



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Fred Akshar

## 5.9.18 - Statement from Sen. Fred Akshar on New York City's SOTA Program

FRED AKSHAR May 9, 2018

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"Earlier this year, I pledged to the people of our community to find answers on New York City's Special One Time Assistance (SOTA) Program, which pays homeless families to relocate outside the city or the state. Before this year, communities throughout the state didn't even know this program existed.

I sincerely appreciate the answers and insight provided by Department of Homeless Services (DHS) Commissioner Steven Banks on this program and I've posted his reply below. The Commissioner also included a full tally of families relocated to other parts of the state outside of New York City.

To date, DHS claims 23 families have been sent to the 52nd District, and while I would hope their number is accurate, I'd rather equip our communities with the information they need to verify DHS's number.

While I still believe communities should take responsibility for their own residents, with the current leadership in New York City, I don't see this program going away. What we can do is improve communication between DHS, the counties being sent SOTA eligible families so that we know exactly how many families are being relocated and when they're being sent here.

I'll be working with my colleagues in the Senate on legislation to hold New York City and DHS accountable while also observing the constitutional right of US citizens to relocate."

[Click here to read the NYS Department of Homeless Services Response.](#)