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## NEW YORK STATE SENATE DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY

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# New York Senate Majority Advances Legislation to Boost Affordable Housing, Support First-Time Homebuyers, and Increase Renter and Homeowner Protections

(Albany, N.Y.) Today, the Senate Democratic Majority will advance legislation to further ensure access to affordable housing for all New Yorkers. This legislative package builds on our work and efforts from last year's legislative session to better address housing shortages and rising costs across New York State by constructing new affordable housing units, while simultaneously revitalizing and repurposing existing structures to serve as legalized forms of housing. Through all our housing negotiations, we have prioritized comprehensive tenant protections like good-cause, rent-stabilization, and 'affordability requirements,' allowing more of our state's renters to remain in their homes.

This package of bills works to address the needs of both our state's homeowners and renters. This package includes legislation to establish the NYS first home savings program to allow first-time homebuyers to open saving accounts that would be eligible for personal income deductions; to ensure the continued availability of free counseling and legal services through the state Homeownership Protection Program for homeowners; to implement a two year look-back window for Senior Citizen (SCRIE) and Disability Rent (DRIE) increase exemptions to help ensure our state's seniors and disabled community members can remain in their homes.

**Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins** said, "Skyrocketing rents and rising home prices have placed an overwhelming burden on working families, seniors, and those wishing to buy their first home. Since 2019, the Senate Majority has prioritized access to affordable housing with legislative action to protect tenants, build more housing, and create opportunities for homeownership. With this legislative package, we are expanding on those efforts to ensure that renters can stay in their homes, seniors and individuals with disabilities receive the support they

need, and first-time homebuyers have the resources to buy a home. Housing should be a source of stability, and we remain committed to ensuring all New Yorkers have access.”

**Bill sponsor and Chair of the Senate Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development, Senator Brian Kavanagh** said, “This legislative package exemplifies our commitment to using every tool available to us to ensure that every New Yorker has access to a safe, stable, affordable home. I am proud to sponsor several of these bills, and to work closely with Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, all of today’s bill sponsors, and every member of the Democratic Majority, as we continue to address the housing affordability crisis by protecting tenants and homeowners, securing housing for New Yorkers experiencing homelessness, and maintaining and expanding our housing supply.”

The legislation being passed by the Senate Democratic Majority includes:

- **New York State First Home Savings Program:** This bill, [S.1157](#) , sponsored by Senator Jeremy Cooney, would establish a program to allow first time homebuyers to establish tax-exempt/deductible savings accounts to buy their first home.
- **Establishing a study on real property tax saturation:** This bill, [S.265](#) , sponsored by Senator Pete Harekham, would direct the state Board of Real Property Tax Services to conduct a study on real property tax saturation.
- **Transferring Tax Credits for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties:** This bill, [S.2124](#) , sponsored by Senator Brian Kavanagh, would amend the state tax law to authorize the pass-through or transfer of the credits for the rehabilitation of historic properties.
- **Ensures Availability of Services through The Homeownership Protection Program:** This bill, [S.2627](#) , sponsored by Senator Brian Kavanagh, will help support the continued availability of free housing counseling and legal services to homeowners through The State Homeowner Protection Program (HOPP).
- **Expands eligibility for the Low Interest Rate Program (LIRP):** This bill, [S.3190](#) , sponsored by Senator Brian Kavanagh, would expand eligibility for the Low Interest Rate Program (LIRP) of the State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA) to recent college or apprenticeship graduates and workforce training program graduates for the purchase of mortgages in economically depressed areas.
- **Implements an up to two-year look-back period for SCRIE and DRIE:** This bill, [S.2534](#) , sponsored by Senator James Sanders, would provide a lookback period of up to two years to the original date of eligibility for the senior citizen rent increase exemption (SCRIE) and the Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE).
- **Requires written justifications for rent increases by home park owners:** This bill, [S.228](#) , sponsored by Senator James Skoufis, requires manufactured home park owners to provide a written justification for any rent increases in excess of three percent.

**Bill Sponsor, Senator Jeremy Cooney** said, “For far too many New Yorkers the dream of owning a home is just a fantasy, but with the First Home Savings Program, we’re looking to make that dream a reality. Homeownership is one of the best ways we can combat poverty and build generational wealth in our communities. I’m proud to have worked with my colleagues in

the Senate Majority to advance my bill and I want to thank Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins for her continued work to make our state more affordable for all New Yorkers.”

**Bill Sponsor, Senator Peter Harckham** said, "A careful analysis of real property tax saturation—which municipalities in New York bear the largest brunt of tax-exempt properties within their jurisdictions—is long overdue. The economic challenges our residents are facing demand that we make property taxes as fair and equitable as possible. The legislation I introduced may point to necessary changes that save homeowners money on their property taxes.”

