



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Elijah Reichlin-Melnick

## State Lawmakers Announce \$500,000 State Investment to Support Rockland County's Code Enforcement Efforts in Spring Valley

ELIJAH REICHLIN-MELNICK April 28, 2022



**NEW CITY, NY** - **Senator Elijah Reichlin-Melnick** (D-Rockland/Westchester), **Senator James Skoufis** (D-Hudson Valley), **Assemblyman Kenneth Zebrowski** (D-Rockland), and **Assemblyman Mike Lawler** (R-Rockland) joined **Rockland County Executive Ed Day** in announcing a major investment to support the County's takeover of code enforcement responsibilities for the Village of Spring Valley.

The New York 2022-2023 Budget passed earlier this month includes \$500,000 that will go directly to Rockland County to help offset the expense of the newly established code enforcement team. The work in Spring Valley is beyond the County's normal operations, and is not intended to be permanent. The decision by the Secretary of State to transfer control of the code enforcement responsibilities to the County came just months after the tragic fire at the Evergreen Court Nursing Home which resulted in the deaths of a resident and Firefighter Jared Lloyd. The subsequent investigation led to indictments of Village of Spring Valley building department officials.

This winter County Executive Ed Day approached the state legislators who represent Rockland County, asking them to include a half million dollars in the state budget to help cover the expense. After pressure from Rockland's state legislative delegation, the allocation was included in both the Senate and Assembly budget resolutions and was ultimately included in the final budget signed by Governor Hochul earlier this month.

**County Executive Ed Day** said: "Our lawmakers worked together in Albany to secure \$500,000 in New York State funding for this effort, which will undoubtedly help alleviate some of the burden of this cost from taxpayers. I want to thank them for their efforts to protect county tax dollars and support the work being done by our Office of Buildings and Codes."

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*Senator Reichlin-Melnick said: "Taking away control from a local government should always be a last resort, but when it became clear Spring Valley could not reliably perform basic code enforcement functions, New York State had to step in and assign code enforcement responsibility to Rockland County. I am proud to have helped secure \$500,000 from the state to cover the costs of the county's life-saving code enforcement work so that local taxpayers aren't left to foot the bill for these efforts."*

**Senator James Skoufis** said: "Rockland County has done exemplary work to correct many of the egregious deficiencies in Spring Valley's code enforcement and hold bad actors accountable. Working with my colleagues, I'm glad we were able to secure this important funding and ensure Rockland County taxpayers are protected and made whole while this essential but expensive work continues."

**Assemblyman Zebrowski** said: "The county's takeover of the Spring Valley code enforcement was an important step forward to clear the backlog of inspections and ensure future compliance with the law. This funding, included in the state budget, will ensure that they are able to continue the necessary work to keep residents and first responders safe. I'm thankful for the collaboration with my colleagues at the state and local levels to secure this investment in our community."

**Assemblyman Lawler** said: "I was proud to work in a bipartisan manner with Senator Reichlin-Melnick, Assemblyman Zebrowski, Senator Skoufis and our local elected officials to secure \$500,000 in the state budget for Rockland County's code enforcement measures in the village of Spring Valley. It's been clear since the county took over that there is a lot of work to do to enforce the village code and hold violators accountable. I trust that County Executive Ed Day and Director Ed Markunas will not rest until the job is complete."