



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

NY Republican Leaders Call For Immediate Actions To Alleviate Financial Pressures On Tenants & Landlords

ROBERT G. ORTT August 27, 2021

| ISSUE: **CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC; COVID-19: LANDLORDS; TENANTS; RENT RELIEF**



New York State Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt and Assembly Republican Leader Will Barclay today wrote an urgent letter to Governor Kathy Hochul, Chief Administrative Judge of the Courts Lawrence Marks, and Office of Temporary Disability Assistance Commissioner Michael Hein, calling on them to take immediate steps to allow tenants and landlords to receive critical financial relief and avoid potential evictions.

In the letter to state officials, the legislative leaders proposed a series of recommendations that would create efficiencies within the court system to align tenants and landlords with access to available funding from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (EARP). Among those recommendations are steps to:

- Ensure housing courts are open and active;
- Facilitate greater coordination between the courts and OTDA to bring more eligible applicants into the program; and
- Require OTDA to have on-site staff in regions of the state where evictions are expected to be more prevalent.

“There is little doubt that these actions will help move funding out the door,” the Leaders wrote. “These proposals are common-sense solutions to real life problems for New Yorkers facing housing instability. As stated before, our court system is the one place where all parties in an eviction proceeding gather. If a tenant is facing eviction, they most likely qualify for New York’s rental assistance program. The court system is a natural intake mechanism for informing New Yorkers about ERAP and assisting them to complete the application process in a timely manner.”

“Senate and Assembly Republicans have [for months](#) been urging the previous Governor’s office and Majority Democrats to release these vital funds to assist both tenants and landlords. The new Governor recently said that she is “not at all satisfied” with the rent relief program, and that distributing the funds would be a top priority for her administration. I agree, and urge the new administration to make these funds accessible. We must continue to focus solely on getting this money out the door -- there are no more excuses,” said Leader Ortt.

[In May](#), Leaders Ortt and Barclay stood with Onondaga County Executive Ryan McMahon to reiterate calls for quicker distribution of rent relief funds. The central New York county has for months operated an efficient rent relief program that could've served as a model for the statewide program.

In more recent months, Senate Republicans have held [virtual listening sessions](#) with stakeholders from the housing community to prepare for the end of the eviction moratorium. Earlier this month, the U.S. Supreme Court partially blocked New York's eviction moratorium. Just yesterday, they blocked the federal eviction moratorium.

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