



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

## Statement by State Senate Housing, Investigations & Consumer Protection Chairs on Attorney General James's Announcement of \$4.5 Million in Fair Housing Grants

BRIAN KAVANAGH May 11, 2020

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New York State Senator Brian Kavanagh, Chair of the Senate Housing Committee, Senator James Skoufis, Chair of the Investigations Committee, and Senator Kevin Thomas, Chair of the Consumer Protection Committee, released the following joint statement:

“In what was a very busy news cycle this week, many media outlets may have overlooked an important announcement by New York Attorney General Letitia James of a \$4.5 million grant to the Eliminating Barriers to Housing in New York (EBHNY) program. The initiative aims to eliminate discriminatory housing practices and improve housing quality in the state.

“In December 2019, our committees held a joint hearing, following an expose by Newsday that uncovered widespread, deeply troubling discriminatory behavior among real estate brokers on Long Island. During the hearings, we listened to witness after witness testify about the discriminatory practices and roadblocks that Newsday’s testers had identified among brokers, who apparently failed in their duty to help New Yorkers secure housing without bias.

“We have called for and will continue to work toward increased funding to promote compliance with, enforcement of, and education around our fair housing laws. While the onset of the COVID-19 crisis prevented us from securing such funding in the State budget enacted last month, the funds from the Attorney General will go a long way toward meeting this need.

“We commend Attorney General James for coming up with funding for this vitally important initiative. We look forward to continuing to work with her, with our colleagues in the legislature, and with fair housing organizations throughout the state to ensure effective implementation and compliance of New York State’s fair housing laws.”

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