



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## State Senator Jeff Klein turns up the heat on coldest Bronx buildings

JEFFREY D. KLEIN November 29, 2014

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*Investigation finds 15 most egregious heat code offenders in borough; recommends remedies to HPD to keep buildings in compliance*

**BRONX, NY** – State Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) today released a report, “Turning Up the Heat: An Investigative Report into The Bronx’s Coldest Buildings,” which includes a list of the top 15 heat code offenders in the borough.

As chilly temperatures set in, tenants, who reside in buildings on the list, have already called in complaints of “no heat” or “no heat/hot water” to the city’s Housing and Preservation Department.

The top offender, University Avenue L.P.’s 30 Buchanan Place, racked up 96 complaints from tenants as of October 1 and accumulated over 320 complaints since October 2013, according to HPD records.

“It’s deplorable that some residents are being left in the cold. My investigation reveals that landlords who landed on my office’s worst heat code offender list persistently left tenants without heat and this could lead to something chilling: death,” **said Senator Klein.**

“Buildings must remain in compliance with wintry temperatures upon us. HPD should create a task force to keep an eye on buildings in each borough with a high number of complaints, should help tenants understand their rights and require top offenders to post performance bonds to ensure that repairs are made on the landlords dime instead of the taxpayers,” **Klein continued.**

In The Bronx, a correlation existed between heat violations and the percentage of residents living below the poverty level. Over half of the buildings that made the top 15 list were in zip codes 10453, 10456 and 10458, where approximately 40 % of residents live below the poverty line.

To combat persistent offenders, Senator Klein recommended that HPD monitor each buildings by borough by and create similar watch lists containing buildings with 20 or more complaints. He recommended that a HPD create a Heat Violator Task Force to conduct surprise compliance inspections of buildings on those lists.

Buildings owners are required to provide heat between October 1 and May 31.

Senator Klein also suggested that HPD require repeat violators to post a performance bond, which could be used if the city is forced to make heating repairs. Currently the city pays for repairs with non-compliant landlords and bills the owner, leaving no recourse for the taxpayer.