

8075

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

June 18, 2013

Introduced by M. of A. SWEENEY, WEISENBERG, JAFFEE, GALEF, HENNESSEY, ENGLEBRIGHT, LAVINE, THIELE, SKOUFIS, GUNTHER, ABINANTI, BUCHWALD, ZEBROWSKI, RAIA -- read once and referred to the Committee on Real Property Taxation

AN ACT to enact the "Superstorm Sandy assessment relief act"; and relating to Suffolk County financing of refunds and credits and to amend the local finance law, in relation to certain real property tax refunds and credits

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

- 1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "Superstorm Sandy assessment relief act".
3 S 2. Definitions. For the purposes of this act, the following terms
4 shall have the following meanings:
5 1. "Eligible county" shall mean a county, other than a county wholly
6 contained within a city, included in FEMA-4085-DR, the notice of the
7 presidential declaration of a major disaster for the state of New York,
8 dated October 30, 2012 and as subsequently amended.
9 2. "Eligible municipality" shall mean a municipal corporation, as
10 defined by subdivision 10 of section 102 of the real property tax law,
11 which is either: (a) an eligible county; or (b) a city, town, village,
12 special district, or school district that is wholly or partly contained
13 within an eligible county.
14 3. "Impacted tax roll" shall mean the final assessment roll which
15 satisfies both of the following conditions: (a) the roll is based upon a
16 taxable status date occurring prior to October 28, 2012; and (b) taxes
17 levied upon that roll by or on behalf of a participating municipality
18 are payable without interest on or after October 28, 2012.
19 4. "Participating municipality" shall mean an eligible municipality
20 that has passed a local law, ordinance, or resolution pursuant to
21 section three of this act to provide assessment relief to property

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [] is old law to be omitted.

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1 owners within such eligible municipality pursuant to the provisions of
2 this act.

3 5. "Superstorm Sandy" shall mean the storms, rains, winds, or floods
4 which occurred within an eligible county during the period beginning on
5 October 29, 2012 and ending November 3, 2012.

6 6. "Total assessed value" shall mean the total assessed value on the
7 parcel prior to any and all exemption adjustments.

8 7. "Improved value" shall mean the market value of the real property
9 improvements excluding the land.

10 8. "Property" shall mean "real property", "property" or "land" as
11 defined under paragraphs (a) through (g) of subdivision 12 of section
12 102 of the real property tax law.

13 S 3. Local option. An eligible municipality may exercise the
14 provisions of this act if its governing body shall, by the forty-fifth
15 day following the date upon which this act is approved by the governor,
16 pass a local law or in the case of a school district a resolution adopt-
17 ing the provisions of this act. An eligible municipality may provide
18 assessment relief for real property impacted by Superstorm Sandy located
19 within such municipality as provided in paragraphs (i), (ii), (iii)
20 and/or (iv) of subdivision (a) of section four of this act only if its
21 governing body specifically elects to do so as part of such local law or
22 resolution.

23 S 4. Assessment relief for Superstorm Sandy victims in an eligible
24 county. (a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, where
25 real property impacted by Superstorm Sandy is located within a partic-
26 ipating municipality, assessment relief shall be granted as follows:

27 (i) If a participating municipality has elected to provide assessment
28 relief for real property that lost at least ten percent but less than
29 twenty percent of its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, the
30 assessed value attributable to the improvements shall be reduced by
31 fifteen percent for purposes of the participating municipality on the
32 impacted tax roll.

33 (ii) If a participating municipality has elected to provide assessment
34 relief for real property that lost at least twenty percent but less than
35 thirty percent of its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, the
36 assessed value attributable to the improvements shall be reduced by
37 twenty-five percent for purposes of the participating municipality on
38 the impacted tax roll.

39 (iii) If a participating municipality has elected to provide assess-
40 ment relief for real property that lost at least thirty percent but less
41 than forty percent of its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, the
42 assessed value attributable to the improvements shall be reduced by
43 thirty-five percent for purposes of the participating municipality on
44 the impacted tax roll.

45 (iv) If a participating municipality has elected to provide assessment
46 relief for real property that lost at least forty percent but less than
47 fifty percent of its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, the
48 assessed value attributable to the improvements shall be reduced by
49 forty-five percent for purposes of the participating municipality on the
50 impacted tax roll.

51 (v) If the property lost at least fifty but less than sixty percent of
52 its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, the assessed value attribut-
53 able to the improvements shall be reduced by fifty-five percent for
54 purposes of the participating municipality on the impacted tax roll.

55 (vi) If the property lost at least sixty but less than seventy percent
56 of its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, the assessed value

1 attributable to the improvements shall be reduced by sixty-five percent
2 for purposes of the participating municipality on the impacted tax roll.

