



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## In wake of NYCHA lead scandal, Senate passes IDC sponsored bills to create state Independent Monitor of NYCHA & to empower New York City Council with oversight power

JEFFREY D. KLEIN February 28, 2018

| ISSUE: **NYCHA, PUBLIC HOUSING, TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY, PUBLIC HEALTH**

*Legislation is part of a comprehensive package announced by the Independent Democratic Conference to protect tenants*

**Albany, NY** — The New York State Senate on Wednesday passed legislation sponsored by **Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester)** that would give the New York City Council oversight of NYCHA and create an Office of the Independent Monitor to oversee operations at NYCHA.

Despite the overwhelming outcry for a state appointed monitor from advocates and NYCHA tenants, some members of the New York State Senate took a sharp stance against the measure opposed by Mayor Bill de Blasio.

“NYCHA residents demand immediate action and state oversight to ensure NYCHA is held accountable for its actions. It’s clear that NYCHA, where every board member is appointed by the Mayor, is not capable of managing itself. The alternative to installing a state monitor, appointed by Governor Cuomo, is to appoint a federal monitor — putting this dire situation in the hands of Donald Trump, whose real estate mismanagement has led him to bankruptcy

and whose HUD director spent \$31,000 on a new dining room set for his office. It's shameful that anyone would vote against a state Independent Monitor to step in. The IDC is ready to stand up for tenants and will fight to make sure they are protected," **said Senator Klein.**

The Independent Democratic Conference released a bombshell report, "The New Flint," on Monday, comparing the lead paint crisis facing 400,000 tenants who call NYCHA home to the lead water crisis that possibly impacted 100,000 residents of Flint, Michigan.

The conference also rolled out a comprehensive legislative package to address NYCHA's mismanagement and fix deplorable conditions in the city's largest affordable housing stock, including a state Independent Monitor and City Council oversight to increase transparency.

While legislation passed 47-12 to create the Office of the Independent Monitor within the Department of Homes and Community Renewal, Senators Brian Benjamin (D-Manhattan), Leroy Comrie (D-Queens), Marty Dilan (D-Brooklyn), Michael Gianaris (D-Queens), Brian Kavanagh (D-Manhattan/Brooklyn), Liz Krueger (D-Manhattan), Velmanette Montgomery (D-Brooklyn), Kevin Parker (D-Brooklyn), Roxanne Persaud (D-Brooklyn), Gustavo Rivera (D-Bronx), Sanders (D-Queens) and Toby Ann Stavisky (D-Queens) voted against it.

In June 2017, this measure passed unanimously.

The state-appointed Independent Monitor would have the ability to review and have oversight of any NYCHA project and require corrective actions to remedy issues. The monitor would also be required to issue an annual report on actions that were taken and on the status of capital projects undertaken by the agency.

The Senate passed another piece of legislation, which was part of the IDC's package, to give the New York City Council the power to review NYCHA operations in the same way that it currently is able to do with other city agencies. The City Council would also have the ability

to pass their own legislation requiring NYCHA to produce reports on its operations. The Senate passed the bill 59-0.

The State Senate passed additional “The Senate passing two of the bills which we called for just mere days ago as measures to improve the lives of 400,000 NYCHA tenants is a testament of the dedication to our constituents. Most importantly, an independent monitor of NYCHA will ensure our residents suffering from mold and lead have another advocate on their side,” **said Senator Diane Savino (D-Staten Island/Brooklyn).**

“Considering the more than 400,000 people who live in NYCHA apartments and the falsification of lead inspection reports by NYCHA officials, it is entirely justified to compare the situation to that of Flint, Michigan. The inhabitants of NYCHA have a right to know when lead is found in their homes and the administration of NYCHA has a responsibility to comprehensively track and quickly deal with any lead problems. Lead poisoning is irreversible and lifelong, and we owe it to New York’s families to empower them to protect their children from the scourge of lead paint. I am proud that legislation to create real oversight at NYCHA has passed the State Senate and am committed to working with my colleagues in the Assembly to get these two important bills to the Governor's desk,” **said Senator Marisol Alcantara (D-Manhattan).**

“NYCHA’s serious failings demanded these steps towards increased transparency and increased accountability. As our ‘New Flint’ report explains, lead poisoning has lifelong consequences for children and families. In addition to solidarity with NYCHA residents, passage of these bills today demonstrates that we will take action to keep all our children safe,” **said Senator Jesse Hamilton (D-Brooklyn).**

“Our City cannot continue to put over 170,000 New York families living in NYCHA buildings in hazardous conditions and not answer to anybody. That is why I am proud to vote in favor

of these pieces of legislation that will provide real solutions that will protect vulnerable New Yorkers,” **said Senator Tony Avella (D-Queens)**.

“We need to work together to ensure NYCHA residents live in safe, decent conditions. The news about the lead paint exposure was terrifying. It is critical that we put all the necessary mechanisms in place to prevent this from ever happening again. I applaud my colleagues for their efforts, and it is my hope that the bills passing today, especially the one calling for an independent monitor at NYCHA buildings, become a reality soon,” **said Senator Jose Peralta (D-Queens)**.

You can read The New Flint here:

[https://www.nysenate.gov/sites/default/files/press-release/attachment/the\\_new\\_flint\\_-\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://www.nysenate.gov/sites/default/files/press-release/attachment/the_new_flint_-_full_report.pdf)

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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## 2017-S5788

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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
- 

Establishes an office of independent monitor for the New York city housing authority, within the division of housing and community renewal, to oversee such authority

April 28, 2017

In Assembly Committee

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Do you support this bill?

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## 2017-S1989

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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
- 

Authorizes the New York city council to oversee the activities of the New York city housing authority

January 11, 2017

In Assembly Committee

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Do you support this bill?