

3956

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N S E N A T E

February 28, 2013

Introduced by Sen. GRISANTI -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to the universal design incentive

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

1 Section 1. Legislative intent and findings. The legislature hereby  
2 finds that the availability of accessible housing opportunities is vital  
3 to the safety and welfare of persons with limited mobility including  
4 seniors and persons with either permanent or temporary physical disabili-  
5 ties.

6 This act provides for a Universal Design Incentive (UDI) permit fee  
7 structure and other benefits that reduce the cost and time needed to  
8 create accessible and adaptable housing. An increase in the inventory of  
9 such single and multi-family dwellings is needed to meet the needs of a  
10 growing number of residents and visitors with disabilities and for those  
11 who wish to retire in their own homes as is commonly referred to as the  
12 ability to "age-in-place".

13 The legislature hereby provides this UDI legislation to stimulate the  
14 development of adaptable and accessible housing by offering permits for  
15 both new dwellings and for alterations to existing dwellings under an  
16 incentive based fee structure with expedited application processing. The  
17 UDI also provides for the exemption from certain dimensional (setback)  
18 requirements for alterations to existing dwellings that are necessary to  
19 create an accessible entryway. Further, the UDI provides for an  
20 exemption from maximum floor area and lot coverage calculations for new  
21 and substantially altered single family dwellings. This act is intended  
22 to encourage and expedite the development of additional local housing  
23 opportunities for independent living.

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

LBD09442-01-3

1 The legislature seeks to facilitate the alteration of existing homes  
2 and the construction of new single and multi-family dwellings that are  
3 accessible or may be readily made accessible for seniors and other  
4 persons with limited mobility such as persons with disabilities.

5 The legislature hereby finds that the inclusion of certain accessible  
6 and adaptable dwelling design features into the construction of new  
7 dwelling units as well as the alteration of existing dwelling units will  
8 allow seniors and persons with disabilities greater opportunity to occu-  
9 py or visit homes within New York state and, to age in place which  
10 avoids the considerable cost to retirees, their families and often to  
11 New York state for unnecessary and unwanted residencies in assisted  
12 living or nursing care facilities.

13 Therefore, this act is necessary to expand the inventory of housing  
14 opportunities that are defined as accessible or adaptable.

15 S 2. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 378-a to  
16 read as follows:

17 S 378-A. UNIVERSAL DESIGN INCENTIVE. THE NEW YORK STATE UNIFORM FIRE  
18 PREVENTION AND BUILDING CODE SHALL CONTAIN THE PROVISIONS SET FORTH IN  
19 THIS SECTION.

20 1. AS USED IN THIS SECTION, THE FOLLOWING DEFINITIONS SHALL APPLY:

21 A. "ACCESSIBLE" MEANS A BUILDING OR PORTION THEREOF THAT CAN BE  
22 APPROACHED, ENTERED AND USED BY PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES.

23 B. "ACCESSIBLE DOOR" MEANS A THIRTY-SIX INCH DOOR THAT WHEN HUNG IN  
24 THE STANDARD MANNER PROVIDES A MINIMUM CLEARANCE OF THIRTY-TWO INCHES  
25 WITH NO MORE THAN ONE-QUARTER INCH BEVELED THRESHOLDS AND EQUIPPED OR  
26 EASILY REFITTED WITH LEVER-TYPE DOOR HANDLES.

27 C. "ADAPTABLE" MEANS LIVING SPACE WHICH MAY BE READILY CONVERTED WITH-  
28 OUT DEMOLITION AND WITH MINIMAL EFFORT AND COST INTO LIVING SPACE THAT  
29 IS ACCESSIBLE.

30 D. "BATHROOM" MEANS A ROOM COMMONLY CONTAINING A TOILET, SINK, AND  
31 EITHER A SHOWER, BATHTUB, COMBINATION BATHTUB/SHOWER, OR BOTH A SHOWER  
32 AND A BATHTUB. THIS TERM SHALL INCLUDE A COMPARTMENTED BATHROOM IN WHICH  
33 THE FIXTURES ARE DISTRIBUTED AMONG INTERCONNECTED ROOMS.

