



LOCAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

New York State Budget

The NYS budget was due on Tuesday, April 1. The Governor is holding out for agreements on four priority policy areas. The legislature passed the third emergency spending bill today. Negotiations seem to be stalled, and it does not seem like the end is near. It could change on a dime, but things are moving very slowly.

STATE LEGISLATION

Rest Act

The REST Act, which is a bill that will make it easier to implement rent control across the state, eliminating the need for a vacancy study, among other items was introduced this year. There has been no action on the state level, since the budget is still be negotiated, both bills are still in committee and have not been placed on an agenda yet. If there is any activity on this bill it will be post-budget. The statewide property and real estate coalition – Homeowners for an Affordable New York, the New York State Realtors Association is an active participant – has resumed their weekly meetings to coordinate advocacy and messaging in their opposition to this and a few other bills.

Housing Justice for All which is the statewide tenant advocacy group, and they seem to be using the same play book that they used to get Good Cause Eviction passed. The City of Kingston is about to vote on a resolution supporting the REST Act.

(A.1865A/S.6729) This legislation provides the ability for tenants to install appliances or fixtures that they have purchased. It was laid aside and therefore not debated.

This is the justification filed by the bill sponsor: When an appliance or a fixture breaks in an apartment, the tenant may be left waiting months for it to be repaired or replaced. During this time, a tenant may have to go without their refrigerator, stove or other appliance, creating a difficult living situation. In some cases, a landlord may even avoid replacing an appliance or fixture with the hope that the frustration will cause the tenant to vacate the unit. If a tenant is willing to bear the expense of replacing an appliance or fixture in their apartment, they should be permitted to do so. This legislation would provide tenants this option, provided that the landlord is aware and such installation would not be in violation of any applicable building codes.

(A.1865A/S.6729) was set on the Assembly Floor calendar for 4/7/25. It was laid aside and therefore not debated

(S.1398/A.6290) This is a Sen. Ryan and Majority Leader Peoples bill. This is the block by block program to provide capital financing for the construction of 1 and 2 family infill homes in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, and Binghamton which was in last year's budget and was included in the Senate one-house budget.

(S.1399A/A.7679) This is a Sen. Ryan and Assemblyman John McDonald (from Albany) bill. The Senate bill was just amended, and it was introduced in the Assembly this week. This bill would create a grant program run by the Housing Trust Fund Corporation that would provide grants of up to \$75,000 to landlords owning buildings of five or fewer units in cities with a population of less than a million people (basically anywhere outside NYC). Units renovated with such grants are required to be rented at an affordable rate to tenants earning 80% AMI or less for a period of ten years. This is also known as the Vacant Rental Improvement Program that provides grants for owners of five or fewer units to bring dilapidated apartments up to code as affordable rentals throughout the state outside of New York City and was included in the Senate one-house budget.

(A.1704/S.72) The Housing Access Voucher Program is an initiative that legislators are trying to get included in the budget agreement at \$250M. This bill was supported by Homeowners for an Affordable New York (the statewide landlord/property owners coalition) offered last year as an alternative to Good Cause Eviction to help with the affordability issue.

CITY OF BUFFALO LEGISLATION

The City of Buffalo passed new regulations on short-term rentals last week, that will go into effect if signed by the Mayor. The full ordinance is attached but as a summary the new regulations will:

- Prohibit non-owner-occupied short-term rentals from operating in residential areas. (STRs not allowed in residential zones N-2R and N-3R)
- Permit non-owner-occupied short-term rentals to operate in commercial areas. (STRs allowed in zones N-2C, N-2E, N-1D, N-1C, N-1S, D-E, D-S, D-C, D-M, N-3C & N3E)
- Continue to permit owner-occupied short-term rentals to operate in multi-family residential areas but not in areas zoned for single-family homes. (STRs not allowed in zones N-4-30, N-4-50, D-R, D-IL, D-IH, D-OS, D-OG, D-ON & C-R)
- Allow homes with three or more units to be used as short-term rentals as long as they are owner-operated.
- Exemptions can be applied for through a special use permit.
- A local property manager is required.
- Properties and property owners must not have any outstanding housing code violations.

The other 2 items passed by the Council adopted a new fee schedule and some changes to the Fair housing office, both are attached.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

STATE WIDE NEWS

Many individual NYC real estate leaders are supporting a Cuomo independent expenditure campaign, but this meeting was with the Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) as an official entity which is meeting with all the mayoral candidates.

LOCAL POLITICS

This is a local political election year so the County Legislature, many Town Boards, Supervisors and Mayors are up for election this year.

The premier race this year is Mayor for the City of Buffalo. It is the first open election in 20 years. Due to the overwhelming enrollment advantage the real race is the Democrat Primary in June although there is a Republican who will be on the ballot in November. Before objections to petitions are argued and/or certified there are 7 candidates in the democratic primary. Additionally, Sen. Sean Ryan has been endorsed by the Working Families Party so he will also be on the November ballot regardless of the June primary outcome.

GOOD CAUSE EVICTION

PUSH Buffalo has an online petition to urge the Buffalo Common Council to opt into Good Cause Eviction. It has been up for several weeks with a goal of 50 signatures. Today when I checked they finally showed 51 signatures and have now extended their goal to 100 signatures.

The Mayor of Binghamton vetoed the Good Cause Eviction bill that was passed by the Council 7-0. After a slight delay the Council voted to override his veto, putting in place Good Cause Eviction in the City of Binghamton.

- The Town of Catskill is prepping for a public hearing on Good Cause Eviction.
- The Town of Poughkeepsie became the first town in Dutchess County to adopt Good Cause of Eviction by a vote 4-3.