STATE OF NEW YORK

2523--A

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 21, 2025

Introduced by Sens. RAMOS, ADDABBO, COMRIE, HARCKHAM, JACKSON, LIU, PARKER, RIVERA, C. RYAN, SALAZAR, SANDERS, SCARCELLA-SPANTON, SERRANO, STAVISKY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development -- recommitted to the Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the private housing finance law, in relation to establishing a jobs and housing pilot program to create jobs in the construction industry and address the housing crisis

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

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "jobs and housing act".

§ 2. Legislative intent. 1. The legislature finds and declares that New York state is in the midst of a jobs and housing crisis. More than half of renters statewide are rent-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on rent. Over 60,000 New Yorkers are homeless. Home ownership has slipped out of reach for an entire generation, cracking the foundation of the American Dream and threatening to deepen the racial wealth gap. The backbone of New York state's existing supply of affordable housing is in jeopardy; new unfunded renewable energy mandates threaten to impose extraordinary capital costs on Mitchell-Lama and similar limited equity cooperatives built by labor unions that will push them out of affordability.

2. The housing crisis has also become a labor crisis due to shortages of workforce housing. Over 500,000 people left New York state in 2022, driven out of the state by high housing costs. Working families and talented professionals are leaving New York in search of a path to homeownership, or at least housing they can afford. In New York city,

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

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civil service positions that require residency, once highly sought-after as a ticket to middle-class stability, have now become harder to fill. New York state must dramatically expand its supply of affordable housing to remain competitive in the global economy.

3. The housing crisis is exacerbating a crisis of good jobs, which in turn exacerbates the housing crisis. Median real household income has declined by 7.2% in New York state since 2019. Workers are squeezed by skyrocketing housing costs on the one hand, and stagnant real wages on the other. Historically, union careers in the construction industry have been a pathway to the middle class for thousands of New Yorkers, particularly immigrant workers, workers of color, and workers without college degrees, but since 2019, the industry lost over 44,400 jobs due to the pandemic. Public spending on residential housing construction is urgently needed to close the gap by creating good jobs for working people in New York state, which will result in a virtuous cycle of increased consumer spending to sustain economic growth.

4. The housing crisis threatens to deepen the racial wealth gap in New York state. White households are more than twice as likely to own their own homes than Black or Latino households in New York state. Decades of racial discrimination through redlining, restrictive covenants, and most recently, predatory lending have prevented Black and Latino families from accessing the wealth-building engine of home ownership. This has contributed to a massive racial wealth gap: in New York state, median White household net worth is $276,900, while Black median household net worth is $18,870. The housing crisis threatens to deepen this disparity by pushing home ownership further out of reach for Black and Latino households.

5. The current model of housing development is not working for working people and threatens the economic vitality of our state. It is therefore in the interests of the people of New York to pilot a new approach to creating good jobs and affordable workforce housing.

§ 3. The private housing finance law is amended by adding a new article 31-A to read as follows:

ARTICLE 31-A
JOBS AND HOUSING ACT

Section 1283. Short title.
1284. Definitions.
1285. Jobs and housing pilot program.
1286. Report.

§ 1283. Short title. This article shall be known and may be cited as the "jobs and housing pilot program".

§ 1284. Definitions. For the purposes of this article:

1. "Agency" shall mean the housing finance agency established pursuant to section forty-three of this chapter.

2. "Eligible project" shall mean preservation of buildings owned under article two, four, five, or eleven of this chapter and operated as cooperative housing or new construction of rental or ownership multiple dwellings affordable to persons of low and moderate incomes.

3. "Project labor agreement" shall mean a pre-hire collective bargaining agreement between an owner or contractor and bona fide building and construction trade labor organization which has established itself as the collective bargaining representative for all persons who will perform work on such a project, and which provides that only contractors

and subcontractors who sign a pre-negotiated agreement with the labor organization can perform work on such a project.

4. "Building service employee" shall mean any person who is regularly employed at, and performs work in connection with the care or maintenance of, an eligible multiple dwelling, including, but not limited to a watchman, guard, doorman, building cleaner, porter, handyman, janitor, gardener, groundskeeper, elevator operator and starter, and window cleaner; provided, however, that building service employee shall not include persons regularly scheduled to work fewer than eight hours per week.

§ 1285. Jobs and housing pilot program. 1. Within amounts appropriated or otherwise available therefor, the agency shall develop and administer a jobs and housing pilot program to construct and preserve housing, including workforce housing, that is affordable to low and moderate income persons, and creates good jobs for those who build and work in such housing. The agency is hereby authorized to take administrative actions when necessary to comply with the requirements within this article.

2. The agency shall post on its website the request for applications for eligible projects to apply for funding awards.

3. In order to qualify for a funding award under the program, the applicant shall:

(a) demonstrate a plan to use contractors that participate in apprenticeship programs registered pursuant to article twenty-three of the labor law; and

(b) attest to responsibility for ensuring that all demolition, construction, rehabilitation, renovation, retrofit or repair work is subject to article eight of the labor law, including the applicable prevailing wage pursuant to section two hundred twenty of the labor law. As part of such attestation, the applicant shall agree to joint and several responsibility for any penalties assessed under article eight of the labor law that are against any contractor or subcontractor on the applicant's eligible project under this program. Where the applicant agrees to enter into a project labor agreement, this paragraph shall not apply; and

(c) attest to responsibility for ensuring that all building service employees employed by the applicant for an eligible project subject to this article shall receive the applicable prevailing wage for the eligible project. As part of such attestation, the applicant shall agree to joint and several responsibility for any penalties assessed under article nine of the labor law that are against any contractor or subcontractor on the applicant's eligible project under this program; and

(d) demonstrate a commitment to utilizing financing, in part, from a labor organization's pension fund or a commingled fund of pension fund investments with a demonstrated track record of successful investment in both new construction and substantial rehabilitation of affordable housing.

4. Nothing in this article shall impair eligible projects receiving funding awards under this article from concurrently receiving funding or benefits for the construction or preservation of housing, including but not limited to real property tax exemptions, tax credit financing, bond financing, subordinate debt, grants, credit enhancement and guarantees, and other such funding or benefits as may be necessary to ensure the feasibility of eligible projects receiving funding awards under this article.

5. To certify compliance with subdivision three of this section, the agency shall designate the fiscal officer pursuant to article eight and article nine of the labor law as the enforcement officer on such eligible projects.

§ 1286. Report. 1. No later than three years following the effective date of this article, the division of housing and community renewal shall issue a report on the jobs and housing pilot program containing data on program applications and awards. Such report shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) the number of applications for funding received;

(b) the number of applications selected for award and contract;

(c) the amount of funding disbursed, by eligible project;

(d) the number of new housing units financed; and

(e) the number of preserved housing units financed.

2. Such report required pursuant to subdivision one of this section shall be posted and made publicly available on the division of housing and community renewal's website in a clear and conspicuous manner.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.