

Hon. WM. Patrick Madden

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August 21, 2017

Honorable Kathleen A. Marchione
New York State Senate
Room 917, Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12247

Honorable John T. McDonald, III
New York State Assembly
Room 417, Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Senator Marchione and Assemblymember McDonald,

On behalf of the residents of the City of Troy, I write today in strong support of A.2784-B (McDonald) / S.3691-B (Marchione) which would amend New York State General Municipal Law to expand local governments' abilities to place liens against fire insurance of owners who fail to repair fire-damaged properties.

Fires are devastating events which tear at the fabric of neighborhoods, displacing families and negatively impacting the quality of life in communities. While many responsible property owners work quickly to secure their buildings following a fire, there are irresponsible owners who fail to make required repairs even after receiving insurance reimbursements.

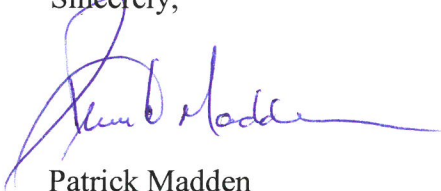
Currently, state law allows municipalities to hold owners of residential, commercial, and industrial properties accountable for failing to repair the damage done to buildings by fires. Unfortunately, the law does not include non-owner-occupied two family residences. In many cases, these buildings remain blighted and vacant after a fire as owners simply abandon their property after receiving their insurance payments. Without addressing these issues, properties can quickly devolve into eyesores and create dangerous conditions for neighbors, families and children. As a result, city governments are forced to spend valuable resources to secure these properties and, in some cases, pay for their eventual demolition. These costs, which can rarely be recouped, are unfortunately passed onto other homeowners through increased taxes.

Expanding the current law to include non-owner-occupied two family residences will greatly assist local governments' ability to hold irresponsible property owners accountable, remove the incentive for non-resident property owners to abandon their buildings with no financial repercussions, and ensure reimbursement for localities from unused insurance payouts. This

important legislation will provide municipalities another enforcement tool in recouping costs associated with maintaining blighted, vacant structures and improve the quality of life for all residents of our city.

I strongly support A.2784-B (McDonald) / S.3691-B (Marchione) and express my thanks for your continued leadership on this important issue which will greatly benefit the residents of our community and region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patrick Madden", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrick Madden
Mayor, City of Troy