



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Sen Squadron, AM Wright, Local #1 IUEC, Electeds, Labor Leaders, Tenants Call For Passage Of Elevator Safety Bill

DANIEL L. SQUADRON January 8, 2016

| ISSUE: **ELEVATOR SAFETY, CONSTITUENT CORNER, LOWER EAST SIDE, INFRASTRUCTURE**



Squadron: “Elevator Incident on Lower East Side a Stark Reminder of Need for Better Safety Regulations”

Legislation Would Improve Elevator Worker Regulation and Licensure Statewide

NEW YORK – Today, State Senator Daniel Squadron, Assemblymember Keith L.T. Wright, Elevator Constructors Union Local #1, I.U.E.C., electeds, and the Grand Street Guild Tenant Association, called for passage of the Elevator Safety Act (S.1945/A.1787), which would

improve regulation and licensure for elevator workers. Squadron co-sponsors the bill, sponsored by Senator Bonacic who has secured over 40 co-sponsors. Assemblymember Wright sponsors the bill in the Assembly, where it has passed 4 times.

The call comes in response to the death of Stephen Hewett-Brown in an elevator accident on New Year's Eve at the Grand Street Guild Complex, located on the Lower East Side in Squadron's district. Though the bill has passed the Assembly four times, it has been repeatedly blocked by the Senate Majority.

The State Elevator Safety Act increases and formalizes licensure and regulation for elevator workers statewide. The bill would provide baseline worker credentials, as exist for many trades, to ensure better training and help provide safety assurances in the wake of incidents like the one on the Lower East Side.

"In NY, elevators are part of our daily lives -- we need to ensure they are up to the safety standards on which lives depend," said **State Senator Daniel Squadron**. "The death of Stephen Hewett-Brown is a reminder of the need for common-sense standards for elevator work. I thank Senator Bonacic, Assemblymember Wright, Local 1, labor leaders, and my colleagues for their continued push on this issue, and will continue to work for this bill's passage."

"It is shocking and unthinkable that New York State doesn't do everything possible to protect the safety of its residents. Millions of people utilize the city's elevators each and every day. Tenants, employees and visitors deserve to know that the maintenance and engineering of such essential infrastructure is completed by qualified, licensed mechanics. To think that the tragic death of Mr. Hewitt-Brown could have been avoided with proper elevator upkeep by licensed professionals is more than enough reason to take action today and pass the Elevator Safety Act in the New York State Senate. We cannot endure another tragedy. It's time to do better for all New Yorkers" said **Assemblyman Keith L.T. Wright, the**

bill's sponsor.

“The heartbreaking loss of Stephen Hewitt-Brown underscores an alarming trend of dangerous and often fatal elevator breakdowns. This lethal threat to public safety is preventable. Far too many elevator technicians are untrained and unlicensed – because they are not required to be. The New York State legislature must pass the Elevator Safety Act and ensure our state’s elevators are kept in safe condition by trained professionals,” said **I.U.E.C. Michael Halpin, Organizer, Local 1.**

“New Yorkers use elevators every single day. We don’t even think about it,” said **Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney (NY-12).** “But clearly we need to do more to ensure that the basic mechanical equipment that brings us to our homes and work is safe. The death of Stephen Hewitt-Brown on New Year’s Eve was an avoidable tragedy, one that I hope we can prevent from recurring. I want to thank Senator Squadron for his leadership on this issue, and I am proud to stand with him, Local #1 IUEC, labor leaders, and tenants in calling for the passage of this elevator safety bill.”

“The Elevator Safety Bill is a common sense measure that will help save lives and prevent needless tragedy. The recent death of Stephen Hewitt-Brown demonstrates how desperately this reform is needed, and it's time for the Republican controlled Senate to end their obstruction. I will continue to work with all my colleagues in Albany to make sure this bill is a priority during this year's legislative session,” said **NYC Public Advocate Letitia James.**

“Manhattan is the ultimate built environment, and more residents, workers, and visitors rely on elevators here than perhaps anywhere else in the country,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer.** “We must have a strong system to license and regulate elevator construction, maintenance, and safety. The death of Stephen Hewitt-Brown, who selflessly helped a building resident escape the elevator seconds before it killed him, is only the latest

in a series of tragedies that simply did not need to happen. The State Senate must act on this legislation, and our city agencies should review any additional actions they can take to strengthen elevator safety.”

“The death of Stephen Hewett-Brown was the all the more tragic because it could have been prevented. For years, residents of Grand Street Guild have experienced numerous close calls while using elevators they thought had been upgraded, but had been left in such a state of disrepair to make using them a very dangerous proposition,” said **Council Member Margaret Chin**. “I urge the state Senate to pass this important piece of legislation that will give government regulators important new tools to provide the necessary training for elevator workers and ensure the safety of all New Yorkers.”

“We the Grand Street Guild Tenant Association support the Senator's passage of the bill that will improve the maintenance and safety of all elevator services and training for elevator workers,” said **Daisy Paez, Grand Street Guild Tenant Association President**.

###

RELATED LEGISLATION

2015-S1945

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

-

Requires the licensing of persons engaged in the design, construction, operation, inspection, maintenance, alteration and repair of elevators

January 15, 2015

In Senate Committee **Finance**

Sponsored by **John J. Bonacic**

Do you support this bill?