



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Senator Squadron, Assemblyman Bing, Housing and Disability Advocates Urge Governor to Sign Bill Prohibiting Housing Discrimination Based on Tenant's Source of Income

DANIEL L. SQUADRON August 13, 2010



New Law Would Make it Easier for New Yorkers with Disabilities to Find Housing

New York, NY—State Senator Daniel Squadron, Assemblyman Jonathan Bing and advocates for affordable housing and New Yorkers with disabilities called on Governor Paterson today to sign their bill S7613/A10689 that would prohibit landlords from discriminating against people who rely on public rental subsidies. The bill would help disabled New Yorkers and

people who use Section 8 and Advantage housing vouchers find homes.

Many landlords and realtors reject tenants solely because they rely on public assistance programs, such as Social Services Disability Insurance, Supplemental Security Income, and Section 8 and Advantage housing vouchers. The bill, which has passed both the Senate and Assembly and is similar to a local law in New York City, makes such discriminatory practices illegal under New York State Human Rights Law.

Senator Squadron said, “Under the best of circumstances, it’s difficult for people with disabilities to find decent and accessible housing. By preventing landlords from rejecting rental applications based on source of income, this bill protects vulnerable New Yorkers from unfair discrimination and ensures that they have more and better housing options. I thank my colleagues in the Senate and Assembly, particularly Assembly Member Bing, for passing this bill, and I urge Governor Paterson to sign this important legislation into law.”

Assembly Member Bing said, “I am proud to have authored this important legislation that protects disabled individuals from discrimination based on their source of income. This bill will help alleviate one of the obstacles that people with disabilities face when looking for housing, and maintain New York State’s reputation for being a leader on disability issues. I urge Governor Paterson to sign this bill into law.” In 2008, The New York City Council enacted a similar City law, Local Law 10, to protect New York City residents from housing discrimination on the basis of lawful source of income. Local Law 10 was intended to assist those with limited incomes to find and maintain affordable housing by maximizing the use of Section 8 vouchers and other forms of governmental rent payment in the City.

“Families across our city are stretching every dollar. Many have gone through the difficult process of receiving Section 8 vouchers or other government housing subsidies, only to find that the doors to a new home remain locked to them – because of blatant discrimination,”

said City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn. “We need to do more to combat this discrimination, especially against those landlords who have flagrantly ignored this source of income anti-discrimination law since its passage. Income discrimination when renting an apartment is unlawful and will not be allowed to continue. I thank State Sen. Daniel Squadron and Assemblyman Jonathan Bing for their continued efforts to ensure that all New York families will get a fair and equal chance at finding a home.”

Judith Goldiner, Supervising Attorney at the Legal Aid Society, said “We call on the governor to sign this important discrimination law, which will help poor people around the state make sure they are able to use and retain housing.”

Michael McKee of Tenants Political Action Committee said, “Anti-discrimination laws in the past have taken time to have an impact, and there is always a problem of enforcement, but over time, barring discrimination in renting on the basis of race, for example, has had a huge impact in improving the rental market practices. The same thing will be true over time in barring discrimination based on source of income. We urge Governor Paterson to sign this very important bill.”

Susan Kurien, Executive Director of the Fair Housing Justice Center, said, "This law is an important and necessary addition to New York State's human rights protections because it prohibits housing providers from discriminating against current and prospective renters or buyers based on their lawful sources of income. In these hard economic times, the legislation is especially important because many individuals are unemployed and rely on other lawful sources of income to pay for their housing. I urge Governor Paterson to sign the bill into law and help protect thousands of vulnerable New Yorkers from housing discrimination."

Mario Mazzone, Lead Organizer at Metropolitan Council on Housing, said, "This bill would help end discrimination in housing and give more New Yorkers access to affordable housing.

I urge Governor Paterson to sign the bill into law.” Marvin Wasserman, Executive Director of the Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled, said, “Finding affordable, accessible housing is probably the most critical issue for persons with disabilities. Including sources of income such as Section 8 vouchers is critical to obtaining such housing. This bill will give folks in New York City a new option to combat discrimination and it would give persons with disabilities and others around New York State new protections.”

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