



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

Senator Bonacic Warns New Yorkers About Deceptive Star Program Solicitations

JOHN J. BONACIC November 12, 2013

Letters Offer to Complete Free STAR Application at a Cost

Senator John J. Bonacic (R/C/I- Mt. Hope) today advised taxpayers to beware of solicitations offering a fee-based service to apply for the School Tax Relief (STAR) property tax exemption – when homeowners can apply for free.

New homeowners have received letters offering to enroll them in the STAR Program for a substantial fee equivalent to the full amount of the taxpayers' first year savings – which averages \$700 statewide and can be as high as \$3,000 for senior citizens in the Lower Hudson Valley and on Long Island. An example of these letters can be viewed [here](#).

“New Yorkers should not be fooled: registration to the STAR Program is free, convenient, and provides millions of taxpayers with property tax relief each year,” said Senator Bonacic. “Many consumers have been taken for a ride by companies offering fee-based services and we must remain vigilant. I encourage any homeowner not receiving a STAR exemption to apply on their own and avoid deceitful schemes that seek to charge you for the tax relief that is rightfully yours.”

STAR exemptions are the only New York State-funded property tax exemptions. There are two STAR exemptions: Basic STAR for homeowners with incomes under \$500,000, and Enhanced STAR for senior citizens with incomes under \$81,900.

More than 60% of the 2.6 million Basic STAR recipients have already registered for their exemptions. Online registration takes less than four minutes and can be done from the Tax Department's website www.tax.ny.gov. Homeowners without Internet access should call 518-457-2036 to register.