LETTER TO THE EDITOR

We're housing advocates, not 'left-wing activists'
Labels should not suggest that people who favor affordable dwellings are zealots

To the editor:

Re "Think this City Council is tough on business? Just wait" (Aug. 21):

Since when are affordable housing advocates "left-wing activists"? As the same characterization used in this article was found in July 11’s "The price of being the king of affordable housing," it should be called out.

In the New York I know, reasonable people can, and always have, approached the goal of achieving more affordable housing in different ways. Mayors have long committed to affordable housing as a primary goal of city government, though with varying degrees of success. Nonprofit developers like WHEDco have worked both as sole developers and in partnership with for-profit entities in this space for decades, and I doubt our partners would call us political zealots.

We can disagree about where and how affordable housing should be built, the essential role of community-based nonprofit developers, what true affordability means, and how to best protect families from being forced from their homes and neighborhoods. But to characterize a commitment to building housing that is affordable to the poorest New Yorkers as "left wing" is wrong, dismissive, and dangerous.

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Link: http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20170908/OPINION/170909918/were-housing-advocates-not-left-wing-activists