



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David Carlucci

Senator Carlucci Fighting to Crack Down on Illegal Housing

Sen.Carlucci

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ALBANY, NY – Senator David Carlucci's (D-Rockland/Westchester) and Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski's (D-New City) bill (S 1773/A 1475) to crackdown on illegal housing passed in the Senate on Thursday. It would allow municipalities to roll a landlord's unpaid housing code fines of at least one year into their annual taxes.

"Illegal housing puts people's lives in jeopardy. It is a problem that has plagued Rockland County, where unscrupulous landlords often put profit before people," **said Senator Carlucci**. We need to give our current law teeth and send a strong message to unscrupulous landlords that if you do not follow building, zoning, and fire codes you will pay the price."

Clarkstown Supervisor George Hoehmann said, "I want to thank Senator Carlucci for shepherding this important bill through the Senate. I am urging the Assembly to follow suit and give municipalities like Clarkstown the ability to protect its residents. This measure would provide my town an additional tool to maintain our muscular approach to code enforcement."

"This is just one effort in a packet of legislation that we have worked on aimed at fire safety and restoring code enforcement throughout the county. This will go a long way in deterring landlords from allowing these code violations, as well as protect residents and first responders. This bill is a priority of mine, and I will continue to push for its passage in the Assembly, **said Assemblyman Zebrowski**.

Under this legislation, the fines for housing violations would be included in a homeowner's property taxes, giving the taxing authority the ability to sell the home to satisfy an outstanding tax lien. This bill will also allow housing code violation fines to be collected at the same proceedings as the delinquent property taxes, saving municipalities time and money through the collection process.

Not following local code and zoning is illegal in New York State, but repeat offenders can get fine after fine and not pay up. Due to the lack of real penalties, code enforcement has proved difficult for many towns and villages in Rockland County, and citations have proved to be ineffective.

Last year Sen. Carlucci's legislation to allow the Department of State to revoke code enforcement officers' licenses due to misconduct was signed into law. Also late in 2016, state monitors were installed to oversee the building departments in Ramapo and Spring Valley.