



RTCNYC Tool 5.4 Sample Campaign Endorsement Letter

Similar to petitions, campaign endorsement letters are another way to get organizations to commit to the campaign and spread the word about Right to Counsel. Below is a template endorsement letter. You may also want to add commitments to specific events such as press conferences, rallies and town halls if you already have them scheduled so that you can have a starting point for calling folks to attend those events.

A RIGHT TO COUNSEL IN THE HOUSING COURTS OF [Municipality or State]

[X # of people from our municipality or state] were served with eviction papers in [YYYY]. Nearly [X%] of these tenants were forced to fight the case without the benefit of an attorney. Tenants have many rights, but without knowing these rights or how to protect them in Court many tenants are unnecessarily evicted. Every day in housing court, tenants give up rights, their homes and their communities. **Research shows that in almost all of these cases an attorney could have changed the outcome for the better for the tenant** and in many cases preserve the tenancy. Most tenants can't afford to hire an attorney and the available free legal services for those who need it does not come close to matching the need. In response, a broad coalition of housing advocates, community groups and legal services providers propose legislation to provide a right to counsel in [our municipality or state] Housing Court for low income tenants. Join us in supporting this legislation and the four principals it stands for:

- Providing real access to justice for tens of thousands of tenants a year facing the loss of their home through an eviction by providing them with a well-trained competent attorney.
- Reducing homelessness and saving millions of dollars spent on shelters by preventing unnecessary evictions.
- Saving families, and our communities, from the serious financial, educational, social, emotional and medical consequences of eviction and homelessness.
- Preserving neighborhoods and affordable housing by keeping tenants, including seniors, in their homes and communities and keeping their apartments from going to market rate.

Join us in the movement to bring justice to Housing Court. Sign on in support of these principles and help us pass the necessary legislation in the [municipality or state legislative body].

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ (please write legibly)

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Indicate any Council Members/State Senators you or your organization has a good relationship with:



I agree to:

- Write letters of support to council members
- Organize clients from my group to write letters of support
- Hold meetings in my community on this issue
- Conduct outreach on the Right to Counsel through newsletters, mailings etc.
- Attend press conferences on the Right to Counsel

Mail your response to [Return address] or scan and email to [return email address]