



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

## Senator Helming Statement on Eviction Moratorium Extension

PAMELA HELMING September 1, 2021



Senator Helming, ranking member of the Senate Housing, Construction and Community Development Committee, issued the following statement:

“I voted no on the legislation to extend New York’s eviction moratorium. The best thing the state can do for tenants and property owners today is the same thing it should have been doing for months – get rental assistance funds out the door and into the hands of our small and mom-and-pop property owners. The distribution of these funds must continue to be our focus and priority.

New York has known since last December it would be getting billions in federal aid to assist tenants and property owners devastated by the pandemic. Here we are nine months later, and still, less than 10 percent of these funds have been distributed. This is

inexcusable.

For months, my Senate Republican colleagues and I have continued to offer recommendations and solutions to Senate Democrats, but they seem to fall on deaf ears. Early this year, we called for this federal aid to be removed from the budget process to expedite the distribution, but Senate Democrats refused our request. One Democratic Senator even acknowledged that a reason for the ERAP's program slow start was because Senate Democrats insisted on including it in the budget.

This summer, Senator Boyle and I led two virtual roundtables with housing community stakeholders to facilitate greater support for tenants and property owners, and we submitted recommendations to New York's Office of Court Administration. That includes opening our housing courts to work with OTDA to help bring more eligible applicants into the ERAP program.

In our area and across the state, it's the mom-and-pop rental property owners who are the hardest hit. They are our neighbors. They want to keep their tenants in their homes but they need to be paid. When small property owners suffer these destabilizing losses, they can't afford to keep their properties. Collectively, we risk the loss of local ownership of rental properties, the quality of local housing stock, and that impacts our local communities and economy.

What property owners have been asking for all along is simply to be treated fairly. I don't believe this bill does that. I will continue to urge the administration and OTDA to accelerate the distribution of this money and finally do the right thing for our small property owners."