**Bill Sponsor, Senator James Sanders Jr.** said, “I applaud the Senate Democratic Majority for taking strong action early in the 2025 Legislative Session to address the affordable housing crisis throughout New York state. A home is central to a person's and family's well-being. Homeownership is where most people build savings and create intergenerational wealth. I will continue to fight to make housing affordable for everyone in Southeast Queens and around the state of New York.”

**Bill Sponsor, Senator James Skoufis** said, "I have been and remain a staunch advocate of housing fairness. New York state is home to nearly 85,000 manufactured homes, and at a time when affordability is top of mind for every New Yorker, these communities serve as a vital source of affordable housing. Stable housing is a foundational need, and this bill addresses loopholes in an existing law, ensuring residents are treated with respect and transparency by mobile home park owners."

**Mike Borges, Executive Director, Rural Housing Coalition** said, “The Rural Housing Coalition applauds the Senate Majority's efforts to address the housing crisis through a variety of measures, especially initiatives to protect mobile homeowners and encourage first-time homebuyers.”

On behalf of **MHAction NY Leaders of Manufactured Resident Homeowners, Executive Director Yvonne Maldonado** said, “Across NYS, the housing crisis and affordability have been confirmed for many families nationwide. Since 2021, MHAction Manufactured Homeowner residents have been fighting for the loophole fixes to the NY Senate bill S228. We will continue to support this legislation and the passage of a package of housing bills that will make a real difference in the lives of 84,956 families living in manufactured home communities across New York State. MHAction stands with our brothers and sisters who are also struggling to find affordable housing and fighting to pass legislation to purchase their buildings. It's a testament to the dedication of resident leaders across the state who tirelessly advocate for affordable housing and equitable opportunities. MHAction is grateful for the tireless work of our legislators and advocate partners to ensure our families can better realize the promise of a safe and affordable place to call home in a healthy and vibrant community.”

**Jacob Inwald, Director of Litigation, Economic Justice Legal Services NYC** said, “Preserving affordable homeownership and arming vulnerable homeowners—primarily in communities of color and the elderly—with the tools they need to defend themselves against deed theft, distressed property consultant and partition scammers is an essential component of a

comprehensive housing policy. Recent legislation targeting deed thefts and partition scams go a long way towards improving law enforcement efforts and in helping those already victimized by scammers preying on homeowners in neighborhoods with appreciating property values, but the only tool that we have to prevent homeowners from falling prey to these scams is the Homeowner Protection Program ('HOPP'). S2627, which would codify the HOPP program among New York's other laws targeting these scams is important recognition of the importance of prevention and in ensuring stable funding for the essential network of free housing counseling and legal services providers who stabilize at-risk homeowners and their communities, prevent avoidable foreclosures, and preserve intergenerational wealth and existing affordable housing."

**New York State Association of REALTORS® 2025 President, Jacqie Rose**, said "We applaud the State Senate for the passage of the New York State First Home Savings Program, modeled after the state's existing 529 College Savings program. NYSAR is proud to have worked with Senator Cooney in developing the legislation. Our REALTOR® members see the downpayment hurdles first time homebuyers face each day, and this legislation provides New Yorkers with an incentive to save for a first home in New York, build generational wealth and achieve the American dream of homeownership."

**Ian Wilder, Executive Director of Long Island Housing Services, Inc., a Qualified Fair Housing Organization and a HUD Certified Housing Counseling agency** said, "It is comforting to know that our New York State legislators understand that Americans are suffering under this increasingly oppressive economy and those state legislators focused on lessening the pain of housing costs. The breadth of this package of bills related to affordable homeownership shows careful thought as it addresses both the needs of those who are hoping to attain a home and those who are fighting to retain their home. Long Islanders are particularly suffering under the dual pressures of heightened national cost of living and the local dearth of affordable housing opportunities. I hope this package of bills is swiftly enacted and its goal of bringing much needed relief to our financial stress is duplicated across the board."

**Beth Finkel, State Director of AARP New York** said, "Better aligning SCRIE with initial eligibility will help ensure that more older adults can remain in their homes without facing the threat of displacement due to unaffordable rent hikes. This action promotes housing stability, reduces financial stress, and enhances the overall well-being of older adults. AARP New York thanks the Senate for their leadership on this issue."

**Empire Justice Center HOPP Anchor Program Director Jim Dukette** said, "Any comprehensive housing plan must include tools to keep New Yorkers in homes that they already own. Codifying HOPP into law is one step toward ensuring stable funding for the only dedicated source of State funding for foreclosure prevention services and will protect homeowners and save jobs. We're grateful to the bill sponsor Senator Kavanagh, to Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and to the Senate for their quick action."

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