



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose Peralta

Peralta Passes Bill - Requires Landlords to Disclose Bed Bug History To Potential Tenants

JOSE PERALTA June 24, 2010

| ISSUE: **CONSUMER PROTECTION**

(Albany, NY) The Senate Democratic Majority has passed legislation (S8130), sponsored by Senator José Peralta (D-Queens), to protect tenants from unknowingly moving into a property with a history of bed bug infestations. This legislation requires property owners or landlords within New York City to disclose infestation history to potential tenants prior to leasing.

According to the National Pest Management Association, bedbug complaints have increased 50 fold over the last five years, appearing in apartments, mansions and dormitories in nearly every corner of the nation

Ridding an infested apartment of bed bugs is a daunting and very expensive task; because bed bugs can live up to one year without feeding, an apartment seemingly clear could actually remain infested with tenants unaware until long after they move in.

This information will help tenants make an informed decision about renting, and are compelled by the State Division of Housing and Community Renewal to provide it, should they resist upon request.

Senator Peralta, Chair of the Consumer Protection Committee said, "Bedbugs have become an insidious nuisance for renters throughout the state because landlords often times do not disclose infestations. Tenants have the right to know if the apartment or house they are renting was previously occupied by bedbugs."

Majority Conference Leader John L. Sampson said, "Bedbugs have been an increasing problem for nearly two decades after all but eradicating them in previous years. The resurgence of these pests warrants us to take action to provide New Yorkers with the option of choosing a clean environment in which to live in. No longer do families have to co-exist with these blood-suckers, and our legislation puts the necessary historical information in the hands of consumers."

Senate Democrats also passed legislation (S7316B/Peralta) to prevent bedbug cross-contamination. Because cross-contamination between contaminated used – as well as new – furniture has contributed to the recent rise in bedbug infestation, no used bedding is allowed to be transported, stored or sold with new bedding unless the used bedding has been sanitized by an approved department of health method. The law further clarifies that "new" bedding is bedding that has never been used or returned after purchase.

Senator Liz Krueger (D-Manhattan) said, "This is a very basic protection for tenants from the physical, emotional and financial havoc bed bugs put upon renters. Often, infestations require several visits from an exterminator because bed bugs are hearty fellows. And even when people think they are in the clear, bed bugs will rear their ugly little heads after a few months – sometimes when a new tenant has moved in. One cannot underestimate the impact bed bugs have, and I applaud Senator Peralta for protecting tenants from their damage."