

STATE OF NEW YORK

3358--A

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 6, 2019

Introduced by Sens. JACKSON, BIAGGI -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, the emergency tenant protection act of nineteen seventy-four, the emergency housing rent control law and the real property law, in relation to prohibiting charges for legal fees

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

1 Section 1. The administrative code of the city of New York is amended
2 by adding a new section 26-416 to read as follows:

3 § 26-416 Unauthorized legal fees. An owner, lessor or agent thereof
4 shall be prohibited from assessing a lessee any fee, surcharge or other
5 charges for legal services in connection with the operation or rental of
6 a residential unit unless the owner, lessor or agent has the legal
7 authority to do so pursuant to a court order. Legal services include,
8 but are not limited to, court fees, legal representation, attorney fees,
9 notary public charges, and administrative fees incurred by the owner,
10 lessor or agent in connection with management of the building, including
11 actions and proceedings in a court of law. Any agreement or assessment
12 to the contrary shall be void as contrary to public policy.

13 § 2. Section 6 of section 4 of chapter 576 of the laws of 1974,
14 constituting the emergency tenant protection act of nineteen seventy-
15 four, is amended by adding a new subdivision f-1 to read as follows:

16 f-1. An owner, lessor or agent thereof shall be prohibited from
17 assessing a lessee any fee, surcharge or other charges for legal
18 services in connection with the operation or rental of a residential
19 unit unless the owner, lessor or agent has the legal authority to do so
20 pursuant to a court order. Legal services include, but are not limited

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

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1 to, court fees, legal representation, attorney fees, notary public
2 charges, and administrative fees incurred by the owner, lessor or agent
3 in connection with management of the building, including actions and
4 proceedings in a court of law. Any agreement or assessment to the
5 contrary shall be void as contrary to public policy.

6 § 3. Section 26-512 of the administrative code of the city of New York
7 is amended by adding a new subdivision g to read as follows:

8 g. An owner, lessor or agent thereof shall be prohibited from assess-
9 ing a lessee any fee, surcharge or other charges for legal services in
10 connection with the operation or rental of a residential unit unless the
11 owner, lessor or agent has the legal authority to do so pursuant to a
12 court order. Legal services include, but are not limited to, court
13 fees, legal representation, attorney fees, notary public charges, and
14 administrative fees incurred by the owner, lessor or agent in connection
15 with management of the building, including actions and proceedings in a
16 court of law. Any agreement or assessment to the contrary shall be void
17 as contrary to public policy.

18 § 4. Subdivision 4 of section 4 of chapter 274 of the laws of 1946,
19 constituting the emergency housing rent control law, is amended by
20 adding a new paragraph (f) to read as follows:

21 (f) An owner, lessor or agent thereof shall be prohibited from assess-
22 ing a lessee any fee, surcharge or other charges for legal services in
23 connection with the operation or rental of a residential unit unless the
24 owner, lessor or agent has the legal authority to do so pursuant to a
25 court order. Legal services include, but are not limited to, court
26 fees, legal representation, attorney fees, notary public charges, and
27 administrative fees incurred by the owner, lessor or agent in connection
28 with management of the building, including actions and proceedings in a
29 court of law. Any agreement or assessment to the contrary shall be void
30 as contrary to public policy.

31 § 5. The real property law is amended by adding a new section 234-a to
32 read as follows:

33 § 234-a. Unauthorized legal fees. An owner, lessor or agent thereof
34 shall be prohibited from assessing a lessee any fee, surcharge or other
35 charges for legal services in connection with the operation or rental of
36 a residential unit unless the owner, lessor or agent has the legal
37 authority to do so pursuant to a court order. Legal services include,
38 but are not limited to, court fees, legal representation, attorney fees,
39 notary public charges, and administrative fees incurred by the owner,
40 lessor or agent in connection with management of the building, including
41 actions and proceedings in a court of law. Any agreement or assessment
42 to the contrary shall be void as contrary to public policy.

43 § 6. This act shall take effect immediately; provided that: (a)
44 section 26-416 of the city rent and rehabilitation law as added by
45 section one of this act shall remain in full force and effect only as
46 long as the public emergency requiring the regulation and control of
47 residential rents and evictions continues, as provided in subdivision 3
48 of section 1 of the local emergency housing rent control act;

49 (b) the amendments to section 4 of chapter 576 of the laws of 1974
50 constituting the emergency tenant protection act of nineteen seventy-
51 four made by section two of this act shall expire on the same date as
52 such act expires and shall not affect the expiration of such act as
53 provided in section 17 of chapter 576 of the laws of 1974;

54 (c) the amendments to section 26-512 of chapter 4 of title 26 of the
55 administrative code of the city of New York, made by section three of
56 this act shall expire on the same date as such law expires and shall not

1 affect the expiration of such law as provided under section 26-520 of
2 such law; and
3 (d) the amendments to section 4 of the emergency housing rent control
4 law made by section four of this act shall expire on the same date as
5 such law expires and shall not affect the expiration of such law as
6 provided in subdivision 2 of section 1 of chapter 274 of the laws of
7 1946.