



# THE REAL ESTATE LOBBY'S OPEN DOOR IN ALBANY

*Real Estate spent \$13.56 million on lobbying over the last five years while campaigning against tenant protections, lobbying top legislators and staff more than 1,000 times against Good Cause eviction protections alone.*

## Findings at a Glance:



Top real estate lobbying organizations spent \$7.66 million collectively on lobbying over the last five years.



Lobbyists hired by real estate spent an additional \$5.9 million on legislative campaigns, events, advocacy and more, with the biggest segment, \$3.78 million, spent on advertising.



Lobbyists working for real estate lobbied legislators and staff over 1,000 times about Good Cause legislation alone, more than any other piece of legislation.

THE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY spends millions of dollars each year lobbying for its interests in Albany — and for the last few years, blocking tenant protections has been at the top of their priority list. Lobbying disclosure data shows that top real estate organizations spent \$13.56 million on lobbyists from 2019-2023. Over the last five years, the real estate industry's lobbying activity focused on opposing Good Cause eviction protections rather than on policies to advance the production of housing. Albany lawmakers, legislative staff, and members of the Executive Chamber staff kept an open door to real estate, data shows they were lobbied thousands of times during the past five years.

The industry is raking in record profits and a small number of large corporate landlords are bankrolling the opposition to tenant protections to keep runaway profits flowing. In 2023, the median asking rent rose to a record high level and remains at \$3,500 per month citywide, a 17% increase since just before the pandemic. A 2021 analysis found that the average portfolio size of board members of the Real Estate Board of New York, Inc (REBNY), Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP), and Rent Stabilization Association of NYC (RSA) is over 7,000 homes, and some board members own well over 30,000 units of housing. The real estate industry is throwing massive resources at opposing common sense tenant protections — at a time when evictions are spiking and policy makers are concerned about New Yorkers leaving the state due to high housing costs.

Using data from the New York State Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government via [NY Open Data](#), this analysis focuses on six of the top lobbying clients in the state: the Real Estate Board of New York, Inc, Homeowners for an Affordable New York LLC, Taxpayers for an Affordable NY LLC, Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP), Rent Stabilization Association of NYC, INC, and the NYS Association of Realtors.

Not only did real estate lobbyists target key legislators, but they also had frequent access to top legislative and executive staff. Lobbyists employed by the real estate industry lobbied Majority and Minority Program and Counsel staff 1,230 times combined over the five-year period. During the same period, they lobbied members of the Governor’s executive chamber over 1,240 times. Real estate lobbying also extended to city and state agencies who deal with housing, contacting city and state housing entities 957 times over the period.

## Conclusion

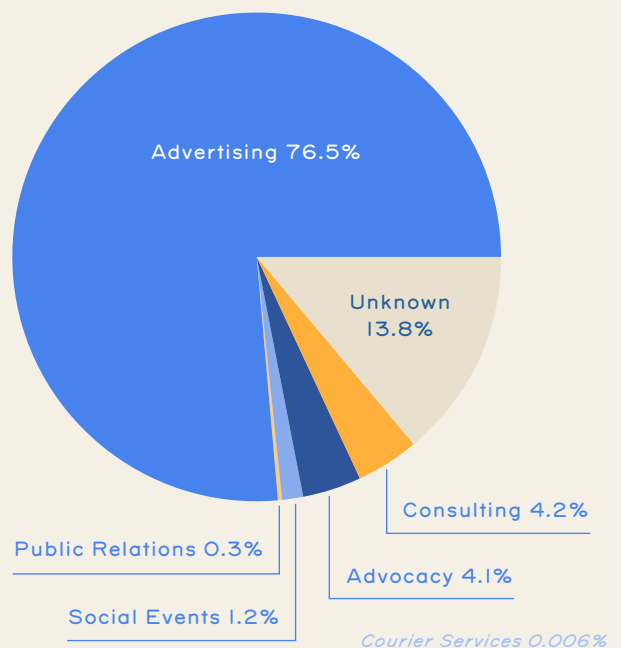
The real estate industry is doubling down on lobbying against pro-tenant policies to maintain the runaway profits that have become the norm in recent years. Rather than focusing on renewing tax incentives for development, which the industry claims is essential to confronting the housing crisis, real estate is focused on protecting the ability of property owners to price-gouge tenants and increase profits. As tenants across the state struggle with skyrocketing costs, the industry uses its open door to Albany policymakers to pad their pocketbooks.

Dig into the data:  
[hj4a.org/re-lobbying](http://hj4a.org/re-lobbying)

***Chart 1: Top Albany Targets of Real Estate Lobbying***

	TARGET	NUMBER OF CONTACTS
1	Executive Chamber	1,243
2	Majority and Minority Program and Counsel	1,230
3	Brian Kavanagh	731
4	Carl Heastie	626
5	Andrea Stewart-Cousins	563
6	Leroy Comrie	430
7	Steven Cymbrowitz	360
8	Kevin S. Parker	261
9	James Skoufis	260
10	Todd Kaminsky	200

***Chart 2: Where The Money Goes: How Real Estate Spent \$5.9 Million To Influence Legislations in Addition to Direct Lobbying***



\*Data is from the New York State Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government via NY Open Data as of August 2023.