



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sean M. Ryan

## Senator Sean Ryan Announces Passage Of Bill To Provide Home Insulation Upgrades Across State

SEAN M. RYAN June 5, 2024

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Legislation Tasks Utility Companies with Improving Energy Efficiency in Thousands of New York Homes Each Year

**ALBANY** – Today, June 5, 2024, New York State Senator Sean Ryan announced that the Senate has voted unanimously to pass his legislation ([S.8575A](#)) to task utility companies statewide with enhancing insulation in thousands of houses across the state. The bill is designed to reduce New York’s carbon emissions and make energy bills more affordable for

low- to moderate-income New Yorkers.

This legislation would task gas and electric companies with creating residential insulation pilot programs in which they approach eligible customers and offer to upgrade their home's insulation at no cost to the homeowners. Enabling these companies to proactively upgrade home insulation block by block would make large-scale insulation upgrades possible by spreading the costs over 25 years and across all ratepayers, creating long-term savings for all ratepayers by alleviating the capacity required in future upgrades to the electrical grid.

In cities like Buffalo that have disproportionately old housing stock, an abundance of poorly insulated homes built in the early- to mid-20th century leads to expensive heating bills and larger problems like frozen pipes. In Western New York alone, early estimates project that a utility-scale insulation upgrade program could reach 20,000 homes in 10 years, making a significant reduction to the state's carbon emissions possible at a small cost to the average ratepayer.

In addition to the emission reduction benefits, the programs would also provide safety and security to New York's most vulnerable residents. A properly insulated house can stay above freezing for four days, meaning homes insulated to modern standards can literally save lives during winter storms like the blizzard that took dozens of lives in Erie County in December 2022. Insulating homes can also help prevent evictions by lowering utility bills for renters in poorly insulated houses who often have difficulty paying their rent in winter because of enormous heating bills, but whose landlords have little incentive to spend money on upgrading the homes' insulation.

The bill passed today is one of four components of *The City of Good Neighborhoods*, a comprehensive, community-focused plan introduced by Senator Ryan in January to address the shortage of high-quality, affordable housing in Buffalo and across Upstate New York. In

May, [Senator Ryan announced that he secured \\$90 million](#) in the FY 2024-2025 state budget to implement programs based on the other three parts of the plan.

**Senator Sean Ryan** said, “Upgrading a house’s insulation to modern standards is a great way to reduce costs for both homeowners and renters who see their heating bills skyrocket in the winter. It also makes homes safer to live in during cold winter months. Despite the clear benefits, the combination of high upfront costs and ineffective existing incentive programs means that insulation upgrades happen at a trickle in New York. A statewide, utility-scale home insulation effort has the potential to provide massive reductions to our state’s energy usage and carbon emissions. This bill would allow us to take advantage of that untapped potential and make thousands of New Yorkers’ homes safer and more affordable to live in every year. By requiring the utility companies to utilize union labor to complete the work, it also helps ensure that New York’s green economy is built on good-paying union jobs.”

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2023-S8575A**

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Enacts the "home utility weatherization jobs act"

February 15, 2024

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by [Sean M. Ryan](#)

Do you support this bill?