



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David Carlucci

## Senate Passes Legislation to Continue Fighting Illegal Housing in Ramapo

DAVID CARLUCCI April 26, 2017

| ISSUE: **CODES, HOUSING**

ALBANY, NY– Yesterday the New York State Senate passed S1773 sponsored by Senator David Carlucci (D-Rockland/Westchester) that would let municipalities roll unpaid fines into an offender's annual taxes. This bill would allow unpaid housing code violation penalties that have remained unpaid for one year to be added to the annual tax levy. Illegal housing has increasingly become a safety concern for Rockland County.

To maximize their profits, landlords subdivide homes and allow families to reside at the property that are well above the legal capacity. Due to the lack of real penalties, code enforcement has proved difficult for many towns and villages in Rockland County, and citations have proved to be ineffective.

Late in 2016, State monitors were installed to oversee housing code administration and recently both the Senate and Assembly passed legislation to create a process for the Department of State to revoke code enforcement licenses based on misconduct.

This bill would allow unpaid housing code violation penalties that have remained unpaid for one year to be added to a municipality's annual tax levy. Under this legislation, the fines for housing violations would be included in a homeowner's property taxes, giving the taxing authority the ability to sell the home to satisfy an outstanding tax lien. This bill will also allow housing code violation fines to be collected at the same proceedings as the delinquent property taxes, saving municipalities time and money through the collection process.

More importantly, landlords who illegally modify apartments put the lives of firefighters and first responders in jeopardy. Attempting to rescue a person from a smoke filled building with minimal visibility is difficult enough without firefighters having to worry if the door they open will lead them to safety or to a room not previously known to exist. We can, and must, do more to protect the safety of firefighters and this commonsense bill is the first step to do so.

"Landlords that do not follow proper housing, zoning and fire codes create unsafe living conditions for our community, and endanger the lives of first responders. The conduct demonstrated by these landlords is unacceptable, completely preventable, and must change immediately," said Senator David Carlucci. "Adding these fines to an individual's tax levy gives our municipalities real teeth when it comes to fighting off code violators. I'm proud that the Senate has passed this bill and I will continue to work vigorously to deter illegal housing in Rockland County."

The bill is sponsored in the Assembly by Ken Zebrowski (D-New City) who added, "Individuals who knowingly skirt the law must be held accountable for their actions and this measure will help to prevent that behavior. This is just one effort in a packet of legislation that we've worked on aimed at fire safety and restoring code enforcement throughout the county. This will go a long way in deterring landlords from allowing these code violations, as well as protect residents and first responders. This bill is a priority of mine and I will

continue to push for its passage in the Assembly.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### 2017-S1773

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- 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
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Authorizes municipalities in the county of Rockland to add unpaid housing code violation penalties, costs and fines to such municipalities' annual tax levy

January 10, 2017

In Senate Committee [Rules](#)

Sponsored by [David Carlucci](#)

Do you support this bill?