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Report

The Left-YIMBY Bargain Comes to Albany:

"State of Yes" Proposals Pair Housing Supply Reforms with New Burdens on Private Landlords

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Introduction

Faced with housing supply shortages, many states have moved vigorously to preempt exclusionary local land-use policies that prevent new housing construction.[1] But the New York State Legislature, despite facing a severe housing supply shortfall in the New York City metropolitan area, has long allowed local governments to control land-use regulation.

This brief looks at a new package of legislative proposals that might offer a path toward progress long considered politically infeasible. In August 2026, New York Assembly member Tony Simone of Manhattan, backed by a group of progressive legislators,[2] proposed the "State of Yes,"[3] a package of 32 bills responding to the city's housing problems. At a news conference presenting the report, Simone said that "New Yorkers need a big and bold housing agenda.… We need to stop nibbling around the edges."[4] State of Yes contains the seeds of good housing legislation that New York's progressive legislators could embrace. But the package also contains several provisions that would increase the burdens imposed on private landlords. Underlying the plan is an assumption that any "pro-development" policies must be traded for "pro-tenant" policies. This is the wrong approach. More housing is an inherently desirable goal that should not have to be part of a trade.

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History of Statewide Land-Use Reform Efforts in New York

Just three years ago, Governor Kathy Hochul's proposed "New York Housing Compact"[5] offered a bold housing agenda, but it found no support in the legislature. Hochul's plan included two signature initiatives: the "New Homes Targets and Fast-Track Approval Act" would have set housing growth targets for the state's municipalities and created a fast-track housing approval process in out-of-compliance communities; the "Transit-Oriented Development Act of 2023" would have set minimum zoned densities for areas near MTA stations.

Hochul's proposals assumed, naively, that the legislature's Democratic majorities were troubled by the persistent housing supply crisis in the New York City area and wanted to alleviate it. Writing about that failure,[6] I identified two issues that made it difficult for the legislature to grapple with housing in downstate New York. One issue was structural: the state's most contested electoral competition occurs in the downstate suburbs, where Republicans are adamantly protective of local powers to stop new housing development.[7] Democrats currently control the legislature, but they fear losing, especially in those seats, if the legislature acts to curtail exclusionary zoning practices.

The second issue is the state's unusual fiscal dependence on income taxes paid by a relatively small number of high-income households.

From an extremely narrow fiscal perspective, the present system works well. The state extracts enormous revenues, by national standards, by sustaining privileged enclaves where affluent households enjoy a unique and sophisticated quality of life. Perhaps against logic, residents of these areas are willing to pay New York taxes for the opportunity to access the experience of New York living.

State politics has perhaps evolved in the past few years, however, as New York City's housing shortage has worsened in the wake of the 2019 Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act (HSTPA), which imposed draconian limits on rent increases for rent-stabilized housing.[8] In 2024, Hochul had more success in getting the legislature to embrace a more limited housing agenda, securing new tax incentives for mixed-income housing in the city and a conditional waiver of the size cap that applies to apartment buildings in the city.[9] In this year's session, the legislature enacted reforms to the state's environmental review procedure that exempt many new housing applications statewide from a costly and time-consuming review.[10]

In both cases, Hochul steered away from the third-rail issue: local control over land use. In the meantime, New York City has used its own land-use powers to respond to the housing crisis. In 2024, NYC enacted major pro-housing zoning reforms known as "City of Yes."[11] The city followed up in 2025 with city charter reforms intended to speed up housing approvals and curtail the ability of individual city council members to reject new housing applications in their districts.[12]

In 2026, Mayor Zohran Mamdani proposed his "Block by Block" housing plan, which indicated willingness to loosen some restrictions on new housing development. But it also took a hard line on preventing private landlords from profiting from their investments in

rent-stabilized housing.[13] Mamdani is an exemplar of "Left-YIMBY" land-use politics, which combines support for heavily regulated, and often subsidized, new housing construction with aggressive rent controls and other putatively "pro-tenant" measures.[14]

Left-YIMBYism is incrementally helpful, but inherently flawed as a strategy to alleviate the supply shortage. Its proponents are open to limited market-based solutions while simultaneously destroying market activity in other segments of the housing industry. "True affordability," I wrote in 2025, "requires far more openness to unrestricted private investment in new housing than we are likely to see in [Mamdani's] tenure."[15]

The city's past actions, and Mamdani's posture, provide an opening for some progressive state legislators to craft a Left-YIMBY agenda at the state level. Like Mamdani's plan, the State of Yes balances "pro-development" and "pro-tenant" proposals.

