



**From: Association for a Better Long Island
Long Island Builders Institute**

Contact: Rubenstein
Gary Lewi 516 316-0579 glewi@rubenstein.com

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**LONG ISLAND’S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVOCATES URGE
NEW YORK STATE TO PASS LEGISLATION CREATING A COVID-19
EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**Enact a program that would deliver funding to those tenants actually
impacted by COVID-19**

ABLI & LIBI: Preventing an economic meltdown must be an urgent priority

At a time of looming economic paralysis, the Association for a Better Long Island (ABLI) and Long Island Builders Institute (LIBI) are endorsing the creation of a COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program that would earmark funds for those tenants actually impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a letter to the Chairmen of the NYS Senate and Assembly Committees on Housing, Senator Brian Kavanaugh and Assemblyman Steven Cymbrowitz, the two organizations urge state lawmakers to support NYS bill S.8140A, making passage an urgent priority to shortstop a potential financial crisis that would eclipse the 2008 Recession.

The regional economic advocacy organizations, whose combined membership represent the region's largest residential property owners, note in their letter, “Each day, property owners are receiving notification from tenants regarding their inability to pay rent. While property owners are making necessary accommodations during this crisis, a COVID-19 emergency rental assistance program would act as a critical economic bridge to assist residents and businesses.”

Assist those in financial distress

In a joint statement, ABLI’s Executive Director Kyle Strober and LIBI CEO Mitch Pally said, “There is recognition that government must assist those struggling to pay rent as a result of COVID-19. But there needs to be a cogent and rational policy that ensures the finite dollars that are available go to those who can demonstrate genuine financial need. Therefore, ABLI & LIBI stand in support of Senator Kavanaugh’s bill to create a COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program that can address this immediate and growing economic crisis.”

In their letter, the two groups warn that alternative rental assistance options being debated in Albany would allow all NYS residents to suspend rent payments, regardless of whether or not the individual is impacted by COVID-19.

ABLI & LIBI cautions that if those policies were enacted it will lead to a devastating economic collapse. They warned, “If all tenants halt rental payments, property owners will fail to make mortgage and property tax payments, pay utility bills and maintain properties. We only need to review the wreckage of 2008 where mortgage payments ceased, causing loan servicers to default on investor payments, and that in turn led to economic ruin that took years to right.”

Pass the only sound option

Mr. Strober stated, “Direct rental assistance to tenants is the only economic sound option. Currently, our federal government is sending billions of dollars, in the form of stimulus checks, to hundreds of thousands of Americans who aren’t remotely impacted by COVID-19, while millions of New Yorkers desperately need assistance. This should serve as a reminder to Albany policymakers that blanket policies of free rent are ineffective and economic ticking time bomb.”

Mr. Pally stated, “When the author of the NYS Rent Reform legislation and New York’s largest property owners, typically polar opposites on virtually all economic issues, agree on a public policy, you know it is the correct policy to implement. A COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program will directly help those in need and help prevent an even worse economic collapse.”

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