



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John A. DeFrancisco

## Senator DeFrancisco Holds Press Conference to Announce the Passage of His Universal Visitability Tax Credit Bill

JOHN A. DEFRANCISCO July 6, 2015

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On July 6, 2015, Senator John A. DeFrancisco joined disability rights advocates at ARISE Syracuse to urge Governor Cuomo to sign his bill (S2967-A) into law. The bill, which passed both the Senate and Assembly, would help to increase accessible and adaptable housing for people with disabilities in the State of New York.

If signed into law, the bill would provide a tax credit of up to \$2,750 for a newly constructed or retrofitted principal residence that achieves universal visitability. The term visitability often refers to a single-family home that is designed so that it can be lived in or visited by people with limited mobility, featuring such elements as step-free entrances and wide doorways.

Eligibility requirements for the tax credit would be established through guidelines by the Department of State Division of Code Enforcement and Administration, and the credit would be effective beginning April 1, 2017.

“A visitability tax credit would serve as a positive incentive to increase accessible and adaptable housing in the State of New York. More people with physical disabilities would be able to live in their own homes or visit the homes of their family and friends. It would also allow more seniors to age in place, improving their quality of life and saving some costs that are often associated with assisted living centers and nursing homes,” said Senator DeFrancisco.

“The passage of legislation creating a visitability tax credit is emblematic of the concern for the disability community that Senator DeFrancisco has shown throughout his career. This important piece of legislation will help to ensure that people with disabilities and others in need of accessibility repairs to their homes will remain vital members of our communities,” concluded ARISE Executive Director Tom McKeown.

ARISE is a non-profit Independent Living Center organized and directed by people with disabilities. The organization has been providing advocacy and services since 1979, and each year ARISE works with approximately 4,000 people of all ages who have all types of disabilities. ARISE has offices in Onondaga, Oswego, Madison, Cayuga, and Seneca counties.

Speakers at the press conference included: Tom McKeown, ARISE Executive Director; Senator John A. DeFrancisco; Agnes McCray, President of ARISE Consumer Council; Beata Karpinski-Prehn, ARISE Advocacy Manager; and Kara Van De Veer, ARISE Health Care Advocate. Several members of ARISE first approached Senator DeFrancisco about the legislation and remained strong advocates along the way.