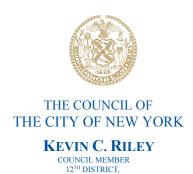
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BRONX

DISTRICT OFFICE: 940 EAST GUN HILL ROAD BRONX, NY 10469 TEL: (718) 684-5509

CO-OP CITY DISTRICT OFFICE 135 EINSTEIN LOOP BRONX, NY 10475 TEL: (347) 326-8652

> CITY HALL OFFICE: 250 BROADWAY, ROOM 1770 NEW YORK, NY 10007 TEL: (212) 788-6873

KRiley@council.nyc.gov

February 18th, 2025

Senate Standing Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development New York State Senate 250 Broadway, Room 2011, New York, NY 10007

Greetings to my esteemed colleagues in the New York State Senate,

As the municipal representative for the Northeast Bronx, I write to you today in support of **S.1457(A)/A.5344** (2025-2026 Legislative Session) which calls for adjusting the income eligibility for SCRIE, DRIE, SCHE and DHE where any increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is weighed.

I have the honor of representing Co-op City, which is the country's largest cooperative housing development; authorized under the N.Y.S. Mitchell-Lama program intended for families with modest incomes. This community is also one of the largest NORCs (Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities). Through my office's conversations with residents of this community about how government can work to meet their needs, our esteemed neighbors here in Co-op City circulated a petition supporting the merits of this bill, demonstrating a vested interest in the passage of these legislative measures, to the benefit of those on a fixed income throughout New York State.

Many residents are currently ineligible for supportive programs, as their pensions & social security costs leave them at a calculation just above the current income limits for SCRIE/DRIE. They are on fixed incomes; leaving them at a deficit financially and faced with difficult decisions. Sometimes this includes leaving the community they have lived in, as they can no longer afford the housing costs. Across the city and state we are seeing people and families deal with the increasing and demanding standards of maintaining stable affordable housing.

I also represent some of the City of New York's more densely populated homeowner communities in Allerton, Williamsbridge, Olinville, Eastchester, Edenwald, Wakefield, and the Valley, who, like their neighbors in Co-op City,

also face the challenging balance of maintaining their essential needs on fixed incomes. We must amend the

DHE/SCHE income caps, to alleviate the financial burdens faced by homeowners and fortify their wellbeing during

periods of housing instability, preserving access for those who have achieved the dream of homeownership.

These legislative measures uphold the integrity of the Northeast Bronx community, which has facilitated

homeownership for tens of thousands of diverse middle-class families and seniors. We must do our part to safeguard

homeownership through every possible avenue and promote generational wealth for families throughout New York

State.

This cost of living crisis endangers affordable housing programs, as they become increasingly inaccessible due to

inflation. When residents cannot access these crucial benefits due to re-certification requirements or periods of

ineligibility - we are all worse off for it. When people must move from their homes because of the lack of affordability

it's a real problem and we lose the history of our neighborhoods with them.

I urge this committee to recognize the unique burdens of seniors and those with disabilities living on fixed

incomes and address them with sustainable solutions. Advocating for ongoing adjusted increases for renters,

shareholders, and homeowners demonstrates our commitment to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to

strengthen our communities.

It is for these reasons that I supported Reso. 0791 in 2023 and Reso. 0232 in 2024 alongside Council Member

Gale A. Brewer and support S.1457(A)/A.5344. We were able to get this Resolution across the finish line, and ask your

governing body to do so as well. This amendment would provide a progressive solution that will meet the needs of

residents now and going forward; instead of leaving government in a perpetual game of catch-up to the needs of our

constituency. We have a collective opportunity to get this right and we should take this moment to do so.

Enclosed is a copy of the petitions provided by my constituents echoing the support for this bill.

Sincerely,

Kevin C. Riley, MPA

K Riley

Council Member, 12th District

Chair, Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises

Co-Chair, Black, Latino and Asian Caucus

New York City Council