Beyond the limited number of identified sponsors and cosponsors, it is not clear how much support there is in the legislature for the various elements of State of Yes. Governor Hochul's position is also unclear. The "pro-housing" part of the package is at least interesting to advocates who have not seen bills of this nature achieve any level of legislative support in past years. But it is concerning that these pro-housing provisions may pass only in exchange for further restrictions on private landlords. "Compromise" of this sort is particularly problematic because 2027—neither an election year nor the year before a gubernatorial election—presents the most favorable possible timing for pro-growth reforms. The legislature is evolving, but perhaps not yet enough to overcome its horse-trading tendencies and to be a responsible steward of the state's interests.

Housing Conditions in New York State

Data on statewide housing conditions mask considerable differences between downstate and upstate metropolitan areas.[16] In 2024, the most recent year for which data are available from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, 51% of New York State renter households were "cost-burdened," paying more than 30% of their income for housing and utilities. This compares with 49.4% of renter households nationwide.[17] Cost burden is a measure of how difficult it is for renters to find housing they can afford.

In large upstate metro areas, as shown in **Table 1**, renter cost burden is close to, or below, the national average. However, the level of cost burden has risen in the Albany–Schenectady–Troy metro.

TABLE 1

Renter Cost Burden, Large Upstate NY Metropolitan Areas

Metro Area	Share of Households That Are Cost-Burdened (Percentage)		
	2014	2019	2024
Albany–Schenectady–Troy	43.8	42.5	48.2
Buffalo–Cheektowaga	48.9	46.8	46.7
Rochester	52.6	49	48.7
Syracuse	50	47.9	49.6

Source: Harvard University, Joint Center for Housing Studies, *America’s Rental Housing 2026*, Mar. 12, 2026, Excel data, table W-16

Renter cost burden is higher downstate: 50.4% in the New York–Newark–Jersey City, NY-NJ, metro area, and 53% in the Kiryas Joel–Poughkeepsie–Newburgh, NY metro area. In most upstate areas, cost burden is primarily driven by income: many households have very low incomes. In the downstate metros, by contrast, cost burden is more about price. This can be seen in the breadth of income ranges in which cost burden is a major issue, extending as high as $75,000 in annual household income (**Table 2**). The data suggest that while upstate cost burden may be alleviated through rent supplements, downstate requires solutions that address supply shortfalls.

TABLE 2

Cost-Burdened Households, $45,000–$74,999 Household Income, 2024, New York State Metro Areas

Metro Area	Share of Households That Are Cost-Burdened
Albany–Schenectady–Troy	42.2%
Buffalo–Cheektowaga	27%
Rochester	31.8%
Syracuse	27.6%
New York–Newark–Jersey City, NY-NJ	65.2%
Kiryas Joel–Poughkeepsie–Newburgh	60.2%

Source: *America’s Rental Housing 2026*, table W-17

Another measure indicating a supply shortfall is the ratio between median home price and median income, which Harvard’s Joint Center for Housing Studies calculates for metro areas using home-price data from the National Association of Realtors and income estimates from Moody’s Analytics. For the nation, the median home price–income ratio was 4.0 in 2014, 4.1 in 2019, and 4.7 in 2025. As shown in **Table 3**, downstate’s ratios are high by national standards and rising.

TABLE 3

Median Home Price-to-Income Ratio, New York State Metro Areas

Metro Area	Median Home Price-to-Income Ratio		
	2014	2019	2025
Albany–Schenectady–Troy	3.3	3.0	3.7
Buffalo–Cheektowaga	2.5	2.7	3.7
Rochester	2.4	2.5	3.5
Syracuse	2.3	2.4	3.2
New York–Newark–Jersey City, NY–NJ	5.7	5.2	7.4
Kiryas Joel–Poughkeepsie–Newburgh	3.5	3.0	5.1

Source: Harvard University, Joint Center for Housing Studies, *State of the Nation's Housing 2026*, Excel data, table W-16

A recent Regional Plan Association (RPA) analysis clarifies the geographic dimensions of the New York City region's housing supply shortfall by compiling data on new housing permits for different regional subareas from 1990 to 2008, and from 2009 to the second quarter of 2026.[18] Comparing the two periods, new housing permits per 1,000 residents increased in New York City and the New Jersey portion of the metro area, which together account for most new housing in the region. However, new housing permits per 1,000 residents fell by 62.6% on Long Island, 34.9% in the Lower Hudson (NY) suburbs, and 42.4% in the Mid-Hudson (NY) suburbs.

