



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 142

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature and the Governor to enact legislation to amend the Real Property Tax Law in relation to expanding the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) to senior citizen heads of household occupying units in non-rent regulated buildings, and in buildings not subject to the Private Housing Finance Law.

By Council Members Gerson, Jackson, Addabbo, Jr., Baez, Boyland, Brewer, Clarke, Gentile, Katz, Koppell, Liu, Nelson, Quinn, Recchia, Jr., Reed, Reyna, Sanders, Jr., Seabrook, Sears, Stewart, Vann, Weprin, Yassky, Avella, Fidler, James and Gennaro

Whereas, The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption, or SCRIE, is authorized by New York State Real Property Tax Law Sections 467-b and 467-c; and

Whereas, Section 467-b of the New York State Real Property Tax Law allows exemptions from rent increases to senior citizen heads of household aged sixty-two and older living in rent-controlled and rent-stabilized dwelling units; and

Whereas, In return for rent increase exemptions, building owners are provided property tax abatements; and

Whereas, New York City's authority over rent-regulated dwelling units is limited by the "Urstadt Law," enacted by the State Legislature in 1971, which prohibits the City from enacting any local law that would impose "more stringent or restrictive provisions of regulation and control than those presently in effect"; and

Whereas, City rent regulation laws will expire in April 2006 unless such laws are renewed by the New York State Legislature and Governor Pataki; and

Whereas, Because of the City's limited authority over rent regulation laws, there is a periodic threat that the State will not renew such laws; and

Whereas, Not only would the absence of rent regulation laws nullify the section of law giving SCRIE protection to senior citizens in rent-regulated units, but it would also drive rent to market rates, rendering thousands of low- to moderate-income seniors unable to afford their apartments; and

Whereas, Section 467-c of the Real Property Tax Law also provides rent increase exemptions and tax abatements for senior citizen heads of households aged sixty-two and older occupying units in properties subject to the New York State Private Housing Finance Law, such as Mitchell-Lama cooperative and rental developments; and

Whereas, The Private Housing Finance Law permits limited-profit housing companies, such as those owning Mitchell-Lama developments, to withdraw from the Mitchell-Lama Housing Program after 20 years; and

Whereas, An increasing number of developments are withdrawing from the Mitchell-Lama Housing Program, causing building residents to become ineligible for SCRIE, since the buildings are no longer subject to the Private Housing Finance Law and can only become rent-regulated if they were built before 1974; and

Whereas, In light of the above-mentioned concerns, good public policy requires that SCRIE be expanded to apply to all rental units, including those in non-rent regulated buildings and those in buildings not governed by the Private Housing Finance Law; and

Whereas, The extension of SCRIE protection to seniors residing in all rental units would ensure that even if a building loses rent-regulated status or is withdrawn from an affordable housing program, seniors would not be at risk of being priced out of their apartments; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature and the Governor to enact legislation to amend the Real Property Tax Law to expand the Senior Citizen Rent Increase

Exemption to senior citizen heads of household occupying units in non-rent regulated buildings, and in buildings not subject to the Private Housing Finance Law.

CAB