



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

# **Governor Paterson Signs Galef/Squadron Legislation Saving Taxpayer Money Through Alternative Notification Process**

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August 10, 2009

ISSUE:

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Governor Paterson signed legislation (A.7966/S.3689) sponsored by Assemblywoman Sandy Galef and Senator Daniel Squadron on July 28, 2009 (Chapter 275) that changes the notification process of real property tax lien foreclosure proceedings. This legislation will allow county, city and village tax districts to provide the New York State Commissioner of Taxation and Finance (Commissioner) notice of the commencement of real property tax lien foreclosure proceedings by alternative means approved by the Commissioner. The alternative means would include those other than the currently required first-class or certified mail.

"I am pleased that the Governor has signed this legislation that will streamline an administrative process that has become outdated with today's technology," said Assemblywoman Sandy Galef. "It is incumbent upon us legislators to identify new ways in delivering public services less expensively and more effectively. This new law is one by which a simple modification of one governmental work process will result in savings for the New York taxpayer due to reduced clerical and postage costs."

"Government works best when it is effective, efficient and accountable, and this bill helps move New York State an important step into the 21st century. I am pleased that Governor Paterson has signed this bill that I passed with Assemblywoman Galef," said Senator Daniel Squadron.

Currently, counties and cities serve thousands of individual real property tax lien foreclosure notices on the Department of Taxation and Finance (Department). This bill would authorize the Commissioner to allow local governments to use an alternative means of providing notice. That alternative could include allowing the local governments to file summaries of real property tax lien foreclosure petitions with the Commissioner instead of serving individual notice and petitions. This measure would provide relief to local governments from an expensive and cumbersome process, without jeopardizing the tax collection efforts of the Commissioner. This bill would also provide the Department and taxing districts with the flexibility to agree upon a transmittal of the summaries by improved electronic technologies. This alternative means of notice may also assist the Department in tracking these foreclosure proceedings.

"This new law is a common sense response to a government process that had become cumbersome and complicated," said NYSAC Executive Director Stephen J. Acquario. "On behalf of New York's county leaders, I applaud Assemblywoman Galef and Senator Squadron for recognizing a problem and delivering a solution."