



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

## Senator Avella & Assemblyman Braunstein Announce Passage of J-51 Tax Abatement Expansion for Middle Class Coop and Condo Owners

ANDREI VASILESCU June 27, 2016



Queens, NY - Today, State Senator Tony Avella and Assemblymember Edward Braunstein held a press conference to announce the passage of their bill expanding access to the J-51 Tax Abatement for middle class coop and condo owners.

The J-51 tax abatement is a property tax exemption for buildings renovating residential apartments. Since 1992, coops and condos with an assessed value of less than \$40,000 were

eligible to receive the J-51 tax abatement, but saw that limit reduced to \$30,000 in 2013. This disqualified many middle-income families living in coops units and condos from qualifying for the tax abatement.

As a result of Avella and Braunstein's legislation that passed at the end of the 2016 legislative session, that qualification threshold will be raised to \$32,000 and will rise with cost-of-living increases each year. The bills in the Senate and Assembly (S8095 and 10651A respectively) passed both chambers with unanimous support.

"The cost of living in New York is always on the rise, making it difficult for middle class families to afford living in the state. Cutting the qualification threshold for the J-51 tax abatement from \$40,000 to \$30,000 in 2013 was a step in the complete opposite direction. Rather than increasing the cap to account for those cost increases, access to the tax abatement put it out of reach for even more families. As a result of our legislation, the cut-off for becoming eligible for the J-51 will increase to \$32,000 and become indexed to cost-of-living increases. This increase will allow more middle class coop and condo owners to qualify for the J-51 abatement and will ensure that threshold stays relevant in the years to come. I'm proud to have passed this legislation with Assemblymember Edward Braunstein," **said State Senator Tony Avella.**

"Over time, as assessments continue to rise, more and more co-op units have fallen out of the J-51 program. This legislation increases the assessment value from \$30,000 to \$32,000 and ties it to the cost-of-living adjustment percentage so the cap can keep increasing over the years, helping middle-class families afford the cost of capital improvements. I look forward to working with Senator Avella and our colleagues in government to further reduce the tax burden on co-op and condo owners," **said Assemblyman Edward Braunstein.**

"Condos and coops are some of the last bastions of affordable housing for our middle class, and it is important that we keep these properties affordable. While previous changes in the tax cap disqualified many from the J-51 abatement, this legislation will allow for more families to qualify, as well as keep the future threshold indexed to the cost-of-living. I thank Senator Avella for his work on this issue, and I am committed to continuing to help our condo and coop homeowners," **said State Senator Jeffrey Klein.**

"This legislation is an important step toward easing the financial burden on seniors and middle-class New Yorkers and helping co-op and condo owners keep up with the essential maintenance of their homes," **said Mayor Bill de Blasio.**

"Expanding eligibility for the J-51 real property tax abatement would be quite helpful to middle class co-op and condo owners. These homeowners have been squeezed by sharply increasing real property taxes for several years, and it is definitely time for them to see some relief. I thank Assemblyman Edward C. Braunstein and Senator Tony Avella for their outstanding leadership on this issue," **said Council Member Barry S. Grodenchik.**

"As President of the largest garden apartment co-op in New York I cannot understate the importance of the J51 Tax Exemption program. We just completed installing over 18,000 new energy efficient windows in Glen Oaks Village. We could not have done this without the benefit of the J51 Abatements that provided nearly 38% of the cost of this massive program in dollar for dollar tax reductions. Without the J51 program, monthly maintenance would have had to increase 16% to fully pay for these new windows which would have been devastating to many of our seniors and working class families. This issue is not sexy and does not garner much conversation around the dinner table, but is truly one of the most important programs that help keep our affordable co-ops, Affordable!" **said Bob Friedrich, President of Glen Oaks Village Co-op.**

“The J-51 Tax Abatement makes it possible for housing cooperatives and condominiums to undertake major capital improvements without imposing a financial hardship upon shareholders or owners. Without the J-51 Abatement, many properties would fall into disrepair or become unaffordable to middle class families,” **said Warren Schreiber, President of Bay Terrace Cooperative Section I.**

“This legislation is a step in the right direction for Coop owners throughout New York City. The Coop leaders and community are grateful to Senator Avella for keeping the issues on the front burner in the Legislature and getting results,” **said Coop Attorney Geoffrey Mazel, Esq.**