



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR
Catharine Young

Senator Young Urges HUD to Keep Seniors In Their Homes

CATHARINE YOUNG February 15, 2017

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ALBANY - Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I- 57th District) has penned a letter to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Office of Native American Programs requesting that the agency grandfather-in existing non-Native residents at the Seneca Nation Housing Authority's Elderly Housing Complex, and refrain from imposing heavy financial penalties on the Authority.

Ten elderly residents have been issued eviction notices following an audit by HUD that threatened financial penalties to the Seneca Nation Housing Authority. While the Seneca Nation and the City of Salamanca have worked to find new housing for the residents, the majority of options available are outside of the City and Cattaraugus County.

"Everyone needs a place to live. These ten elderly residents have all been long-term tenants at the Seneca Nation's housing complex and it is not right that they are now being forced out of their homes because of the threat of financial penalty from the federal government. We should be doing all we can to help keep people in the home and community they love, near their family and friends," said Senator Young.

"One of the women who is being evicted has lived in the complex for nearly 30 years and she is into her 90s. Another, who has already been forced out, had to give up her companion animal of 14 years, just so she could secure a new place to live. It is heartbreaking. I have urged the federal government to consider the depths of the situation, and asked that they grandfather-in the remaining ten residents so that they can live out their years in the housing accommodations of their choice. I also requested that the agency not impose harsh penalties on the Seneca Nation for housing these elderly individuals," Senator Young said.

According to reports, HUD could impose fines up to \$500,000 on the Seneca Nation Housing Authority because of the use of Native American housing by non-Natives. The penalties are a result of an audit performed by the HUD Office of Native American Programs – Eastern Woodlands, which found that the Seneca Housing Authority did not comply with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) guidelines related to non-Natives residing in tribal housing.

“I am pleased to hear that City and Tribal officials have been working together to help those impacted by the federal government’s decision. We are all hopeful that HUD will reconsider their position and allow these elderly residents to stay in their homes,” said Senator Young.