



**ASSEMBLY MEMBER**  
**LATOYA JOYNER**  
**77<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT**  
 ASSEMBLY.STATE.NY.US/MEM/LATOYA-JOYNER



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**Assembly improves rent regulations, protects tenants**

Ending the 2015 legislative session with a focus on tenant rights, **Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner (D – Bronx, 77th AD)**, along with her Assembly colleagues, passed legislation to strengthen tenant protections and extend current rent regulations for four years.

The Assembly will protect tenants and keep rents affordable by:

- Ensuring that higher civil penalties for landlords who harass tenants or violate a **Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR)** order in order to force a vacancy; and
- Extending the **Major Capital Improvement (MCI)** repayment period from 84 months to 96 months for buildings with 35 and fewer units, and up to 108 months for buildings with more than 35 units, will limit the financial impact of building improvements on rents; and
- Limiting the amount landlords can increase rents when a tenant with a preferential rent vacates an apartment. Such increase will depend on how long the previous tenants stayed. For instance, if the vacancy lease began less than 2 years ago, the increase is capped at 5 percent; less than four years ago, the increase is capped at 15 percent; and for four or more years, the vacancy increase is capped at 20 percent; and
- **Increasing the vacancy deregulation threshold.** Currently, apartments with monthly rents over \$2,500 and that become vacant can become deregulated upon vacancy. It will raise the threshold to \$2,700, and require that it be indexed to future increases according to the **Rent Guidelines Board**.

**Assemblywoman Joyner enhances SCRIE and DRIE**

**Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner (D – Bronx, 77th AD)**, along with her Assembly colleagues, improved the **Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE)** and **Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE)** Program this session by passing legislation that allows recipients to be **grandfathered into the program as of January 1, 2015** at their current frozen rent, despite recent changes that may have dropped them from coverage.

For new applicants that apply on or after July 2, their rent will be compared to **one-third of their household income**. It will also allow additional time (approximately six months of the date of death or 90 days from being notified by the Department of Finance) for eligible surviving members to apply for a transfer of the deceased head of household’s SCRIE or DRIE benefit.

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**LATOYA’S LINE**

**Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner’s Statement Regarding the Reopening of the High Bridge**

"I am happy to welcome back the High Bridge, New York City’s oldest standing bridge, to its rightful spot as one of New York’s major attractions. For Bronx families and residents in my district, and those who call upper Manhattan home, the High Bridge will once again become an essential part of their lives after having been closed more than 40 years. I commend the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation and New York City Department of Design and Construction, as well as all my colleagues, for their hard work. They have revitalized this vital bridge, restoring an essential pedestrian and cycling thoroughfare that connects the Bronx and Manhattan."

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- CRIMINAL JUSTICE | pg 2**
- JOYNER SUPPORTS FAMILIES | pg 3**
- JOYNER UPCOMING EVENTS | pg 4**

**District Office - Constituent Service Hours**

**When:** Monday - Friday (10:00 AM-6:00 PM)      **Where:** 910 Grand Concourse, Suite 1JK (btwn E. 162 and 163 Streets)

## ASSEMBLYWOMAN JOYNER PASSES LEGISLATION TO EXPAND YOUTHFUL OFFENDER STATUS



**“This legislation is about ensuring equitable treatment of our youth is put at the heart of our criminal justice system – especially for first time youthful misdemeanor defendants – whether their cases are resolved in a local or a superior court. Ensuring Youthful Offender status in both courts is essential to ensuring that youthful transgressions don’t lead to the lifelong stigma of a permanent criminal record, and all New Yorkers are given the opportunity for a second chance.”**

**-Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner**

Bronx, N.Y. – Providing a second chance for young people who have run afoul of the criminal justice system and been charged with a misdemeanor, legislation introduced by Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner (D – Bronx, 77th AD) sailed through the New York State Assembly by a vote of 106 – 41 on June 15th. The “Second Chance Act of 2015” brings uniformity to New York’s legal system and ensures that 16-, 17- and 18-year-olds charged with misdemeanors will be treated as Youthful Offenders. Under the legislation (Assembly Bill A.7212), Youthful Offender determinations will be the same for defendants who are convicted in local and superior court (county or supreme).

Youthful Offender status is particularly important because it removes the criminal record and label that would otherwise stay with the person through life. Under current law, a youthful defendant who is convicted in a superior court may be treated differently than someone who is convicted in local court. The statute now allows a superior court judge to deny Youthful Offender status, while a local court judge is required to grant Youthful Offender status. This bill would provide for the same treatment, regardless of the level of the court.

In 2013, more than 33,000 16- and 17-year-olds were arrested as adults in New York State, according to the Correctional Association of New York. Not only are they these minors in grave danger, prosecuting them as adults can increase crime. A prior study found that youth charged in New York adult courts are more likely to re-offend with a violent offense.

Across the country, there are an estimated 250,000 youth are tried, sentenced, or incarcerated as adults every year, the Campaign for Youth Justice states. For youth sentenced as adults, the criminal record stigma often leads to future cases, where they are denied employment and educational opportunities. This includes receiving student financial aid.

