



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

## Squadron, Niou Announce Passage Of Tenant Protection Bill For HRA Rental Assistance

DANIEL L. SQUADRON June 22, 2017

| ISSUE: **TENANT PROTECTION, HUMAN RESOURCE ADMINISTRATION, RENT LAWS, HOUSING COURT, AFFORDABLE HOUSING**



Squadron, Niou Bill Aimed At Preventing Housing Court; 203,119 Nonpayment Petitions Citywide Last Year

**ALBANY** – State Senator Daniel Squadron and Assemblymember Yuh-Line Niou announced passage of their legislation ([S.1789A/A.8166A](#)) requiring the NYC Human Resource Administration (HRA) to provide tenants access to rent payment records. This proof of payment can help address erroneous housing court cases for nonpayment.

Squadron and Niou's bill could impact thousands of New Yorkers who receive HRA rent payment assistance. Attorneys report that a lack of access to payment records can cause problems for tenants, particularly when there is a change of building management. Across the city, 203,119 housing court petitions for nonpayment were filed in 2015. Last year, 58,100 households received HRA rental assistance, a number that has increased by over 11,000 since 2013. An expansion of ACCESS NYC last year was launched to allow tenants access to rent payment information. This legislation ensures access regardless of administration or system changes.

"We must do everything we can to help New Yorkers stay in their homes -- and by giving tenants information that will cut down on erroneous eviction cases, this bill can help," said **State Senator Daniel Squadron**. "Thank you to Assemblymember Niou, the City and Human Resource Administration, my colleagues, the Legal Aid Society, Cooper Square Committee, GOLES, and housing organizations and advocates."

"It is critical that we empower tenants, and this legislation would ensure that our most vulnerable New Yorkers have access to rental information that can help them stay in their homes," said **Assemblymember Yuh-Line Niou**. "This legislation requires HRA to post up to date information on rental assistance provided to tenants, which can help clear up allegations of rent non-payment made against families, as well as alleviate caseloads from our courts. I commend HRA for their work around modernizing their public assistance services, and I look forward to working with the City and advocates as we continue to protect tenants."

"We fully support this legislation and protecting tenants from wrongful eviction proceedings and other forms of harassment," said **Department of Social Services Commissioner Steven Banks**. "We are committed to making our processes as transparent as possible while also protecting our clients' privacy. With our ACCESS HRA website and mobile app, New Yorkers who receive Cash Assistance and other forms of rental assistance such as LINC and CityFEPS can

view records of payments made to landlords on their behalf, in addition to many other important features.”

“The Legal Aid Society's clients on public assistance often end up in Housing Court through no fault of their own. Providing our clients with access to payment records will hopefully lead to less tenants being hauled into court for nonpayment cases where the tenant has done nothing wrong. Thank you Senator Squadron and Assemblymember Niou for this important piece of legislation,” said **Ellen Davidson, Staff Attorney, The Legal Aid Society**.

“This new law will benefit thousands of formerly homeless households receiving HRA rent payments. It's common for tenants who receive rental assistance to have rent payment discrepancies, and this will enable these tenants and their attorneys to more easily resolve rent disputes in housing court,” said **Steve Herrick, Cooper Square Committee Executive Director**.

“If enacted this bill can help prevent the eviction of thousands of tenants who are being harassed and erroneously taken to court because of the difficulty in obtaining the necessary paperwork to aid in their defense,” said **Damaris Reyes, Executive Director, Good Old Lower East Side**.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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**2017-S1789A**

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- Introduced
  - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ◦ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Requires certification notice to tenant when rent is paid by human resources administration

January 10, 2017

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by Daniel L. Squadron

Do you support this bill?