34 E. "BUILDING OFFICIAL" MEANS A PERSON DESIGNATED BY THE SECRETARY WHO  
35 SHALL OVERSEE THAT THE PROVISIONS SET FORTH IN THIS SECTION ARE ADHERED  
36 TO.

37 F. "COMMON USE ROOM" MEANS A ROOM COMMONLY USED BY RESIDENTS OR GUESTS  
38 TO CONGREGATE.

39 G. "DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS" MEANS ANY LOCAL ZONING ORDINANCES  
40 GOVERNING THE SIZE OF ANY STRUCTURES ON A BUILDING LOT. THIS TERM SHALL  
41 INCLUDE SETBACK REQUIREMENTS.

42 H. "DWELLING UNIT" MEANS ONE OR MORE ROOMS IN A BUILDING THAT ARE  
43 ARRANGED, DESIGNED, USED OR INTENDED FOR USE BY ONE OR MORE FAMILIES.

44 I. "FLEX ROOM" MEANS A COMMON USE ROOM THAT CAN BE CONVERTED TO A  
45 PRIVATE BEDROOM WITHOUT DEMOLITION, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THAT WHICH IS  
46 REQUIRED FOR INSTALLING A DOOR IN AN EXISTING WALL OPENING. A FLEX ROOM  
47 MUST MEET SUCH CODE REQUIREMENTS AS MAY BE ADOPTED FOR FUTURE USE AS A  
48 BEDROOM INCLUDING EGRESS AND SMOKE DETECTION.

49 J. "KITCHEN" MEANS A ROOM USED FOR THE COOKING OR WARMING OF FOOD.

50 K. "LOT COVERAGE RESTRICTIONS" MEANS ANY LOCAL ZONING ORDINANCES  
51 GOVERNING THE RATIO OF THE OCCUPIED AREA TO THE TOTAL AREA OF A BUILDING  
52 LOT. THE OCCUPIED AREA REFERS TO THE AREA OF A BUILDING LOT WHICH IS  
53 COVERED BY BUILDINGS, DRIVEWAYS AND OTHER STRUCTURES.

54 L. "POWDER ROOM" MEANS A ROOM CONTAINING A TOILET AND SINK, BUT NO  
55 BATHTUB OR SHOWER. IT INCLUDES A COMPARTMENTED POWDER ROOM IN WHICH THE  
56 FIXTURES ARE DISTRIBUTED AMONG INTERCONNECTED ROOMS.

1 M. "SETBACK REQUIREMENTS" MEANS ANY LOCAL ZONING ORDINANCES GOVERNING  
2 HOW CLOSE TO A PROPERTY LINE ANY BUILDING MAY BE BUILT.

3 N. "UNIVERSAL DESIGN INCENTIVE" MEANS THE FEE REDUCTIONS SET FORTH IN  
4 SUBDIVISION TWO OF THIS SECTION.

5 2. THE SECRETARY SHALL GRANT SUCH NEW BUILDING OR BUILDING ALTERATION  
6 PERMIT FEE REDUCTIONS AS HE OR SHE DEEMS SUFFICIENT TO ENCOURAGE THE  
7 EXPEDITED DEVELOPMENT OF NEW DWELLING UNITS OR THE SUBSTANTIAL ALTER-  
8 ATION OF EXISTING SINGLE AND MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING UNITS THAT ARE TO BE  
9 ACCESSIBLE OR ADAPTABLE TO PERSONS WITH EITHER TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT  
10 PHYSICAL DISABILITIES.

