



THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
CITY HALL
NEW YORK, NY 10007

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SPEAKER

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March 11, 2013

Hon. David M. Frankel
Commissioner
NYC Department of Finance
One Centre Street, Room 500
New York, NY 10007

Dear Commissioner Frankel:

Recently, a number of concerns have been raised about how the NYC Department of Finance (DOF) is handling the changes to the Coop and Condo Abatement recently enacted by the State. It is critical that the City correctly identify primary residents before removing their abatement.

We were surprised and dismayed to learn that School Tax Relief Program (STaR) recipients were receiving notices revoking their abatement. City Council staff was told that DOF would be using pre-existing information, such as STaR eligibility and income tax returns, to help identify primary residents, and that those, and only those, who DOF could not identify as primary residents would receive notification that they appeared ineligible for the abatement and would need to submit a form to receive the abatement.

Given these reports, we are particularly concerned about the tight time frame DOF has provided to property owners to respond, particularly when this is a brand new requirement that many were not expecting. Most property owners received notification from DOF requiring submission of the form in early March. With a deadline of April 1st, that provides less than a month to respond. We strongly urge you to extend the deadline for co-op and condo owners to respond to May 1st. Additionally, we would like your assurance that DOF will not penalize those who have not responded by the deadline and will be given the opportunity to provide you with the correct information, and that DOF will make any necessary corrections to tax bills retroactively during the year.

We also believe that more outreach to the public is needed on this issue. We are astounded that the home page of the DOF website makes no mention of the changes to the abatement and that no copy of the eligibility form can be found anywhere on the website. In addition to correcting those omissions, we urge DOF to have outreach sessions with co-op and condo boards and owners to help ensure compliance, and to take other steps to advise the public of the new law and its requirements.

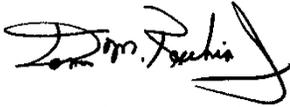
The Mayor, City Council, State Senate, State Assembly and the Governor all worked together to pass this reformed abatement to provide much-needed property tax relief to co-op and condo owners throughout the City. It is therefore critical that, in these difficult times, the implementation of this reform be done accurately and fairly.

We look forward to your response about the efforts you are taking to ensure a successful and fair implementation of the recent change.

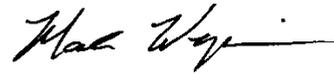
Sincerely,



Christine C. Quinn
Speaker



Domenic M. Recchia, Jr.
Chair, Finance Committee



Mark Weprin
Council Member