When evaluating the State of Yes package, it is important to keep in mind that upstate and downstate have different conditions and needs. Bills that impose statewide administrative burdens to solve primarily downstate problems should be less of a priority than bills that are likely to have the greatest effects in areas where more housing needs to be constructed.

"Pro-Housing" Bills in "State of Yes" (Sponsors in Parentheses, Assembly/Senate)

New York State Social Housing Development Authority, A6265[19]/S5674 (Emily Gallagher [D-Brooklyn]/Cordell Cleare [D-Manhattan])

This bill would create a new public benefit corporation, known as the New York State Social Housing Development Corporation (NYSSHDC), to build, acquire, rehabilitate and preserve permanently affordable housing. The corporation would have the ability to issue bonds and make loans. "Affordable housing" is not a defined term in the legislation.

However, across the corporation's portfolio of projects, at least one-quarter of the units must be affordable to households at 30% of Area Median Income (AMI). Only a third of the units, at a maximum, can have no income restrictions. The remaining units must either be affordable to households at 80% of AMI or set at 110% of the applicable fair market rent, if lower.[20] Those restrictions would require considerable additional subsidies to make new housing financially feasible.

New York housing wonks with very long memories will notice the resemblance of NYSSHDC to the original New York State Urban Development Corporation (UDC), enacted in 1968, in the wake of the assassination of the civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. Under the leadership of Edward J. Logue, UDC used its bond authority to make short-term construction loans, expecting to be repaid with federal commitments under the Section 236 program, which provided low-interest, federally insured long-term loans. Buffeted by price inflation and a Nixon administration funding moratorium, UDC became insolvent in 1975, necessitating a costly state bailout.[21]

UDC's insolvency ended its housing-finance role, and the state legislature and the governor are unlikely to ignore this history to reinstate a new public benefit corporation with a similar scope of authority. However, A6265 includes another interesting pro-housing provision: a blanket, statewide zoning override.[22] In 1968, UDC had similar powers, but its powers outside NYC were removed by the legislature after Logue tried to use them to build low-income housing in the city's suburbs. Vesting zoning override powers for mixed-income housing in a state-controlled entity, even without bonding authority, would be a powerful but controversial move to overcome exclusionary zoning.

Sustainable Affordable Housing and Sprawl Prevention Act, A6283A[23]/S3492 (Anna R. Kelles [D-Ithaca]/ Rachel May [D-Syracuse])

This legislation would build upon the 2026 reform by offering more extensive exemptions from environmental review for affordable housing developments. The size threshold for the exemption would increase from a maximum of 250 or 500 units in NYC, depending on the district, to 1,000 units. Elsewhere in the state, the threshold would be lower but still increased from the 2026 legislation. The bill would also require qualifying developments to be on previously disturbed land in an urbanized area and connected to water and sewer systems.

Environmental-review reform targeted to affordable housing had been introduced in several legislative sessions without gaining traction, until the governor threw her support behind the measure enacted in 2026, applying to all types of housing. The 2026 legislation is arguably timid in terms of its exemption thresholds, and the concept of treating badly needed new housing as a potential environmental nuisance is antiquated. However, structuring an enhanced environmental review exemption as a reward for including below-market units would limit its effectiveness as a pro-housing measure.