3 (vii) If the property lost at least seventy but less than eighty
4 percent of its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, the assessed
5 value attributable to the improvements shall be reduced by seventy-five
6 percent for purposes of the participating municipality on the impacted
7 tax roll.

8 (viii) If the property lost at least eighty but less than ninety
9 percent of its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, the assessed
10 value attributable to the improvements shall be reduced by eighty-five
11 percent for purposes of the participating municipality on the impacted
12 tax roll.

13 (ix) If the property lost at least ninety but less than one hundred
14 percent of its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, the assessed
15 value attributable to the improvements shall be reduced by ninety-five
16 percent for purposes of the participating municipality on the impacted
17 tax roll.

18 (x) If the property lost one hundred percent of its improved value due
19 to Superstorm Sandy, the assessed value attributable to the improvements
20 shall be reduced by one hundred percent for purposes of the participat-
21 ing municipality on the impacted tax roll.

22 (xi) The percentage loss in improved value for this purpose shall be
23 adopted by the assessor from a written finding of the Federal Emergency
24 Management Agency, or where no such finding exists shall be determined
25 by the assessor in the manner provided by this act, subject to review by
26 the board of assessment review.

27 (xii) No reduction in assessed value shall be granted pursuant to this
28 act except as specified above for such counties. No reduction in
29 assessed value shall be granted pursuant to this section for purposes of
30 any county, city, town, village or school district which has not adopted
31 the provisions of this act.

32 (b) To receive such relief pursuant to this section, the property
33 owner shall submit a written request to the assessor on a form approved
34 by the director of the office of real property tax services within nine-
35 ty days following the date upon which this act is approved by the gover-
36 nor. Such request shall attach any and all determinations by the Federal
37 Emergency Management Agency, and any and all reports by an insurance
38 adjuster, and describe in reasonable detail the damage caused to the
39 property by Superstorm Sandy and the condition of the property following
40 the superstorm and shall be accompanied by supporting documentation, if
41 available.

42 (c) Upon receiving such a request, the assessor shall adopt the find-
43 ing by the Federal Emergency Management Agency or, if such finding does
44 not exist the assessor shall make a finding, as to whether the property
45 lost at least fifty percent of its improved value or, if a participating
46 municipality has elected to provide assessment relief for real property
47 that lost a lesser percentage of improved value, such lesser percentage
48 of its improved value as a result of Superstorm Sandy, and thereafter
49 the assessor, shall adopt or classify the percentage loss of improved
50 value within one of the following ranges:

51 (i) If a participating municipality has elected to provide assessment
52 relief for real property that lost at least ten percent but less than
53 twenty percent of its improvement value due to Superstorm Sandy, at
54 least ten percent but less than twenty percent,

55 (ii) If a participating municipality has elected to provide assessment
56 relief for real property that lost at least twenty percent but less than

1 thirty percent of its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, at least
2 twenty percent but less than thirty percent,
3 (iii) If a participating municipality has elected to provide assess-
4 ment relief for real property that lost at least thirty percent but less
5 than forty percent of its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, at
6 least thirty percent but less than forty percent,
7 (iv) If a participating municipality has elected to provide assessment
8 relief for real property that lost at least forty percent but less than
9 fifty percent of its improved value due to Superstorm Sandy, at least
10 forty percent but less than fifty percent,
11 (v) At least fifty percent but less than sixty percent,
12 (vi) At least sixty percent but less than seventy percent,
13 (vii) At least seventy percent but less than eighty percent,
14 (viii) At least eighty percent but less than ninety percent,
15 (ix) At least ninety percent but less than one hundred percent, or
16 (x) one hundred percent.
17 (d) The assessor shall mail written notice of such finding to the
18 property owner and the participating municipality. Where the assessor
19 finds that the loss in improved value is less than fifty percent or, if
20 a participating municipality has elected to provide assessment relief
21 for real property located within such participating municipality for a
22 lesser percentage, is less than such lesser percentage, or classifies
23 the loss within a lower range than the property owner believes is
24 warranted, the property owner may file a complaint with the board of
25 assessment review. Such board shall reconvene upon ten days written
26 notice to the property owner and assessor to hear the appeal and deter-
27 mine the matter, and shall mail written notice of its determination to
28 the assessor and property owner. The provisions of article 5 of the real
29 property tax law shall govern the review process to the extent practica-
30 ble. For the purposes of this act only, the applicant may commence with-
31 in 30 days of service of a written determination, a proceeding under
32 title 1 of article 7 of the real property tax law, or, if applicable,
33 under title 1-A of article 7 of the real property tax law. Sections 727
34 and 739 of the real property tax law shall not apply.
35 (e) Where property has lost at least fifty percent of its improved
36 value or, if a participating municipality has elected to provide assess-
37 ment relief for real property that lost a lesser percentage of improved
38 value, such lesser percentage due to Superstorm Sandy, the assessed
39 value attributable to the improvements on the property on the impacted
40 assessment roll shall be reduced by the appropriate percentage specified
41 in subdivision (a) of this section, provided that any exemptions which
42 the property may be receiving shall be adjusted as necessary to account
43 for such reduction in the total assessed value. To the extent the total
44 assessed value of the property originally appearing on such roll exceeds
45 the amount to which it should be reduced pursuant to this act, the
46 excess shall be considered an error in essential fact as defined by
47 subdivision 3 of section 550 of the real property tax law. If the error
48 appears on a tax roll, the tax roll shall be corrected in the manner
49 provided by section 554 of the real property tax law or a refund or
50 credit of taxes shall be granted in the manner provided by section 556
51 or section 556-b of the real property tax law. If the error appears on a
52 final assessment roll but not on a tax roll, such final assessment roll
53 shall be corrected in the manner provided by section 553 of the real
54 property tax law. The errors in essential fact found pursuant to the
55 Superstorm Sandy assessment relief act on either the tax roll or final
56 assessment roll, upon application to the county director of real proper-

