



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanaugh

## Mayor Adams, Partners Urge Albany to Aid Creation of Affordable, Supportive Housing

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| ISSUE: **HOTEL CONVERSIONS**

| COMMITTEE: **HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**



**New York** – New York City Mayor Eric Adams today led a coalition made up of city and state government leaders and union members urging Albany to unlock a critical tool to tackle the city's housing affordability and homelessness crisis in an effort to create new affordable and supportive housing for thousands of New Yorkers. Mayor Adams and the group highlighted the importance of [S.4937/A.6262](#), which would make it easier for the city to convert

underutilized hotels into affordable and supportive housing.

"We are facing a homelessness crisis and an affordable housing crisis, but, with the help of our partners in Albany, we can work to tackle them both with one tool," said **Mayor Adams**. "By repurposing underused hotels, we can create supportive housing faster and cheaper. We can make affordable, permanent housing available to families, seniors, and any New Yorker in need, including our neighbors experiencing homelessness. Let's get this done."

Sponsored by New York State Senator Brian Kavanagh and New York State Assemblymember Steven Cymbrowitz, S.4937/A.6262 would ease the process by which underutilized and vacant hotels can become permanent housing. With the right rules in place, hotel conversions could be a critical tool for creating the affordable and supportive housing the city needs — affordable apartments can be created for about two-thirds of the cost and in one-third of the time through conversions than through ground-up construction. Passed in 2021, the Housing Our Neighbors with Dignity Act made \$100 million available to help facilitate these conversions.

This effort follows a campaign proposal from Mayor Adams to reimagine vacant and underutilized hotels and repurpose them for permanent affordable and supportive housing. It also follows the mayor's recently announced executive budget, in which he committed **\$5 billion in new capital funding to create and preserve affordable housing**, bringing the city's total housing investment in the 10-year capital plan to \$22 billion, the largest housing investment in the city's history.

"We have to get creative when it comes to solving our housing shortage," said **New York City Chief Housing Officer Jessica Katz**. "Hotel conversion to housing is a simple but vital part of the housing solution. We can take these units, and permanently house New Yorkers. And I am proud that our friends in Albany are pushing a bill forward to do just that."

"Our housing crisis and our homelessness crisis go hand in hand. That's why I believe investing in hotel conversions to repurpose underused hotels to give our most vulnerable New Yorkers the opportunity to gain permanent housing," said **New York City Department of Social Services Commissioner Gary Jenkins**. "I look forward to working with both the mayor and Albany to pass this very necessary legislation to help support our clients."

"The city's housing crisis demands creativity and new tools to build and preserve more affordable homes," said **New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development Commissioner Adolfo Carrión, Jr.** "This legislation is a necessary first step to unlock the potential for more hotel conversions that can expand the supply of affordable and supportive housing."

"Converting distressed hotels will enable us to significantly expand the supply of permanent affordable housing in New York," said **New York State Senator Brian Kavanagh, chair, Committee on Housing, Construction, and Community Development**. "Passing our legislation will facilitate this and is one very important step, among many, that we can take to end homelessness, which must be our ultimate goal. I thank Mayor Eric Adams for his strong support for this effort and for rallying others to the cause, and the city's housing agencies, which stand ready to use the new tools this legislation will offer. I also want to thank Assembly Housing Chair Steven Cymbrowitz for championing this bill in the Assembly and the many advocates who have partnered with us over the last year. Let's get this done now!"

"Paring back cumbersome regulations and cutting through red tape is critical to our economic recovery and our ability to address pressing challenges like the housing affordability crisis," said **New York City Department of City Planning Director Dan Garodnick**. "We need creative and bold solutions like this to meet the moment."

"The legislation that Sen. Kavanagh and I introduced creates a viable process for addressing two critical issues facing our city — the lack of affordable and supportive housing and the increase in vacant and underutilized hotel space resulting from the pandemic," said **New York State Assemblymember Steven Cymbrowitz, chair, Committee on Housing**. "The support from Mayor Adams, city and state representatives, and housing and labor advocates sends a strong message to Albany that this legislation needs to be passed this session to meet the urgent affordable housing needs of New Yorkers, while at the same time alleviating the pressure on commercial real estate."

"All New Yorkers deserve safe and stable housing, and we have to create more flexibility in our zoning and building codes to allow for the conversion of vacant hotels into desperately needed supportive and affordable housing," said **New York City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams**. "I urge my colleagues in the State Senate and Assembly to seize the moment and pass S.4937/A.6262, so we can add this important new strategy for increasing the affordable and supportive housing so many New Yorkers desperately need."

"Our city is facing an unprecedented housing crisis that needs solution-oriented thinking on how to tackle such an encompassing problem that impacts every single one of us, in every single community, throughout New York City," said **New York City Councilmember Amanda Farías, chair, Committee on Economic Development**. "The hotel conversion bill does exactly that. This is the type of common-sense policy that not only supports and uplifts businesses who have been struggling with a solution, but also supports its thousands of workers and their good-paying union jobs. I am excited to support Mayor Eric Adams, our state and city leadership, Hotel Trades Council, and all the businesses and workers who deserve for us to advocate for a better New York City."

"Good hotels create good jobs. They are responsible neighbors and elevate the reputation of the tourism industry by attracting more visitors," said **Rich Maroko, president, New York Hotel Trades Council**

. "But failing hotels provide only poverty-level jobs, bring crime to local communities, and tarnish the reputation of New York City's tourism industry. Converting these hotels into much-needed housing is a smart and effective way to help the city protect the safety of our neighbors, support tourism recovery, and safeguard good jobs. I commend Mayor Adams for his leadership and look forward to working with the state bill sponsors and legislative leaders to get this done."

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2021-S4937B**

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- Introduced
  
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
  
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
  
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
  
- Delivered to Governor
  
- Signed By Governor
  
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Relates to authorizing any dwelling with a certificate authorizing occupancy as a Class B hotel to also authorize occupancy of such units in such dwelling for permanent residence purposes

February 18, 2021

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Brian Kavanagh**

Do you support this bill?