Exclusionary Zoning Reform, A2586[24] (Kelles)

This bill, which has no Senate equivalent, would set minimum zoning standards for cities, towns, and villages. In cities, the bill would prohibit minimum lot sizes greater than 1,200 square feet for new housing (currently in NYC, minimum lot sizes are 1,700 square feet in apartment-house areas and greater for small-home areas). No off-street

parking could be required, and no fewer than four dwelling units (six in areas near rail transit) would be permitted on each lot. (NYC's City of Yes reforms retained off-street parking requirements and a per-lot unit limit of one or two in much of the city.) These rules would apply to the 62 cities in the state.[25]

For the state's 500+ villages, the bill would also prohibit minimum lot sizes greater than 1,200 square feet, as well as off-street parking requirements. Two dwelling units would be permitted on every lot, and six in locations proximate to rail transit. In towns, which regulate land use outside cities and incorporated villages, minimum lot sizes would be limited to 5,000 square feet in areas with water and sewer infrastructure and 20,000 square feet elsewhere.

While extremely aggressive by historical New York State practices, A2586 is comparable with legislation passed in other states and cities. Houston, for example, which has no use zoning but has controls on building bulk, allows lot sizes as small as 1,400 square feet in most of the city.[26] Montana's House Bill 492 exempts any home smaller than 1,200 square feet from off-street parking requirements.[27] In Oregon, statute 197.158 "requires Oregon's medium-sized cities to allow duplexes on each lot or parcel zoned for residential use that allows for the development of single-family homes. In larger cities with population over 25,000, and cities within the Portland Metro region, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage clusters, and townhouses are allowed outright in residential areas."[28]

A2586 is particularly appealing because of its lack of conditionality; small multifamily buildings, whose small units make them inherently more affordable than single-family homes, are not subject to additional affordability requirements.

New York Fair Housing Act, S6958[29] (Robert Jackson [D-Upper Manhattan and West Bronx])

This bill, which has no counterpart in the assembly, would create a process to ensure that each municipality creates its "fair share" of affordable housing. A state panel would determine regional and municipal fair-share obligations for a 10-year period. Each locality would be required to adopt a "municipal housing element and fair share plan," indicating the zoning and other changes that it would make to achieve the target. The bill includes enforcement mechanisms against noncompliant municipalities, including litigation by the state attorney general and a "builder's remedy" that would allow developers to override local zoning.

The bill is modeled on New Jersey's affordable housing fair-share process, often known as the "Mount Laurel doctrine." A 2026 RPA report found that the 2015–25 period in New Jersey

> represented a major change in residential development, as enforcement shifted from the administrative Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) to the state judicial system. The results following this shift provide evidence that the system offers a structural advantage for housing growth compared to neighboring regions without a comparable framework. . . .
>
> After the court-enforced obligations resumed in 2015, the number of permitted multifamily units in New Jersey more than doubled, rising from 80,200 (2007–2014) to 169,400 (2015–2022). . . . A key factor in this growth was the updated methods for assessing housing obligations and the "builder's remedy" mechanism. This prompted towns to voluntarily eliminate restrictive

> zoning codes to avoid court orders. The zoning changes effectively removed regulatory constraints, allowing growth to proceed at the same rate in areas with historical barriers as in those without.[30]

New Jersey should be commended for its successful fair-share housing growth mechanism, but the system took decades to perfect. Currently, affordable housing fair-share obligations are governed by 2024 legislation, known as Assembly Bill 4 / Senate Bill 50.[31] Under the bill, the state's Department of Community Affairs sets initial affordable housing obligations for each municipality for a 10-year period. Municipalities must adopt a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (HEFSP) detailing how they will meet their obligations. Adopting an HEFSP shields communities from developers' litigation.

The system requires not only political will but ongoing planning capacity at both the state and local levels, as well as the cooperation of the judiciary in enforcing fair-share obligations. New York legislators, should they have the political will to adopt legislation overriding local land-use control, have simpler options that do not create such ongoing obligations.

State Affordable Housing Zoning Board of Appeals, A1492[32]/S4058 (Kelles/May)

This proposal would create two new procedures to expedite applications to construct "low or moderate income housing developments." In the bill, these are defined as housing developments subsidized at the local, state, or federal level and including specified percentages of units affordable at certain income thresholds: 25% affordable at 80% of AMI, or (for rental housing) 20% affordable at 60% of AMI. NYC is given additional flexibility. Any housing development with a regulatory agreement with a city, state, or federal entity is eligible.