## ASSEMBLY FIGHTS TO REFORM NEW YORK’S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

This legislative session, the New York State Assembly worked to institute changes to New York’s criminal justice system. By passing legislation that seeks to impact each level of the process, the Assembly worked to implement reforms to better and restore justice to New York’s criminal justice system. These reforms include:

- Restoring accountability by allowing for the **public release of the legal instructions and charges considered by a Grand Jury;**
- Creating an **Office of Special Investigation** within the **Attorney General’s Office** that would assign a special prosecutor to investigate and prosecute alleged criminal offenses committed by police or peace officers that involve the death of a civilian;
- **Prevent employers from denying employment to a person based on their criminal record,** and prohibit questions about criminal history on job applications. Employers can only inquire about a person’s criminal history after having made a conditional job offer first.
- Ensure reforms for the way solitary confinement is utilized in state prisons by limiting the time inmates are subjected to confinement. Also, the legislation **prohibits the use of confinement for youths under the age of 21** as well as any person with a mental illness or a developmental disability.

## ASSEMBLYWOMAN PASSES LEGISLATION TO SENIORS, DISABLED PERSONS SECURE HOUSING

Bronx, N.Y. – The New York State Assembly passed legislation on June 19 that will permit local governments, particularly New York City, to quickly spur development for low income residential rental developments. Assembly Bill A.8238, first introduced by Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner (D – Bronx, 77th AD), quickly rolled through the Assembly this month.

Heralded in a 140-0 vote, this bill will improve housing conditions and opportunities for our state’s seniors and disabled residents through the Urban Development Action Area Project (UDAAP). By expediting the process by which development of federally financed housing for low income and disabled persons can be completed, this legislation can accelerate the land use review process – eliminating the added cost associated with what can be a lengthy approval process.

Assembly Bill A.8238 will continue to generate new buildings that will receive operating subsidies from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Since 2002, HUD has financed over 2,800 units for elderly or disabled persons of low income in New York City. Of these new units, more than 95 percent were allocated to communities in the Bronx and Brooklyn, where affordability of housing continues to be major concern

New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli noted in a prior report that housing remains scarce for our community. For hard-working families paying rent, Bronx County has the highest

“This piece of legislation will extend the ability of local governments to utilize an expedited land use review process to meet the housing needs of low income seniors and disabled. This process has been particularly helpful in the development of a 61-unit senior building known as ‘Artsbridge’ that is located in the Highbridge community in my district. Along with providing much needed housing, the building will also serve as the permanent home of the 70-member Highbridge Voices youth choir when it opens next year. Assembly Bill A. 8238 ensures that affordable housing for low income seniors and disabled New Yorkers can be built faster and at a lower cost while still protecting the public nature of New York City’s land use review process.”

-Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner

proportion, approximately 57.6 percent, of households that face housing costs that eat up at least 30 percent of their income. Bronx also has a large percentage of households with gross rents at or above 50 percent of their income.

## ASSEMBLYWOMAN JOYNER KICKS OFF SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner is sponsoring a Summer Reading Challenge, in coordination with the New York State Library, to motivate our district children to pick up a book and read this summer break. This month, the Assemblywoman kicked off her reading effort at the High Bridge Library, with a focus on impacting local school children who reside in nearby family shelters.

Here’s how the challenge works: children are required to mark each day in July and August that they read, either with a parent, with someone else or alone. Once they have marked off 40 days or more, please return the completed form to the Assemblywoman’s office, and she will award your child with a New York State Excellence in Reading certificate.



## ASSEMBLYWOMAN JOYNER INVITES THE COMMUNITY TO HER UPCOMING EVENTS

<p><b>Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner's invites the community to her 1<sup>st</sup> Annual MILL POND PARK SUMMER STAGE</b></p> <p>The free event will include music, poetry and comedy. Refreshments will be served.</p>	<p><b>When:</b> Saturday, July 11 from 1:00 PM-5:00 PM</p> <p><b>Where:</b> Mill Pond Park (Near Major Deegan Exwy btwn E. 149 St and E. 153 St.)</p>
<p><b>Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner invites the community to obtain FREE civil legal services</b></p> <p>The event, which is held in conjunction with the Mobile Legal Help Center, a partnership with the New York Legal Assistance Group and the New York State Courts' Access to Justice Program, includes free legal assistance on issues related to housing and public/disability/health care benefits, immigration, domestic violence, and many more.</p>	<p><b>When:</b> Friday, July 10 from 10:00 AM-3:00 PM</p> <p><b>Where:</b> Near Assemblywoman Joyner's Community Office (910 Grand Concourse btwn E. 162 St. and E. 163 St.)</p>
<p><b>Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner's SENIOR LIFE PLANNING WORKSHOP</b></p> <p>Informational session, resources available for wills, health care proxies, advance life planning topics, including health care benefits and other legal issues</p>	<p><b>When:</b> Thursday, July 16 from 2:30 PM-4:30 PM</p> <p><b>Where:</b> Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council 900 Grand Concourse Bronx, NY 10451</p>
<p><b>Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner's SENIOR SAFETY AWARENESS DAY</b></p> <p>Attend to gain knowledge on better safety awareness tips and important resources</p>	<p><b>When:</b> Tuesday, July 21 from 6:00 PM-8:00 PM</p> <p><b>Where:</b> Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council 900 Grand Concourse Bronx, NY 10451</p>