11 3. TO QUALIFY FOR THE UNIVERSAL DESIGN INCENTIVE, APPLICATIONS FOR NEW  
12 OR SUBSTANTIALLY ALTERED EXISTING SINGLE OR MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING UNITS  
13 SHALL CONTAIN AN:

14 A. ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCEWAY AND ACCESSIBLE INTERNAL ROUTE OF TRAVEL.  
15 THIS REQUIRES:

16 (I) ONE UNOBSTRUCTED WALKWAY OF AT LEAST THIRTY-SIX INCHES IN WIDTH  
17 WITH AN APPROACH SLOPE OF NOT MORE THAN 1CONSUMER PROTECTION FROM THE  
18 DRIVEWAY OR PUBLIC SIDEWALK TO THE ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCEWAY;

19 (II) ONE STEP-FREE ENTRY AT ANY OPENING OF THE DWELLING (FRONT, BACK,  
20 SIDE, GARAGE) THAT IS IDENTIFIED AS THE ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCEWAY;

21 (III) ALL EXTERIOR HINGED DOORS TO BE ACCESSIBLE DOORS WITH A MINIMUM  
22 OF THIRTY-TWO INCH INTERNAL CLEARANCE AND WITH NO MORE THAN ONE-QUARTER  
23 INCH BEVELED THRESHOLDS AND EQUIPPED OR EASILY REFITTED WITH LEVER-TYPE  
24 DOOR HANDLES;

25 (IV) ALL INTERIOR HINGED DOORS WITH LANDINGS TO BE A MINIMUM OF THIR-  
26 TY-SIX INCHES WIDE (THIRTY-TWO INCH INTERNAL CLEARANCE) WITH NO MORE  
27 THAN ONE-QUARTER INCH BEVELED THRESHOLDS AND EQUIPPED OR EASILY REFITTED  
28 WITH LEVER-TYPE DOOR HANDLES;

29 (V) ONE DEDICATED POWER SOURCE AT ALL INTERIOR STAIRS LEADING TO HABI-  
30 TABLE SPACE FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE CHAIR LIFT INSTALLATION; AND

31 (VI) AN ACCESSIBLE ROUTE CONNECTING THE ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCEWAY WITH  
32 ALL ACCESSIBLE DWELLING SPACE, INCLUDING THE ACCESSIBLE POWDER ROOM,  
33 BATHROOM, KITCHEN, FLEX ROOM OR BEDROOM AND OTHER COMMON USE ROOMS ON  
34 THE ACCESSIBLE LEVEL OF THE DWELLING.

35 B. ACCESSIBLE BEDROOM OR FLEX ROOM ON THE GROUND/FIRST FLOOR OF DWELL-  
36 ING. THIS REQUIRES:

37 (I) ONE ACCESSIBLE BEDROOM ON THE GROUND/FIRST FLOOR; OR

38 (II) ONE FLEX ROOM ON THE GROUND/FIRST FLOOR. A FLOOR PLAN DESIGN  
39 SHALL DEMONSTRATE HOW A COMMON USE ROOM CAN BE CONVERTED INTO A PRIVATE  
40 BEDROOM WITHOUT DEMOLITION, EXCEPT FOR THAT WHICH IS REQUIRED FOR  
41 INSTALLATION OF A DOOR IN AN EXISTING WALL OPENING.

42 C. ACCESSIBLE OR ADAPTABLE KITCHEN. THIS REQUIRES:

43 (I) ONE ACCESSIBLE OR ADAPTABLE KITCHEN; OR

44 (II) AS DEFINED BY THE BUILDING OFFICIAL, A KITCHEN THAT PROVIDES  
45 ADEQUATE WHEELCHAIR ACCESS AND CIRCULATION WITH ACCESSIBLE LIGHT, VENT,  
46 OVEN AND STOVETOP CONTROLS AS WELL AS BREAKAWAY CABINETRY UNDER THE SINK  
47 FOR EASE OF FUTURE MODIFICATION FOR WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY.

