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Testa/Oros Oppose Commercial Assessment Ratio Bill

Former Mayor of Peekskill and candidate for County Legislator John Testa was joined today by County Legislator George Oros in opposition to the “Commercial Assessment Ratio Bill” (1706-A) now in front of the NY State Legislature.

The bill, already passed by the State Assembly, now needs approval by the Senate. Testa and Oros are calling for the Senate to reject this legislation.

The pending legislation would increase property tax assessments on condominiums, cooperative apartments, rental apartments and commercial buildings. If passed, a targeted group of property owners would be forced to pay higher municipal, school and county taxes. This bill is written to apply to only one county in all of New York, Westchester.

“This legislation will have a devastating effect on thousands of property owners in Northern Westchester.” Testa said. “As a former mayor I know how disastrous this would be for taxpayers. Anyone who lives in a condo, co-op, townhouse or rental apartment will see their living costs go up dramatically,” Testa added.

“This is another example of just how out of touch our state leaders in Albany are with their constituents,” Oros said. “It wasn’t bad enough that the Hudson Valley region was socked with the Mobility Tax but with this legislation taxpayers will be whacked again. This is outrageous and demonstrates a blatant lack of leadership.”

“Many who live in condominiums, cooperative apartments and rental apartments are senior citizens looking for an affordable way to live. Many young adults also rely on this type of housing as they graduate college or start a family,” said Testa.

Oros also criticized members of the Assembly for keeping Westchester in the dark about the measure. Neither public hearings, nor any conversation with elected officials took place.

“Why be so secretive about it? Could it be that this is something they wanted to sneak in at the end of session when everyone was already making summer plans and not paying attention to the circus in Albany?” Oros remarked. “Our Westchester delegation has a lot of explaining to do.”

According to Testa “This law would also negatively impact the small businesses of Westchester County. Times are tough enough already, with many businesses barely hanging on now. This would be the death knell to a large number of them. It must be stopped.”

Both Testa and Oros are calling on all residents of Westchester, especially those who live in condominiums, cooperative apartments, rental units and commercial property owners, to join them in contacting their State Senate representatives to vote against this bill.