



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Steven D. Rhoads

New York State Senator Steve Rhoads & Senate Republican Conference Unveils Legislative Package to Prioritize Housing

STEVEN D. RHOADS March 27, 2024

| ISSUE: **AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS, ACCESSIBLE HOUSING, CREATING A PATHWAY TO HOMEOWNERSHIP, HOME OWNERSHIP**



Package of legislation designed to incentive home ownership, improve access to affordable housing and help protect homeowners against “squatters.”

ALBANY, NY – On March 26, Senator Steve Rhoads, Senate Republican Leader Robert Ort, along with Senator Pam Helming, ranking member of the Senate Committee on Housing, Construction, and Community Development, and members of the Senate Republican Conference, today unveiled a comprehensive package of legislation designed to incentivize

home ownership, improve access to affordable housing options in communities, and help protect homeowners against “squatters.”

The package includes tax credits and incentives, removes regulatory burdens, and incentivizes new construction, as well as continued investment and improvements in existing housing stock. In addition, it will directly address the recent increase in outrageous cases of “squatters” who inhabit a home without permission from the law-abiding, taxpaying property owners who actually own the home.

“Housing affordability is one of the biggest issues facing our state. Our conference has a plan to revitalize our existing housing stock by removing blight from our communities and replacing it with good quality housing units, to work with local communities on what housing strategies are best for them, to expand and create incentives for development, and to establish means-testing for rent-regulated housing to ensure that affordable housing units are occupied by those who truly need them. The legislative package we are putting forward today under the leadership of our housing ranker Senator Pam Helming will deliver affordable homeownership for the state of New York,” **said Leader Rob Ortt.**

q

“While Albany Democrats continue to talk about a self-inflicted housing crisis fueled by high-tax, anti-growth policies that continue to drive builders and housing developers out of New York, I was proud to stand with my Senate Republican conference to advance an actual plan to do something about it. This comprehensive plan addresses the pressing issue of housing and improves the landscape in our state for renters, young first-time homebuyers, builders and seniors while maintaining local control of zoning, where it belongs. With this groundbreaking legislative package, we are committed to again making the American Dream possible in New York State for our kids and grandkids and provide a brighter, more affordable and more accessible future for all New Yorkers. As New Yorkers continue to flee this state for better opportunities, there is no time to wait. We demand the Assembly and

Senate majorities advance our common-sense housing agenda,” said Senator Steve Rhoads.

“From the Bronx to Buffalo, the American Dream is unattainable for a large portion of our population. The good news is, this is a problem we can solve. Our Senate Republican Conference is again putting solutions on the table to increase access to affordable housing options for every New Yorker, from renters to first-time homebuyers to our workforce and seniors. Importantly, our solutions preserve local control and prioritize collaboration with municipalities to facilitate new builds and improve existing housing stock,” **said Senator Pam Helming.**

“New York needs to focus on real and immediate solutions to the affordable housing crisis. Most people think that rent subsidized housing goes to the poor or working poor - people who actually need it. But they're wrong. The truth is 30 percent of those units are going to wealthy people because nobody checks their income - that's over 300,000 affordable apartments that should be going to those who need it. My bill would put an end to this scam and make sure rent controlled and stabilized housing goes to the people who need it most. Governor Hochul and the Democrats in Albany need to prioritize real solutions and do what's right for working people,” **said Senator Jack Martins.**

“Increasing New York’s housing stock is the only way to meet the state’s housing crisis and make the dream of homeownership more attainable for countless New Yorkers. The 421-A program has been widely successful, creating over 100k units of affordable housing for NYC residents since its inception. Now is not the time to take away one of the most effective tools for addressing that shortage. My proposed 421-A legislation would extend the project vesting and completion deadlines so that we can spur new development, bring affordability back to New York City, and give tenants a fair shot at living comfortably,” **said Senator Anthony Palumbo.**

“There have been several high profile, disturbing reports regarding squatters recently. The mere notion of so-called ‘squatters rights’ is nonsensical and is having devastating effects on property owners who are forced to continue paying real estate taxes, possibly a mortgage and other expenses while a squatter wrongly occupies their property. My legislation would make it clear that squatters and those who occupy property without permission from the owner are not treated as tenants and have no right to remain on the property. Until our policies stop favoring criminal behavior, cases such as these will only continue to get worse,” **said Senator Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick.**

“For many, owning a home is the American Dream, but the unfortunate reality is that it is becoming a nightmare for too many due to the epidemic of squatting. With this package making great efforts to ensure families can own and build their homes, it is vital that we also give them the ability to protect them. The aggressive legislation I have introduced will protect homeowners by providing them with a mechanism to quickly remove squatters and giving the police the tools they need to assist victims. This will give power back to our residents who are being repeatedly abused by the current broken system,” **said Senator Mario Mattera.**

Included in the package unveiled today are proposals that would:

> Create a first-time homebuyer tax credit to give new homeowners an income tax credit based on their local property taxes, making the American dream more affordable for New Yorkers (S.8826, Helming);

> Create a home renovation tax exemption to provide five years of property tax relief to homeowners who invest in their property. This will incentivize the revitalization of our existing housing stock, bringing abandoned and dilapidated homes back to life and expanding the housing stock of the future (S.8838, Helming);

- > Establish a housing infrastructure tax credit to provide a credit of up to ten percent of costs for infrastructure projects related to the construction of new homes or multiple dwellings (S.8578, Helming);
- > Establish a tax credit of up to \$2000 to incentivize the installation of manufactured homes and the expansion of manufactured home communities to provide more affordable housing opportunities (S.8458, Helming);
- > Provide means-testing for rent-regulated housing to ensure that affordable housing units are occupied by those who need them (S.8887, Martins);
- > Create a Local Housing Task Force to bring together local government officials, state agencies, and stakeholders to develop best practices to incentivize housing development and address state regulation that prevents development (S.8896, Martins);
- > Extend the successful 421-a tax incentive for developers (S.7560, Palumbo);
- > Establish the crime of squatting as criminal trespass in the third degree (S.5979, Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick); and
- > Expedite the method where a property owner may evict a squatter from residential property (S.8867, Mattera).