

February 18, 2022

Dear Governor Hochul,

As President of the Douglaston Civic Association that for over 100 years has represented a community of 13,000 people in a predominately single-family homes but with a mixture of rental apartments and garden apartments. The proposed legislation and your budget message purport to produce “affordable housing,” but it will do the exact opposite. Current illegal ADUs price out at top market rates that is not affordable housing. Preservation of current housing stock, a major effort of local zoning, has keep prices in check. The city needs to add additional housing in the way Stuyvesant town accomplished that goal.

Waiving building and fire codes is not a solution but a license for disaster, as a former prosecutor in the Bronx, I personally saw the destruction of 100,000 plus housing units mostly by fires set by landlords and loss of life due to no fire code enforcement. This was a result of the real estate industry, unscrupulous property owners, and political leaders in the name of affordable housing cheating and using affordable housing as their cover.

I am writing to you today in the strong opposition to language inserted in the proposed FY2023 budget bill - S8006/A9006 – which requires the allowance of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in single family zones across New York State (PART AA) as well as requires up-zoning of all residential land within ½ mile of commuter rail stations and commuter parking lots up to 60 miles from NYC to a minimum of 25 units per acre (PART EE). We are also opposed to bills S4547 / A4854 (Harckham/Epstein), both of which closely track with your introduced legislation pertaining to ADUs and the elimination of 1-family zoning. I note that there is no plan to increase infrastructure from schools to sewerage waste water.

I urge you to look to communities of color and first-generation Americans who have invested in their homes, their wealth investment, and how your support of these proposals will betray their American dream. While you may be with withdrawing these proposals from the budget, you need to regain our faith in your leadership by a public rejection of these bills.

Respectfully,

Sean M. Walsh
President