Eligibility is also limited geographically. Communities with income restrictions at 80% of AMI or lower, on at least 15% of housing units, are excluded. In New York City, the same measure is applied to community districts. Additionally in NYC, community districts with a median income below 100% of AMI are excluded. The 2026 NYC region AMI is $152,700 for a three-person household.[33] Based on the latest five-year (2020–24) data available from the American Community Survey, only a handful of high-income NYC community districts likely would qualify for the procedures created in this legislation.[34] Thus, the legislation should be viewed as mainly applicable to localities outside NYC. However, in 2025 NYC voters approved city charter amendments creating a separate set of expedited procedures for approving applications for mixed-income and 100% affordable housing.[35]

Under the bill's first new procedure for expediting applications, eligible housing developers could seek building permission from the local zoning board of appeals, bypassing the zoning board. After a public hearing, the zoning board of appeals would be required to approve the application unless the development is found to have a specific adverse impact on public health or safety that cannot be mitigated by a conditional approval. The zoning board of appeals is specifically precluded from basing its decision on other, common grounds for local planning-board decisions, such as community character, aesthetics, or traffic and parking impacts.

A second procedure is created by establishing a new state zoning board of appeals, consisting of the Commissioner of the Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) (or the commissioner's appointee) and two gubernatorial appointees: one an

expert in fair housing; and the other an expert in local government and the development of affordable housing. The state zoning board of appeals could reconsider denials of applications by local zoning boards of appeals, as well as conditional approvals that applicants argue are economically infeasible. The state board of appeals would consider whether the conditions are "consistent with regional needs," meaning "reasonable in view of the regional need for low- and moderate-income housing developments and necessary to protect the health and safety of the occupants of such housing, or of the residents of a city, town, or village."

The upshot of the two-step process is that there would be few grounds to deny an application to build affordable housing in most of the state outside New York City. That would serve as an effective spur to affordable housing construction.

Transit-Oriented Development Act, A5137[36] (Michaelle C. Solages [D-Elmont])

This bill, which has no Senate equivalent, would require cities, towns, and villages to approve housing density of at least 25 units per acre within a half-mile of a commuter rail station or a bus stop with parking for riders. NYC stations and bus stops would not be subject to these provisions. Local governments would be prohibited from imposing restrictions that make the development of housing at such density infeasible.

According to one architecture firm's online guide, a 25-unit-per-acre development would be classified as "garden apartments," two- or three-story walkup apartment buildings.[37] The bill seems inspired by Massachusetts's "MBTA Communities" law,[38] which requires as-of-right multifamily zoning within a half-mile of transit in 177 communities served by public transit in the Boston metropolitan area. A 2026 evaluation of the program found it to be modestly effective at promoting housing development.[39] However, the Exclusionary Zoning Reform bill, discussed above, which would simply allow the construction of small multifamily buildings, may be more effective at overcoming local resistance than this proposal, which would require communities to undertake locally controversial areawide rezonings.

"Pro-Tenant" Bills

New York State already places so many burdens on landlords that progressive legislators and housing activists seem to have trouble identifying new "pro-tenant" laws that they could enact to reduce landlords' incomes further. Of the grab bag of proposals in State of Yes, perhaps the most credible along such lines is the **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA), A6100[40]/S10169 (Marcella Mitaynes [D-Brooklyn]/Julia Salazar [D-Brooklyn])**. The bill establishes a "right of first offer" for sales of rental housing to tenants' groups, or nonprofits either designated by the tenants or pre-certified by DHCR. In addition, a "right of first refusal" would allow the same entities to raise their initial bids and buy at the price offered by another bona-fide purchaser. There are exceptions for housing already subject to income restrictions or regulatory agreements with public agencies.

In theory, the seller would still receive the same market price, regardless of purchaser. However, the law would create costly delays in the selling process, which would encourage sellers to come to an expedited agreement to sell to the tenants or a designated nonprofit

at a below-market price. In addition, for-profit purchasers would be deterred by the potential for tenant groups, or nonprofits, to step in front of their bids after perhaps lengthy and costly evaluation of the property for sale and negotiation over the terms.