1 ty tax services, shall be forwarded by the county director of real prop-
2 erty tax services immediately to the levying body for an immediate order
3 setting forth the appropriate correction.

4 (f) The rights contained in this act shall not otherwise diminish any
5 other legally available right of any property owner or party who may
6 otherwise lawfully challenge the valuation or assessment of any real
7 property or improvements thereon. All remaining rights hereby remain and
8 shall be available to the party to whom such rights would otherwise be
9 available notwithstanding this act.

10 S 5. The commissioner of taxation and finance is authorized to develop
11 a guidance memorandum for use by assessing units. Such guidance memoran-
12 dum shall assist with the implementation of this act and shall be deemed
13 to be advisory on all assessing units in counties which implement the
14 provisions of this act. The guidance memorandum shall have no force or
15 effect or serve as authority for any other act of assessing units or of
16 the interpretation or implementation of the laws of the state of New
17 York except as they relate to the specific implementation of this act.

18 S 6. School districts held harmless. Each school district that is
19 wholly or partially contained within an eligible county shall be held
20 harmless by the state for any reduction in state aid that would have
21 been paid as tax savings pursuant to section 1306-a of the real property
22 tax law incurred due to the provisions of this act.

23 S 7. Bonds authorized. Serial bonds, and in advance of such, bond
24 anticipation notes, are hereby authorized pursuant to subdivision 33-b
25 of paragraph a of section 11.00 of the local finance law, provided,
26 however, that any federal community development block grant funding
27 received by such participating municipality, in relation to loss of
28 property tax funding, shall first be used to defease, upon maturity, the
29 interest and principal of any such bond or note so outstanding.

30 S 8. Suffolk County financing of refunds and credits. Payments by
31 Suffolk County for refunds or credits pursuant to the chapter of the
32 laws of 2013 which enacted this section may be financed pursuant to the
33 local finance law in the same manner, and subject to the same condi-
34 tions, as amounts authorized under section 3 of the Suffolk County Tax
35 Act to be charged by Suffolk County to towns or special districts or by
36 towns to school districts may be financed pursuant to the local finance
37 law. The period of probable usefulness for such payments is hereby
38 determined to be ten years.

39 S 9. Paragraph a of section 11.00 of the local finance law is amended
40 by adding a new subdivision 33-b to read as follows:

41 33-B. REAL PROPERTY TAX REFUNDS AND CREDITS. PAYMENTS OF EXEMPTIONS,
42 REFUNDS, OR CREDITS FOR REAL PROPERTY TAX, SEWER AND WATER RENTS, RATES
43 AND CHARGES AND ALL OTHER REAL PROPERTY TAXES TO BE MADE BY A MUNICI-
44 PALITY, SCHOOL DISTRICT OR DISTRICT CORPORATION AS A RESULT OF PARTIC-
45 IPATING IN THE SUPERSTORM SANDY ASSESSMENT RELIEF ACT, TEN YEARS.

46 S 10. Severability clause. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdi-
47 vision, section or part of this act shall be adjudged by any court of
48 competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect,
49 impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in
50 its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section
51 or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judg-
52 ment shall have been rendered. It is hereby declared to be the intent of
53 the legislature that this act would have been enacted even if such
54 invalid provisions had not been included herein.

55 S 11. This act shall take effect immediately and shall be deemed to
56 have been in full force and effect on and after October 28, 2012.