



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Iwen Chu

Senator Chu Introduces Bill to Establish Housing Court Efficiency Legal Process to Expedite Small Landlord and Tenant Cases

IWEN CHU April 15, 2024



The HELP bill creates a “fast lane” for small landlords and tenants to have housing cases resolved within 120 days, addressing the current system backlog and providing relief to those who have spent years in court.

(Albany, NY) Recently, Senator Iwen Chu (SD-17) introduced **legislation** that would establish the Housing Court Efficiency Legal Process (HELP bill), which would expedite the cases of small landlords and tenants in housing court by restructuring the existing system so that tenants and small landlords with ten units or less can have their cases resolved within 120

days of the start of proceedings. Currently, individuals are sometimes waiting years before their cases are even heard, let alone resolved. This bill aims to reduce the logjam and grant quicker remediation to those who can't afford to wait.

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Senator Iwen Chu said, “Small landlords and tenants can’t spare the resources it takes to languish in court—sometimes for years—in order to resolve their cases. Many of the small landlords in my district rely on one property and a few tenants as supplemental income, and lose tens of thousands of dollars in arrears and legal fees while navigating housing court. And for tenants trapped by unfair housing practices, the wait can be just as costly and damaging. That’s why I’ve introduced this legislation, which would rightfully prioritize these equally vulnerable groups and ensure they get a timely decision on their case. Not only will this help us work through the overwhelming backlog of cases in the housing court system, but it will better protect those who deserve to have their day in court.”

Tonya Ores, CEO of NHS Brooklyn CDC, Inc., said: “Small landlords who depend on rental income to meet mortgage payments are the most vulnerable to the time it presently takes to resolve a landlord-tenant case. During an eviction proceeding, the landlord is required to provide basic essentials like water and heat while not receiving rent. This financial strain can place an owner of a two- or three-family home into foreclosure after only a few months. Nor should tenants have to endure harassment and unhealthy living conditions while waiting for a court decision. This bill will help expedite small landlord and tenant cases, which is fair to small landlords and tenants alike.”

Helen Gao, Small Local Landlord, said: “I owned a 2 family home in Queens and lived on the first floor. I had a personal stake in the property and those who lived there. But in instances of missed rent and damaged property, it was me and my family who had to deal with the mental and emotional pressure on top of the financial one. I appreciate Senator Chu’s efforts to create a bill that will shorten the time it takes to get an answer in court, to help us protect

our property and wellbeing."