A similar bill that applied only to New York City, the Community Opportunity to Purchase Act (COPA), passed the city council in 2025 but was vetoed by then-Mayor Eric Adams. The council failed to override the veto. In October 2026, a new version of COPA was approved by the council.[41] Unlike TOPA, the COPA bill is targeted to properties meeting certain criteria for physical distress. Owners of such buildings are required, subject to penalties, to notify the NYC Department Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and all entities prequalified by HPD of a proposed sale. The qualified entities have a right of first offer and a right of first refusal. As with TOPA, the prospect of delay encourages sales to entities on the HPD list, even at a below-market price.[42] The bill has the current mayor's support.[43]

Both TOPA and COPA, even in its current scaled-back form, likely face legal challenges if passed. An attorney representing building owners argues that COPA "is essentially a regulatory taking [without compensation]. The city, by implementing COPA, is preventing owners from freely transferring their property and imposing regulatory burdens that prevent free alienation of property and probably also impact pricing."[44] TOPA presents a similar issue.

Other proposals in the package would have modest negative effects on landlords' bottom lines. **The Accessible Housing Fairness Act, A6261**[45]**/S7571 (Simone/Cleare)** prohibits rent adjustments to fund the cost of modifications necessary to accommodate the needs of a disabled tenant. No alternative public source of funding is provided, however, so any such modifications would be at the landlord's expense. **A4120**[46]**/S1130 (Solages/May)** purports, according to the sponsors' memorandum in support, to extend "existing rental protections by addressing situations where individuals use housing subsidies from public, private, and non-profit assistance, with a focus on preventing discrimination based on an individual's credit score or source of income." Since source-of-income discrimination is already prohibited in state[47] and city[48] law, the impact of this legislation is difficult to evaluate.

Part of the state's prohibition on source-of-income discrimination was invalidated on constitutional grounds in litigation that is now on appeal to the state's highest court.[49] Should the court of appeals uphold these lower-court decisions, this proposed extension would not bring back the prohibitions that the courts have already struck down.

The remaining "pro-tenant" proposals do not appear likely to have a material impact on most landlords' incomes. Some proposals might affect landlords who are already acting contrary to law. **A659**[50]**/S9650 (Linda Rosenthal [D-Manhattan]/Liz Krueger [D-Manhattan])** would prohibit landlords who receive certain property-tax exemptions from providing tenants with incorrect information about rent decontrol. The **Hazard Free Homes Act, A6735**[51] **(Simone)** allows tenants to remediate hazardous conditions where the landlord has failed to do so, and deduct the cost from rent payments. **A654-B**[52]**/S9694 (Rosenthal/Cleare)** increases penalties for rent overcharges.

Other bills would require greater disclosure of information that might be helpful to tenants. For example, **A1506**[53]**/S119 (Rosenthal/Cleare)** requires disclosure of the beneficial owners of limited-liability corporations that own buildings with rent-stabilized units.

Recommendations

State of Yes contains the seeds of good housing legislation, and Governor Hochul should try to build on its pro-housing provisions in the 2027 legislative session. But the notion that the legislature needs to be bought off with pro-tenant (actually, anti-landlord) measures to do the right thing on housing is troubling. The governor should resist such thinking.

Substantively, the state should build on the achievements of recent years. In order of priority, the bills that should be considered for approval in 2027 include the **Sustainable Affordable Housing and Sprawl Prevention Act, Exclusionary Zoning Reform** bill, and the **State Affordable Housing Zoning Board of Appeals** legislation.

The 2026 environmental review reforms have gone into effect without any controversy or adverse effects. Raising the thresholds, as the Sustainable Affordable Housing and Sprawl Prevention Act would, is a logical next step.

Another step to achieving housing progress is for the state to carefully begin to set minimum standards for local zoning. Assemblymember Kelles's Exclusionary Zoning Reform bill points the way, but there are many other state and local variations on the same theme from across the nation. The idea is to allow incremental change in the suburbs, through lot splits and small numbers of additional units where only one is permitted today.

If small changes can become accepted, more aggressive state action might be considered. One such change, instituting the appeals mechanisms established by the State Affordable Housing Zoning Board of Appeals bill, might appeal to affordable housing advocates. That legislation would open the suburbs to affordable housing development, a considerable leap for New York's legislature but consistent with the majority's avowed progressive principles. However, it would retain more local control over bona-fide health and safety concerns than a pure state zoning override, such as that included in the **New York State Social Housing Development Authority** bill. Other bills in the State of Yes package, such as the **New York Fair Housing Act** and the **Transit-Oriented Development Act**, are reminiscent of the failed New York Housing Compact proposals and are likely to engender strong local resistance.

