



NEWS FROM NEW YORK STATE SENATOR **JAMES SKOUFIS**

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****PRESS RELEASE****

Three Skoufis Bills to Combat Housing Discrimination Signed into Law

Senator James Skoufis (D-Hudson Valley) announced that three of his bills aimed at reducing discriminatory and predatory behavior in the real estate market have been signed into law. The legislation was among a sweeping package of fair housing reforms introduced in the Senate earlier this year, the direct result of an exhaustive investigative report on housing discrimination issued by the Senate Committee on Investigations and Government Operations, which Skoufis chairs.

Following a stunning exposé by *Newsday* on rampant predatory behavior in Long Island's housing market, the committee held multiple joint hearings, issued 25 subpoenas to compel uncooperative realtors and their firms to testify, and ultimately produced a wide-ranging report with recommendations for holding bad actors within the industry accountable.

"The legacy of discrimination in the housing market must be addressed head-on," said **Senator Skoufis**. "With the Governor's signature, we're sending a clear message that discrimination of any kind in the real estate market is dead wrong and won't be tolerated. All prospective homebuyers deserve to be treated fairly and with dignity."

The three Skoufis bills signed by Governor Hochul this week are:

- **S.2133-A:** This bill adds a modest surcharge to the fee paid for issuing or reissuing a real estate broker or salesperson license, which would provide significant funding dedicated to statewide fair housing testing efforts. Testing is an invaluable tool to identify and eliminate where discrimination—especially against minority potential homebuyers—is prevalent.
- **S.2132-B:** The exposé uncovered that real estate instructors are often inconsistent in their training surrounding racial and ethnic discrimination in the housing market. This bill increases the amount and expands the content of required training for real estate brokers and real estate salespeople.

- **S.2131-A:** This bill aims to eliminate the disparate treatment in real estate sales by requiring the standardization of operating procedures utilized by real estate agents, including what documentation is or isn't required from prospective buyers prior to showing listings.

All three bills were supported by the New York State Association of Realtors who worked with Skoufis in an effort to ensure bad actors are rooted out and answerable to the large majority of hardworking real estate professionals who do right by their clients every day.

As chair of Investigations & Government Operations, Skoufis has worked to crack down on waste, fraud, and abuse throughout New York State.. A recent investigation by the committee on misuse of taxpayer dollars and double-dealing by Industrial Development Agencies (IDAs) helped lead to the felony conviction of an Orange County IDA official in August.

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