



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

## Tedisco & Jordan Stand-up for Small Business "Mom & Pop" Property Owners

SENATOR JIM TEDISCO June 30, 2021



**Halfmoon, NY** – During a press conference today at Halfmoon Town Hall, Senator Daphne Jordan (R,C,I,Ref-Halfmoon), and Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C-Glenville), stood with, and advocated for, local landlord small businesses that have been financially devastated by policies like the rent eviction moratorium which have had serious unintended consequences for countless landlords.

Senator Jordan and Senator Tedisco were joined today by local landlord small businesses including Joseph Tronco; Dennis and Mary Ryan, Town of Brunswick; Rosie Karame, Mortgage Tax Supervisor at Rensselaer County Clerk Frank Merola's Office, City of Troy; as well as Chris Morris, Founder, and Executive Director, Schenectady Landlords Influencing Change. Senator Jordan and Senator Tedisco are supported in their efforts by Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh (R,C,I-Ballston), and Assemblyman Jake Ashby (R,C,I-Castleton), both of whom are quoted in this news release.

During this morning's press conference, Senator Jordan and Senator Tedisco also called for reforms to state initiatives such as the State Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) that, due to their overly complicated and cumbersome nature, aren't helping landlord small businesses, some of whom have not been paid rent for well over a year. **Senators Jordan and Tedisco also support the passage of common-sense legislation – Senate Bill S.5629 – to help small property owners with a rental assistance loan-to-grant program to aid in covering missed payments.** The local landlord small businesses in attendance for today's press conference also shared their perspectives as to what they have endured financially, and are still enduring, and also underscore the urgent need for real relief.

"We appreciate and understand the challenges faced by those who rent during this pandemic. The 'mom and pop' small business owners who rent out housing are also in harm's way economically as there's a potential they'll be out of business due to a lack of revenue. If our small property owners go out of business, that impacts the renters as well as there won't be enough affordable housing stock available. Unfortunately, the rental assistance relief funding that was designated by the state is not getting to many of these small property owners who have not been paid, in many cases, since March 2020," said Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C-Glenville).

“I have introduced legislation (S.5629) with Senator Daphne Jordan to help small property owners with a rental assistance loan-to-grant program to help them cover missed rental payments. These small landlords live on the margins and many are on the verge of bankruptcy. The moratorium that continues to be passed designates that renters are supposed to pay back the money they owe. If that doesn’t happen, under my loan-to-grant bill, if the tenants pay their back rent, which they’re responsible for under the present law and deferment they have, then the landlords would simply repay the state. If the tenant never pays the rent, then the loan turns into a grant like the federal pandemic assistance program for small businesses, thus landlords would be held harmless,” Senator Jim Tedisco said.

“I’m proud to stand with, and advocate for, local landlord small businesses that have been financially hurt by policies like the rent eviction moratorium that have had serious unintended consequences. Landlords are small businesses: they have mortgages, utilities, maintenance and upkeep, long-term debt. They also have families, children, college funds, car payments, health insurance. They have all the expenses that everyone else has, plus the cost of their properties. I’m speaking and advocating for mom-and-pop landlord small businesses on Main Street, the folks who provide a good deal of the affordable housing in our nation. It’s time that the state and federal government recognize there is a serious problem facing mom-and-pop landlords and takes the necessary steps to ensure that real relief gets into their hands,” Senator Daphne Jordan (R,C,I,Ref-Halfmoon) said.

“I continue calling for common-sense reforms to state programs that aren’t helping landlord small businesses – some of whom have not been paid rent for well over a year and, in one case, are still waiting after 17 months for payment. The Emergency Rental Assistance Program, or ‘ERAP,’ has unrealistic, unworkable requirements that make a bad situation even worse for landlord small businesses struggling financially because of the unintended

consequences of this misfiring state program. The practical reality of these provisions, as shared with me by many local landlords, is that they will not be able to recoup their total losses and that some, not all, rent scofflaws have absconded from rental premises without sharing necessary information, hence, the lack of cooperation. This lack of active cooperation as required under ERAP – can prevent the processing of rightful claims by landlords to recoup any of their losses via ERAP. That’s why I recently wrote Governor Cuomo urging him to take immediate action to address the serious, significant, and systematic shortcomings I identified within ERAP,” Senator Daphne Jordan said.

“The local landlords joining me today are more than just mom-and-pop small businesses; they are our friends and neighbors who’ve been trying to do the right thing for their tenants and their local community. It’s wrong that these are the folks being left behind by a bureaucratic program that was entrusted to create a fair, easy, and timely initiative to get checks into the hands of those in need. It’s time for the Governor to do the right thing and help streamline the Emergency Rental Assistance Program so that small landlords can continue to earn their living and be a vital part of New York’s economy,” Senator Daphne Jordan stated.

“At the onset of the pandemic, the eviction moratorium aided New Yorkers who needed it. However, the continuous extension of the eviction and foreclosure moratorium has only furthered the financial hurt for countless large and small landlords throughout the state,” said Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh (R,C,I-Ballston).

“Landlords and property owners have been overlooked again and again in terms of the policies and aid issued during the COVID-19 Pandemic, resulting in countless local landlords being owed thousands in past due rent,” said Assemblyman Jake Ashby (R,C,I–Castleton).

“The negative impacts caused by the indifference State leaders continue to show our landlords will be felt for many years if we don’t act quickly to provide streamlined, accessible

and sufficient aid to the thousands of landlords who have been put in this position by no fault of their own but rather by shortsighted government policies.”

“Landlords are small businesses and we’ve been seriously hurting because of public policies that have put us last. I haven’t received rent from one of my Halfmoon rental properties for close to 17 months. This is causing incredible financial pain to me and my family. Mom-and-pop landlords are people too and we need help! I’m thankful to Senator Jordan for being such a strong advocate on behalf of landlord small businesses like myself who are truly struggling during these difficult times,” said Joseph Tronco, landlord small business.

“In the rush to provide relief, small landlords like me have been forgotten by the Federal and state government. Policies that are supposed to be helping are hurting, and some in Albany don’t seem to realize that we need assistance too. This issue really boils down to basic fairness and landlord small businesses like me not being treated fairly. My wife and I have gone months without receiving regular rent payments and it’s imposed a massive financial burden on us. I’m genuinely grateful to Senators Jordan and Tedisco for being so responsive and for their continued efforts to ensure our voices are heard and our needs are met,” said Dennis Ryan, landlord small business, Town of Brunswick.

“Landlords have endured incredible fiscal challenges caused by not receiving rent for over a year due to the pandemic. Trying to figure out which programs were available for people like me that only have one rental property in the City of Troy was very difficult. Especially when the City of Troy was charging us late fees and refused to waive them when I was paying my taxes last year. We need real relief and we need it now! We can’t afford to wait any longer. I am so honored that Senator Jordan is allowing for my voice to be heard. It’s time our elected officials in the state and federal government take this fight on,” said Rosie Karame, Mortgage Tax Supervisor at Rensselaer County Clerk Frank Merola’s Office and landlord small business, City of Troy.

Chris Morris, Founder and Executive Director of Schenectady Landlords Influencing Change said, "Small business landlords simply cannot continue to sustain their properties where there is NO INCOME! That's common sense! Relief monies are desperately needed now. They disappear in September. AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS AT STAKE!"