



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rachel May

Senator Rachel May's Bill to Help Tenants Take Action Against Deplorable Housing Conditions signed by Governor

Dan Messineo

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ISSUE:

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Syracuse, NY -- Senator Rachel May's (D-Onondaga, Cayuga) and Assemblymember Bill Magnarelli's bill, the "Tenant Dignity and Safe Housing Act," was signed into law by Governor Kathy Hochul.

Currently, tenants have few options when facing deplorable conditions that landlords refuse to correct, filing reports that may go unaddressed for months or years, lengthy and costly lawsuits or withholding rent and risking their landlord attempting to evict them for non-payment.

The legislation ([S4594](#)) gives tenants a tool to help remedy poor living conditions caused by consistent housing code violations. It creates a process in local housing courts where tenants can sue due to neglected conditions to fix violations of local or state housing standards and codes. It allows courts to order monetary judgments or reductions in future rent for the diminished value of property. Also, through this bill, the Office of Court Administration will publish simple forms to make it easier for tenants and allows court clerks to assist tenants with completing the forms.

Considering there are existing ordinances like this bill in New York City's five boroughs, it will exempt New York City counties to avoid confusion on the part of tenants, landlords, and the court system.

Our homes should be a place where we can be comfortable and safe; persistent conditions violations create an environment where neither of those is possible. The 'Tenant Dignity and Safe Housing Act' gives tenants a way to ensure landlords maintain their properties, keeping them in good condition and improving the quality of our Upstate housing stock. I want to thank Governor Hochul for signing the bill and Assemblyman Bill Magnarelli for his sponsorship and hard work getting it through the State Assembly. - Senator Rachel May

This has been a long hard-fought battle to get the 'Tenant Dignity and Safe Housing Act' to this point. Even though Syracuse Tenants Union did get everything we wanted to be in this bill, it is a good first step in the right direction for tenants to feel dignity and safety in the homes they pay a significant amount of their income. - Palmer Harvey, founder of the Syracuse Tenants Union

related legislation

[2021-S4594](#)

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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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[Relates to special proceedings by tenants for judgment directing repairs of conditions and other relief in residential real property](#)

February 05, 2021

Passed Assembly

Sponsored by [Rachel May](#)

Do you support this bill?