



City of Rochester, NY
Rochester City Council

City Hall Room 301A • 30 Church Street • Rochester, New York 14614-1290

Loretta C. Scott, President
Councilmember At-Large

Molly Clifford
Councilmember
Northwest District

Malik D. Evans
Councilmember At-Large

Mitch Gruber
Councilmember At-Large

Willie J. Lightfoot
Councilmember At-Large

Jacklyn Ortiz
Councilmember At-Large

Michael A. Patterson
Councilmember
Northeast District

Elaine M. Spaul
Councilmember
East District

April 2, 2019

Hon. Liz Kruger
New York State Senate
28th District Representative
172 State Street - Room 416 CAP
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Senator Kruger:

Housing is a basic human right, and all people deserve clean and safe housing that they can afford. It is with this belief in mind that the Rochester City Council strongly supports efforts to positively reform housing policies across the State of New York. We support innovative solutions that will reduce homelessness, stabilize residents, and provide safe housing for all. As elected representatives serving at the local level, we know the needs of the residents living in our neighborhoods and we know how difficult it can be for individuals and families to find quality, truly affordable housing.

We are writing in support of legislation that you have sponsored in the New York State Legislature that seeks to provide justice in housing. Specifically we are in support of legislation that provides:

- Evictions Protections (Prohibition of Eviction without a Good Cause, Bill No. A05030/S02892
- Home Stability Support (Bill No. A01620/S02375) AND
- Reduction in Public Assistance Sanctions (Bill No. A2455)

We are hopeful that the entire delegation of the City of Rochester will not only support these three pieces of legislation, but also sign on as a co-sponsor. We are grateful to Members of our local delegation Harry Bronson and Jamie Romeo for signing onto Bill No. A01620 for Home Stability Support.

Cities across New York State are seeing the effects of an aging housing stock, and we need to ensure that all residential units are habitable and code compliant. Our City is actively monitoring its housing stock, every year the City of Rochester inspects 14,000 units and issues 4,000 certificates of occupancy which affirms that city inspectors have thoroughly examined rental units for habitability standards.

We have been having serious conversations around affordable housing in our community, and each year hundreds of new affordable units are built within our City. However we know that using the Area Median Income (AMI) of our County (Monroe County) did not accurately reflect the income of many city residents, and that AMI was falsely inflated in the City of Rochester due to a more affluent suburban impact. To address this, we passed legislation that more accurately defines the tiers of affordability, and encourages developers to include units that serve those in need of 30% AMI.

Like you we hear from housing advocates frequently, and we have been told that 62% of tenants in Rochester are rent burdened and paying more than 30% of their income on rent. We have been working with housing advocates, Assemblyman Bronson, and Senator Joseph Robach to advocate for a housing court in Rochester that would provide tenant protections and provide a singular judge that would serve as a consistent authority on code enforcement and habitability.


Solving housing issues is no easy task and we know that an issue of this magnitude cannot be solved through our efforts alone. These policies will be additional tools that will make a profound difference in our battle to eradicate substandard living conditions and ensure our constituents are provided sufficient resources to maintain their housing. We are so grateful for your support of legislation that will positively impact our community.

Sincerely,


Loretta C. Scott


Molly Clifford

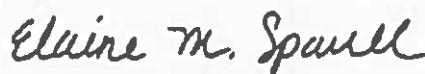

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CC: Hon. Carl Heastie, Speaker, New York State Assembly
Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Temporary President and Majority Leader NYS Senate
Hon. Rich Funke, 55th Senate District Representative
Hon. Joseph E. Robach, 56th Senate District Representative
Hon. Michael H. Ranzenhofer, 61st Senate District Representative
Hon. Jamie Romeo, 136th Assembly District Representative
Hon. David F. Gantt, 137th Assembly District Representative
Hon. Harry B. Bronson 138th Assembly District Representative