48 D. ACCESSIBLE BATHROOM OR ADAPTABLE POWDER ROOM ON THE GROUND/FIRST  
49 FLOOR. THIS REQUIRES:

50 (I) AN INTERIOR SIXTY INCH CLEAR TURNING RADIUS;

51 (II) A WALL BLOCKING FOR FUTURE GRAB BARS;

52 (III) FAUCETS TO BE LEVER-TYPE AND PREFERABLY SINGLE LEVER OR ARE  
53 EASILY REFITTED AS SUCH; AND

54 (IV) EITHER:

55 (A) A STEP-FREE TUB OR ROLL-IN SHOWER WITH WALL BLOCKING AND GRAB  
56 BARS; OR

1 (B) SUFFICIENT SPACE FOR FUTURE ACCESSIBLE SHOWER OR ACCESSIBLE BATH  
2 THAT DOES NOT ENCROACH ON THE REQUIRED SIXTY INCH TURNING RADIUS.  
3 ADAPTABLE PLUMBING SHALL BE PROVIDED FOR THE FUTURE INSTALLATION OF A  
4 STEP-FREE TUB OR ROLL-IN SHOWER, BROUGHT TO THE FLOOR AND WALLS AND  
5 CAPPED-OFF FOR FUTURE USE.

6 4. A. AN EXEMPTION FROM ANY SETBACK REQUIREMENTS SHALL BE GRANTED FOR  
7 ANY ALTERATIONS, SUCH AS AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT-COMPLIANT  
8 WHEELCHAIR RAMPS, FOR EXISTING DWELLINGS THAT PROVIDE ONE ACCESSIBLE  
9 ENTRYWAY FOR PERSONS WITH QUALIFYING DISABILITIES.

10 B. SUCH EXEMPTION SHALL BE GRANTED ONLY WHEN THE BUILDING OFFICIAL  
11 DETERMINES THAT NO PRACTICAL AND CONFORMING ACCESSIBLE PATHWAY TO ANY  
12 ENTRYWAY EXISTS.

13 C. SUCH EXEMPTION SHALL NOT APPLY TO ANY HISTORIC AND/OR CULTURAL  
14 PLACE OR PROPERTY OR ANY REGISTERED PROPERTY AS THOSE TERMS ARE DEFINED  
15 BY SECTION SIXTY-ONE OF THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS LAW, OR ANY HISTORIC  
16 DISTRICT AS DEFINED BY SECTION ONE HUNDRED NINETEEN-BB OF THE GENERAL  
17 MUNICIPAL LAW; PROVIDED, HOWEVER THAT EXEMPTIONS FOR SUCH PROPERTIES MAY  
18 BE AUTHORIZED BY THE BUILDING OFFICIAL UPON REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE  
19 NEW YORK STATE COMMISSIONER OF PARKS, RECREATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVA-  
20 TION.

21 5. EXEMPTIONS FROM CERTAIN DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS AND LOT COVERAGE  
22 RESTRICTIONS FOR THE MINIMUM ADDITIONAL LIVING AREA REQUIRED SHALL BE  
23 GRANTED TO PROVIDE:

24 A. ONE ACCESSIBLE BATHROOM OR ADAPTABLE BATHROOM THAT IS ACCESSED FROM  
25 THE ACCESSIBLE GROUND/FIRST FLOOR LIVING AREA AND FROM BOTH THE ACCESSI-  
26 BLE ENTRYWAY OF THE DWELLING UNIT AND THE ACCESSIBLE INTERIOR ROUTE OF  
27 TRAVEL; AND

28 B. ONE ACCESSIBLE BEDROOM OR FLEX ROOM WHICH IS ACCESSED FROM THE  
29 ACCESSIBLE GROUND/FIRST FLOOR LIVING AREA AND FROM THE ACCESSIBLE ENTRY-  
30 WAY OF THE DWELLING UNIT AND THE ACCESSIBLE INTERIOR ROUTE OF TRAVEL.

31 6. A. AN EXEMPTION OF FIFTY SQUARE FEET FROM DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS  
32 (INCLUDING BUILDING SETBACK REQUIREMENTS) AND LOT COVERAGE RESTRICTIONS  
33 SHALL BE GRANTED FOR ANY LIVING AREA WHICH EQUALS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
34 THAT WHICH IS NEEDED TO CONSTRUCT A MINIMUM SIZED POWDER ROOM AND AN  
35 ADAPTABLE OR ACCESSIBLE BATHROOM.

