

New York Council Plans Heftier Fines for Apartments Used as Hotels

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Some landlords have quietly found a way to make more money each month: They have illegally turned units in their apartment buildings into hotel rooms, said lawmakers, housing advocates and tenants at a City Council meeting yesterday.

A committee of council members introduced a bill that would significantly raise fines against those landlords.

In recent years, housing advocates said, thousands of residential apartments have been converted into hotel rooms that cater to short-term visitors looking for a reasonably priced room.

Many of the units being rented out as hotel rooms were rent-stabilized or single-occupancy apartments, and housing advocates worry that the practice is severely straining the city's tight rental market.

Units that previously drew \$1,000 a month in rent can bring a landlord \$125 per night instead, they said.

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