



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

## Ahead of the Anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act, Governor Hochul Signs Legislation to Support New Yorkers With Disabilities

BRIAN KAVANAGH July 25, 2024

| ISSUE: **ACCESSIBLE HOUSING**



disability home

S.9699A/A.10457 Permits the Access to Home and Access to Home for Heroes Programs to Cover Cost of Important Home Repairs for Accessibility Modifications

S.8903/A.9948 Expands Accessibility to Partial Real Property Tax Exemptions for People with Disabilities

## S.1900A/A.2487A Makes it Easier for Individuals with Disabilities to Apply for Renewed Parking Permits

Ahead of the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Governor Kathy Hochul today signed legislation to support New Yorkers with disabilities. Legislation S.9699A/A.10457 allows the Access to Home and Access to Home for Heroes programs to cover the cost of important home repairs that accompany accessibility modifications for low- and moderate-income households with disabilities. Legislation S.8903/A.9948 expands the real property tax exemption for people with disabilities. Legislation S.1900A/A.2487A makes it easier for New Yorkers with disabilities to apply for parking permit renewals.

“Those living with disabilities face discrimination and additional barriers every day – it is crucial we do what we can to fix it,” **Governor Hochul said.** “Ahead of the anniversary of the Americans with Disability Act, I am signing this legislation because people with disabilities deserve to enjoy the rights and privileges that all New Yorkers do.”

**Chief Disability Officer Kim Hill Ridley said,** “As we celebrate the 34th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act with Governor Hochul's signing of these three bills and the progress they will make towards improving the lives of New Yorkers with disabilities, we also acknowledge the advocacy of the pioneers who came before us to get us to this point. And while we take this moment in time to celebrate how far we've come, we also must take a deep breath, roll up our sleeves and continue our fight until all people with disabilities are able to lead integrated, inclusive and independent lives in our local communities.”

**New York State Homes and Community Renewal Commissioner RuthAnne Visnauskas said,** “Improving access to safe, affordable housing that allows people to remain in their homes and be a part of their community is critical for every New Yorker, and especially those with disabilities. By expanding our Access to Home and Access to Home for Heroes programs to cover the cost of home repairs that include accessibility modifications, we create safer, more

comfortable places for residents with disabilities—including veterans—to live and thrive. Thank you to Governor Hochul and the Legislature for continuing to find creative solutions to our housing affordability crisis that put people first.”

Legislation S.9699A/A.10457 amends the Access to Home and Access to Home for Heroes program to permit home repairs to be financed with program funds so long as they are related to the accessibility modifications being paid for by the program and do not constitute more than 60 percent of project costs. The bill will help expand participation and provide better, safer conditions for persons with disabilities, including veterans, helping them to continue to live comfortably in their homes.

**State Senator Brian Kavanagh said,** “I am pleased that Senate Bill S9699A is part of the package of bills Governor Kathy Hochul is signing today to support New Yorkers with disabilities. The Access to Home programs have been instrumental in funding accessibility modifications, allowing low- and moderate-income individuals with disabilities to live safely in their homes. However, these programs have been limited in covering the full scope of home repairs often needed for full accessibility upgrades, leaving homeowners in a difficult position. This bill fills the gap by allowing financing for home repairs related to habitability alongside accessibility adaptations. By removing health and safety risks, individuals with disabilities can remain in their homes and take care of multiple projects at once. Moreover, the increase in allowable administrative fees will attract more nonprofit organizations to administer the program, expanding its geographic scope and providing additional support to individuals with disabilities. This legislation marks a significant step towards ensuring the well-being and independence of homeowners with disabilities in our state. I thank Assemblymember Carrie Woerner for championing this legislation in the Assembly, as well as all our colleagues and the housing advocates who supported this bill, and of course Governor Hochul for signing this legislation and for her steadfast leadership.”

**Assemblymember Carrie Woerner said,** “Many homeowners with disabilities live in homes that require modifications for accessibility and repairs for health and safety purposes. This bill provides funding support for home repairs, such as roll-in showers or entrance ramp, so people with disabilities can continue living safely and comfortably in their home.”

Legislation S.8903/A.9948 expands the real property tax exemption for people with disabilities. The bill closes a gap in the law that excluded many people with disabilities from an important tax benefit by making eligible people who have their primary residence in a special needs trust and property owners who have a life tenant with a disability. This legislation will reduce barriers to affordable, stable housing for people with disabilities.

**State Senator Monica Martinez said,** “New York State has always been a champion of equitable treatment for its residents. However, the existing tax exemption law treated some individuals with disabilities differently than others. This amendment brings much-needed equity and fairness to the property tax code that will help more disabled New Yorkers afford to remain in their homes and communities. I thank the Governor for recognizing the seriousness of this issue and for signing this change into law.”

**Assemblymember Chris Eachus said,** “The rights and well-being of those with disabilities has always been a major focus of mine. That’s why I’m excited to hear the Governor has signed my bill to extend a housing tax exemption for disabled individuals - a population who face unique difficulties and limited options in an already-difficult housing market. This bill will improve access, enhance parity, and raise the standard of living for those in great need.”

Legislation S.1900A/A.2487A allows disabled individuals to renew parking permits without providing updated certifications or additional medical documents.

**State Senator Toby Ann Stavisky said,** “The definition of ‘permanently disabled’ does not leave any gray area that must be proven each time a parking permit expires. Obtaining this medical information can be costly and time consuming, as well as dehumanizing for many with severe disabilities. This legislation eliminates obstacles and allows New Yorkers access to services they deserve. On this 34th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, I’m proud to continue to work for a society that is inclusive of all. I thank the Governor for signing this bill into law.”

**Assemblymember Andrew Hevesi said,** “After hearing from numerous constituents facing undue burdens when submitting disability parking permit renewals, including often being required to provide recent medical exams not covered by insurance, my office wrote A.2487. That bill, which passed unanimously in both the Assembly and Senate, is being signed into law by the Governor today. I couldn't be more grateful and proud of my staff for their work, start to finish, on creating this law. Thank you to Senator Stavisky for her partnership and I am grateful to Governor Hochul for quickly signing each of these bills into law, as well as for her administration's ongoing support of the disability community.”

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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## 2023-S9699A

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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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Permits certain home repairs to be financed in conjunction with accessibility improvements through the access to home program

May 22, 2024

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Brian Kavanagh**

Do you support this bill?