36 B. AN EXEMPTION OF ONE HUNDRED SQUARE FEET FROM DIMENSIONAL REQUIRE-  
37 MENTS (INCLUDING BUILDING SETBACK REQUIREMENTS) AND LOT COVERAGE  
38 RESTRICTIONS SHALL BE GRANTED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ANY ADDITIONAL  
39 LIVING AREA ON THE GROUND/FIRST FLOOR THAT CAN BE IDENTIFIED BY THE  
40 BUILDING OFFICIAL AS A 10'X10' ACCESSIBLE BEDROOM OR FLEX ROOM. THE  
41 ACCESSIBLE BEDROOM OR FLEX ROOM SHALL NOT PRECLUDE THE CONTINUED USE OF  
42 GROUND/FIRST FLOOR LIVING AREAS CUSTOMARILY KNOWN AS THE LIVING, DINING  
43 OR KITCHEN COMMON USE AREAS.

44 C. TO QUALIFY FOR THE EXEMPTION SET FORTH IN PARAGRAPH B OF THIS  
45 SUBDIVISION, APPLICANTS MUST APPLY CONCURRENTLY FOR THE EXEMPTION SET  
46 FORTH IN PARAGRAPH A OF THIS SUBDIVISION.

47 D. PURSUANT TO THE EXEMPTIONS SET FORTH IN THIS SUBDIVISION, FRONT AND  
48 REAR EXTERIOR WALLS MAY ENCROACH INTO MINIMUM BUILDING SETBACK LINES BY  
49 A MAXIMUM OF FIVE FEET FOR A TOTAL OF ONE HUNDRED FIFTY SQUARE FEET WHEN  
50 BOTH A GROUND FLOOR ACCESSIBLE BATHROOM AND FLEX ROOM ARE INCORPORATED  
51 INTO THE PLAN DOCUMENTS AND APPROVED BY THE BUILDING OFFICIAL.

52 7. ANY EXEMPTIONS PROVIDED FOR IN THIS SECTION SHALL NOT BE APPLIED TO  
53 ANY NEW OR SUBSTANTIALLY RENOVATED DWELLING UNITS THAT ARE OTHERWISE  
54 REQUIRED TO BE ACCESSIBLE PURSUANT TO ANY OTHER NEW YORK STATE OR LOCAL  
55 LAW OR REGULATION INCLUDING THE FAIR HOUSING ACT.

1 8. ANY EXEMPTIONS PROVIDED FOR IN THIS SECTION SHALL NOT BE APPLIED TO  
2 BUILDING APPLICATIONS FOR DWELLING UNITS OVER TWO THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED  
3 SQUARE FEET.

4 9. EXEMPTION FROM DIMENSIONAL AND LOT COVERAGE REQUIREMENTS SHALL NOT  
5 APPLY TO PRE-EXISTING NON-CONFORMING DWELLING UNITS AND NON-CONFORMING  
6 LOTS UNLESS AUTHORIZED BY THE LOCAL ZONING APPEALS OFFICER. SUCH APPLI-  
7 CATIONS SHALL BE CONSIDERED WITHOUT CHARGE BY SUCH AGENT.

8 10. APPLICATION FEES MAY BE REDUCED FOR APPLICATIONS TO ALTER EXISTING  
9 DWELLING UNITS THAT DEMONSTRATE TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE BUILDING  
10 OFFICIAL THAT COMPLIANCE WITH THE FOUR REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN SUBDI-  
11 VISION THREE OF THIS SECTION IS IMPRACTICABLE DUE TO CONSTRAINTS WHICH  
12 ARE NOT SELF-IMPOSED.

13 S 3. This act shall take effect January 1, 2014; provided, however,  
14 that effective immediately, the department of state may prescribe such  
15 rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of  
16 this act.