



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## Governor Cuomo and Senator Lanza Announce State Buyout Program Extension for Staten Island Homeowners Affected by Superstorm Sandy

ANDREW J LANZA November 18, 2013

### *Homeowners in Ocean Breeze Now Eligible for Buyouts under the NY Rising Housing Recovery Programs*

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and Senator Andrew J. Lanza today announced that homeowners in the Ocean Breeze neighborhood on Staten Island will now be eligible for buyout assistance under the NY Rising Housing Recovery Programs. Under the buyout program, properties purchased will be maintained as open space or transformed into coastal buffer zones, parks or other non-residential uses that will help protect nearby communities from the impact of extreme weather. With today's announcement, up to 129 properties in Ocean Breeze will now be eligible for buyouts (map of neighborhood with eligible properties available [here](#)). Participation in the program is completely voluntary and state officials were on hand at today's event to assist interested homeowners apply for the program.

"Homeowners and businesses on Staten Island endured among the worst destruction and devastation in New York State as a result of Superstorm Sandy," Governor Cuomo said. "The reality is that extreme weather is happening more frequently and we must take a new,

smarter approach to rebuilding our communities in areas prone to storm damage. By extending the state's buyout program to homeowners in Ocean Breeze, we are giving residents an opportunity to move out of an area that could get hit hard again by a future storm and start over without the fear of future devastation as a result of extreme weather."

Seth Diamond, Director of the Office of Storm Recovery, said: "The enhanced buyout area gives homeowners an opportunity for a fresh start after repeated flooding and allows the State to better protect nearby communities."

The enhanced buyout area was determined based on the history of damage caused by extreme weather events, collective interest by homeowners of contiguous properties in the floodplain, and agreement among municipal officials. Property is purchased at pre-storm Fair Market Value and homeowners are offered incentive payments to relocate within the five boroughs. The funds were made available through State's Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program, funded by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.

The NY Rising Home Buyout program was launched in April 2013 and currently includes 613 properties in Suffolk County, Long Island as well as 420 properties in Oakwood Beach, Staten Island. The Oakwood Beach buyout program currently includes 312 homeowners.

Senator Andrew Lanza said, "The state's buyout program is an important opportunity for impacted Ocean Breeze residents to truly have a fresh start. Expanding the coverage zone to include these additional residents whose lives were turned upside-down was a logical step as we continue to build back smarter, stronger and safer than before. I thank Governor Cuomo for his leadership and for once again standing up for the people of Staten Island and

ensuring that Sandy relief dollars go directly to victims of the storm as well as helping Staten Island put the pieces back together."

Assembly Member Michael Cusick said, "The home buyout program is representative of Governor Cuomo's approach to a smarter, long-term focused storm recovery strategy. While we could rebuild these homes here in Ocean Breeze, the reality is that we are experiencing more and more extreme weather and this neighborhood is at risk of getting hit hard again by another storm. Leaving one's home neighborhood is difficult, but by offering to cover the full value of these homes, the state is giving homeowners a real opportunity to rebuild their lives without fear of the next Sandy. I thank the Governor for being here today to continue his work to support the recovery here on Staten Island."

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