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Senator Luis Sepúlveda and the Senate Majority Pass Legislation to Protect Elder New Yorkers

Albany, NY—Senator Luis Sepúlveda and the Senate Democratic Majority advanced legislation to support and protect the rights of elder New Yorkers. This package will prohibit termination of tenancy in certain senior housing facilities, establish the Office of Older Adult Workforce, encourage entrepreneurship for seniors, establish an elder abuse aftercare program, and protect consumers with the creation of the State Office of the Utility Consumer Advocate. These bills will also require elder abuse training for senior service providers, the public posting of a senior trail guide, expanding Medicare eligibility, and will raise the income eligibility limit for rent increase exemptions.

“Over the next 40 years, Americans ages 65 and older will reach 80 million in 2040—more than doubling the current number. Older Americans remain in the workforce longer and face widening economic disparities, especially in our communities of color,” said **Senator Sepúlveda**. “As our population ages, we need to ensure that our seniors are protected throughout their golden years. This bill package would expand Medicare eligibility and senior housing protections, implement elder abuse prevention training for senior service providers and establish an Office of Older Adult Workforce Development within the State Office for the Aging. I am proud to support my Senate colleagues in expanding protections for elder New Yorkers.”

The legislation passed by the Senate Majority includes:

- **Senior Housing Protections:** This bill, [S.1106](#), sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, prohibits the termination of tenancy in housing facilities, with 20 or more units, occupied by senior citizens and/or persons with disabilities without cause or court approval.
- **Office of Older Adult Workforce:** This bill, [S.555A](#), sponsored by Senator Rachel May, will establish an Office of Older Adult Workforce Development within the State Office for the Aging to provide support and services addressing the needs of older adults in the workplace.
- **Encore Entrepreneurs:** This bill, [S.554](#), sponsored by Senator Rachel May, will direct the Office for the Aging and the Department of Economic Development to expand encore entrepreneurship in the state to empower individuals fifty years of age or older to become first-time business owners.
- **Office of the Utility Consumer Advocate:** This bill, [S.4884](#), sponsored by Senator Diane Savino, will establish an independent Office of the Utility Consumer Advocate to advocate for residential utility consumers at both state and federal proceedings.
- **Elder Abuse Shelter Aftercare Demonstration Program:** This bill, [S.1065](#), sponsored by Senator Alessandra Biaggi, will establish an elder abuse shelter aftercare pilot

program to evaluate the effectiveness and potential to expand temporary elder abuse shelters.

- **Elder Abuse Prevention Training:** This bill, [S.5196B](#), sponsored by Senator James Sanders Jr. directs the State Office of the Aging to develop elder abuse prevention training that includes elder abuse detection, reporting, and counseling. Senior service providers are required to take the training and receive supplemental refresher training every 3 years.
- **Senior Trail Guide:** This bill, [S.6208](#), sponsored by Senator Jose M. Serrano mandates the public posting of a senior trail guide that identifies walking and hiking opportunities for active seniors within the state park system and along public non-motorized multi-use trails within the state.
- **Expanding Medicare Eligibility:** This bill, [S.2535A](#), sponsored by Senator Gustavo Rivera will allow individuals who have comparable coverage to a Medicare Part D plan to also be eligible for EPIC if they otherwise qualify.
- **Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption:** This bill, [S.4216](#), sponsored by Senator Toby Ann Stavisky, will raise the income eligibility limits for the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) and the Disabled Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) program to \$55,000 beginning July 1, 2021. These programs exempt low-income seniors and people with disabilities from rent increases that could lead to them losing their homes.

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