



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

## Senate Passes Strongest Tenant Protections In State History

BRIAN KAVANAGH June 14, 2019

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After 13 years advocating in the Assembly and the Senate for housing justice, Senator Kavanagh is proud to have led the Senate's efforts to pass the Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act. Along with Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, he was the Co-Prime Sponsor of the bill, which was drafted following multiple legislative hearings throughout the state that he chaired. It represents enormous progress toward fundamental fairness for every New Yorker who rents their home. The Senate's announcement of the bill's passage is below.

**Senate Passes Strongest Tenant Protections In State History**

June 14, 2019

**(Albany, NY)** The Senate today passed the Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act of 2019, the strongest affordable housing and tenant protections legislation in state history. This legislation, a 2-way agreement with the State Assembly Majority, was drafted following multiple legislative hearings throughout the state and discussions with advocates, tenants, and stakeholders. This legislation will make these new pro-tenant regulations permanent, repeal vacancy deregulation, reform rent increases for major capital improvements, create transformational protections for all tenants throughout the state, and empower qualified communities outside of New York City to opt into rent stabilization.

“We made a commitment that the new Senate Democratic Majority would help pass the strongest tenant protections in history,” **Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins** said. “The legislation we passed today achieves that commitment and will help millions of New Yorkers throughout our state. I thank my partner in legislative leadership, Speaker Carl Heastie and the Chair of the Senate’s Housing, Construction and Community Development Committee, Senator Brian Kavanagh for their leadership on this issue. I also want to recognize and thank Senator Zellnor Myrie and the members of the Senate Democratic working group which helped draft and advance this historic affordable housing legislation.”

**Senator Brian Kavanagh, Chair of the Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development and co-prime sponsor of the bill**, said, “Throughout this session — and indeed for many years now — New Yorkers have made one thing clear: our state needs stronger laws to empower and protect tenants and halt the displacement that has ravaged many of our communities. The Housing Committee held five hearings where we heard testimony from dozens of people all around the state, many of whom gave compelling and emotional testimony about the ways our current laws are failing them. After 13 years advocating in the Assembly and the Senate for housing justice, I’m proud to say that the Housing Stability and

Tenant Protection Act represents enormous progress toward fundamental fairness for every New Yorker who rents their home. I would like to thank our legislative leaders Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Carl Heastie, my colleagues in the Senate and the Assembly, especially Senator Zellnor Myrie, whose work was an essential part of this effort, and the many tenants who courageously told their stories on behalf of millions of fellow tenants.”

The Senate Majority held a series of hearings across New York State, led by Kavanagh as Chair of the Housing Committee, on rent regulation and tenant protections so that the final legislation would reflect the perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders. Hearings were held in Syracuse, New York City, Albany, Newburgh, and Greenburgh. The hearings provided an opportunity for tenants, property owners, stakeholders, and New Yorkers from around the state the opportunity to provide testimony and discuss affordable housing concerns directly with their State Senators.

The Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act of 2019, Senate bill [S.6458](#), will make the rent regulation system and tenant protection initiatives permanent, rather than having them sunset as was the policy in the past. This legislation also repeals high-rent vacancy deregulation as well as “vacancy bonus” and “longevity bonus” provisions. This omnibus bill also reforms potential rent increases for major capital improvements and for individual apartment improvements to better protect tenants. Additionally, this historic affordable housing legislation extends certain tenant protections statewide, implements protections for mobile and manufactured home tenants, and empowers qualified localities throughout the state to implement the rent stabilization system.

For additional information on the historic tenant protections and affordable housing legislation, please visit:

<https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/andrea-stewart-cousins/joint-statement-senate-majority-leader-andrea-o>

**Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris** said, “After years of displacement caused by rent laws that worked against them, New York’s tenants finally have a seat at the table thanks to a new Senate that is working with our Assembly partners to eagerly champion housing affordability. This sweeping legislation provides the strongest tenant protections since the rent laws were enacted decades ago and I am proud to have worked with incredible grassroots organizers to deliver this historic progress”

**Senator Zellnor Myrie** said, “This bill is the strongest package of tenant protections New York has seen in almost a century. For decades, our communities have lost hundreds of thousands of rent regulated units, but with this legislation, we are putting power back in the hands of tenants. We are taking a historic step forward in the fight for housing as a human right, and I am proud to have stood with colleagues, advocates, and, most importantly, tenants, to lead this fight.”