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## Attorney General Charges the 'Bernie Madoff of Landlords' with 20 Felonies For Allegedly Harassing Rent-Stabilized Tenants

By Lori Chung

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A landlord accused of harassing rent-stabilized tenants so he could charge higher rents, is facing a possible 25 years in prison.

Steve Croman owns over 140 apartment buildings in Hell's Kitchen, Chelsea and lower Manhattan.

He and his banker Barry Swartz face more than 20 felony charges, ranging from grand larceny to tax evasion.

Besides criminal charges, Attorney General Eric Schneiderman has filed a civil suit.

The Attorney General says Croman "would do whatever it took" to remove rent-stabilized tenants from his buildings.

"The scope of his enterprise wasn't like anything we'd ever seen in New York. This guy was essentially the Bernie Madoff of landlords," Schneiderman said.

"It seems like a long time coming," said tenant Shawn Dahl. "I'm relieved, and I'm hopeful that it will prevent other tenants having to go through what I went through - and what my neighbors went through."

Both Croman and Swartz pleaded not guilty to the charges.