A problem with the horse-trading aspects of the State of Yes package is that the 2027 legislative session is likely to see a strong push by rent-stabilized owners, and perhaps the governor, to undo some of the harshest rent-control provisions of HSTPA. In a 2025 report,[54] I suggested some changes that might be acceptable to the then-mayor-elect and, by extension, to legislative progressives. These include allowing vacancy increases, provided that rents remain affordable to households within specified income bands, as well as a more predictable process for demolishing rent-stabilized buildings for redevelopment.

Conclusion

The State of Yes reform package represents an interesting effort to articulate a statewide housing agenda that progressive Democratic legislators can get behind. However, those legislators should understand that more housing is an inherently desirable goal—not something that needs to be justified by trading it for more forced transfers from economically stressed private rental landlords to tenants and nonprofits. The New York City voters who approved the 2025 city charter changes made clear that they wanted to see the housing crisis solved. How much the state’s governor and legislative majorities are now willing to push suburban communities to contribute to the solution will be seen in the upcoming legislative session.

Endnotes

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3 Assemblymember Tony Simone, "State of Yes: Solving the Housing Crisis in New York," Aug. 26, 2026.

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5 New York Conference of Mayors, "Summary of Governor Hochul's 'New York Housing Compact' Proposal," Feb. 16, 2023.

6 Eric Kober, "NYC's Housing Crisis: Next Steps After 'New York Housing Compact' Fails," Manhattan Institute, May 18, 2023.

7 See, e.g., this post from Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, the 2026 Republican candidate for New York governor, Facebook.com, Apr. 26, 2026.

8 Eric Kober, "A Predictable Crisis," *City Journal*, Feb. 13, 2024.

9 Eric Kober, "Hochul's Housing Deal Will Help New York's Affordable Housing Crisis, but Not Solve It," Manhattan Institute, May 29, 2024.

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12 Eric Kober, "On the Ballot: NYC Charter Revision Commission's Housing Revolution," Manhattan Institute, Aug. 21, 2025.

13 Eric Kober, "Mamdani's Housing Plan Runs into the Limits of Its Own Politics," *Bigger Apple* (blog), May 28, 2026.

14 Eric Kober, "The Rise of the 'Left-YIMBY' in NYC," *Bigger Apple* (blog), Nov. 12, 2025.

15 Ibid.

16 This report defines "upstate" as counties outside the Metropolitan Transportation Authority service district, which includes New York City and Nassau, Suffolk, Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Rockland, and Orange Counties. A map of the referenced New York State Metropolitan Statistical Areas can be found at

https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/metro-micro/reference-maps/2020/state-maps/36_NewYork_2020.pdf. The area shown on the map as Poughkeepsie–Newburgh–Middletown has been renamed Kiryas Joel–Poughkeepsie–Newburgh.

17 Harvard University, Joint Center for Housing Studies, *The State of the Nation's Housing 2026*, June 17, 2026, Excel data, table W-10.

18 Marcel Negret, "New York Metro Area Housing Gap & SEQRA Reform," Regional Plan Association (RPA), Sept. 29, 2026.

19 A. 6265, *Permanently Affordable Social Housing for New Yorkers Act*, 2025–2026 Leg., Reg. Sess. (N.Y. 2025), accessed Sept. 22, 2026.

20 See A. 6265, §11, paragraph 2. Income thresholds vary by area, but in New York City, 30% of AMI is $45,810, and 80% is $122,160 for a family of three in 2026. The maximum permitted monthly rent for a two-bedroom apartment affordable to households at 80% of AMI is $2,916. See NYC Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), Area Median Income, accessed Sept. 22, 2026. For federal fiscal year 2027, beginning Oct. 1, 2026, the fair market rent established by the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for a two-bedroom apartment in the NYC area is $2,971. See HUD, Fair Market Rents Documentation System.

21 The UDC story is told in Lizabeth Cohen's biography of Logue, *Saving America's Cities: Ed Logue and the Struggle to Renew Urban America in the Suburban Age* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019).

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[33] HPD, Area Median Income.

[34] NYC Dept. of City Planning, American Community Survey, Economic Data, 2024 Five-Year Estimates for PUMA/Community District Tabulation Areas, column KY. Note that an inflation adjustment would be necessary to make these figures comparable with the 2026 NYC Area AMI.

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