

# STATE OF NEW YORK

6449--A

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

March 7, 2017

Introduced by M. of A. BUCHWALD, MAYER, M. G. MILLER, ABINANTI, SOLAGES, GOTTFRIED, SIMON, MOSLEY, BLAKE, SEAWRIGHT, CAHILL, JAFFEE, JOYNER, PEOPLES-STOKES, HYNDMAN, HOOPER, BICHOTTE, ORTIZ, STECK, BARRETT, OTIS, CRESPO, WILLIAMS, SEPULVEDA, BARNWELL -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. COOK, GIGLIO, GLICK, KEARNS, LENTOL, MAGEE -- read once and referred to the Committee on Aging -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the real property law, in relation to prohibiting the termination of tenancy in certain housing occupied by senior citizens and/or persons with disabilities

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The real property law is amended by adding a new section 228-a to read as follows:

§ 228-a. Tenancy in rental buildings; senior citizens; persons with disabilities. 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of section two hundred twenty-eight of this article or any other provision to the contrary, if substantially all of the lessees or tenants occupying units in a rental building are over sixty-five years of age and/or are persons with disabilities, the lessor may not terminate or fail to renew a lease for premises in such building or terminate a tenancy at will or at sufferance, except for cause involving actions of the tenant that violate the terms of the lease, such as the non-payment of rent, without the prior approval of a court of competent jurisdiction. In determining whether to grant approval, the court shall consider factors including: whether the lessor is operating the rental building at a profit or loss; the need for any major capital repairs or improvements that cannot be performed while the tenants are in occupancy; any written or oral representations made by the lessor to tenants about how long they could remain in occupancy; any alternative housing being offered by the

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

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1 lessor, the number of affected tenants; and the length of time the  
2 affected tenants have lived in their apartments. At the time of filing  
3 any action affecting more than one lease and seeking such prior approval  
4 from a court of competent jurisdiction, the lessor shall notify all the  
5 lessees and tenants occupying units in the rental building that are over  
6 sixty-five years of age and/or are persons with disabilities of the  
7 filing of such action. The lessor shall also notify at such time any  
8 village, town, city and county, except counties inside the city of New  
9 York, in which such rental building is located of the filing of such  
10 action. While such action is pending, the lessor shall notify any  
11 prospective lessee or tenant prior to the signing of a lease for prem-  
12 ises in such rental building of the pendency of such action.

13 2. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, a lessor of a rental  
14 building where substantially all of the lessees or tenants occupying  
15 units in the rental building are over sixty-five years of age and/or are  
16 persons with disabilities may not increase the rent in such rental  
17 building by more than one percent above the percentage change in the  
18 consumer price index since the start of the tenancy or most recent  
19 renewal, whichever is more recent at the time of renewal of a lease and  
20 may not increase the rent more than one time annually.

21 3. Every lessor of rental buildings where substantially all of the  
22 lessees or tenants occupying units are over sixty-five years of age  
23 and/or are persons with disabilities, shall notify prospective tenants  
24 of the provision of this section. Such notice shall be in writing, upon  
25 the rental application, and shall include, in plain and simple English,  
26 in conspicuous print of at least eighteen point type, an explanation of  
27 a tenant's rights under this section and all other applicable require-  
28 ments and duties relating thereto.

29 Such notice shall read as follows:

30 NOTICE TO SENIOR CITIZENS AND/OR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES:

31 BUILDING TENANCY

32 SECTION 228-A OF THE REAL PROPERTY LAW OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
33 PROHIBITS A LESSOR FROM TERMINATING OR FAILING TO RENEW A LEASE OR  
34 TENANCY FOR PREMISES IN CERTAIN HOUSING FOR SENIOR CITIZENS AND/OR  
35 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, EXCEPT FOR CAUSE.

36 (CONSULT SECTION 228-A OF THE REAL PROPERTY LAW FOR SPECIFIC  
37 INFORMATION AND CRITERIA.)

38 4. Any lessor who violates the provisions of this section shall be  
39 liable to the lessee or tenant affected thereby for reasonable costs,  
40 including reasonable attorney's fees, which fees shall be taxed and  
41 collected as a part of the costs in the action, and for the reasonable  
42 expenses incurred by the affected lessee or tenant in relocating to a  
43 new residence. Additionally, lessors shall return initiation fees and  
44 security deposits to lessees or tenants, where appropriate. An action  
45 to recover for such loss, damage or injury may be brought in any court  
46 of competent jurisdiction by the affected tenant or lessee.

47 5. As used in this section:

48 (a) "lessor" means the owner or landlord of a rental building, or his  
49 or her agent;

50 (b) "person with a disability" means an individual who is currently  
51 receiving social security disability insurance (SSDI) or supplemental  
52 security income (SSI) benefits under the federal social security act or  
53 disability pension or disability compensation benefits provided by the  
54 United States department of veterans affairs or those previously eligi-  
55 ble by virtue of receiving disability benefits under the supplemental  
56 security income program or the social security disability program and

1 currently receiving medical assistance benefits based on determination  
2 of disability as provided in section three hundred sixty-six of the  
3 social services law;

4 (c) "rental building" means twenty or more residential units; and

5 (d) "substantially all" means approximately eighty percent or more of  
6 the lessees or tenants occupying units in a rental building, provided  
7 that the court need not rely on a strict percentage when, in its deter-  
8 mination, the interests of justice warrant it.

9 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.