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**NEW YORK STATE SENATE
INTRODUCER'S MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT
submitted in accordance with Senate Rule VI. Sec 1**

BILL NUMBER:

SPONSOR: ZELDIN

TITLE OF BILL: An act to amend the general business law, mental hygiene law and social services law in relation to sober living homes.

PURPOSE: To improve the operation of sober living homes located within Suffolk county.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS:

Section One contains the declaration of findings and legislative intent.

Section Two amends the general business law to provide for the definition of a sober living home in Suffolk county. It further provides that no owner, operator, or landlord may hold themselves out or advertise to be a "sober living home" in Suffolk county unless they are certified as such.

Section Three amends the mental hygiene law by adding a new article 21 entitled "Certification of Sober Living Homes". This new article provides for a certification process and fees, details circumstances under which a certificate can be revoked, and outlines inspection and violation procedures.

Section Four amends the social services law to ensure that all recipients of public assistance, who reside in sober living homes, live in housing accommodations that are in compliance with all applicable building codes, ordinances, and regulations, with reasonable accommodations provided pursuant to the Federal Fair Housing Act.

Section Five amends the social services law to provide that in the event there are any outstanding violations of law in respect to the sober living home, a public welfare official may withhold a portion of any payment comprising rent, that is made on behalf of a sober living home resident.

JUSTIFICATION: A sober living home is intended to provide affordable, drug and alcohol free environments, for persons who are enrolled in out-patient treatment or recovering from a drug or alcohol addiction. The mission of a sober living home is to promote recovery and allow individuals to become self-supporting. In order to meet this mission, residents must be afforded a safe, sanitary, and secure environment.

There are far too many sober living home operators in Suffolk county who fail to provide the atmosphere necessary for residents to be successful. While there certainly are some well-run sober living homes that truly aim to assist those in recovery, many of these homes are often overcrowded, drug and

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alcohol infested, unsanitary, and incompetently managed. In order to ensure that appropriate living standards are being maintained, regulations pertaining to the operation of sober living homes must be established and enforced.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY: New Bill.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: To be determined.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Effective one year after it shall become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date is authorized to be made on or before such effective date.