Hall that drew more than 150 people, as we delivered both petitions and the letter from the faith leaders to the mayor and the speaker.

And, throughout our efforts, we garnered **an incredible amount of press coverage**, including an endorsement from the NYT Editorial board and being named one of the top brilliant policies by the New York Magazine

On February 12, the Mayor and Speaker committed to passing and funding a right to counsel for tenants in housing court.

On July 20, 2017 42 councilmembers vote overwhelmingly to pass RTC!!!

The bill is signed into law on August 11,
2017!

Implementation began in September and we
had a party in October!!!