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Long Island Real Estate Group Announces Opposition to NYS Legislation Expanding Prevailing Wage

Westbury, New York, May 14, 2019 – The Long Island Real Estate Group (LIREG), a networking and philanthropic organization composed of almost 400 professionals in the real estate industry and allied trades, announced today its opposition to prevailing wage legislation now under review in the New York State Legislature.

While not a political organization, LIREG’s Executive Board voted to take a stand against the legislation due to the devastating effect it will have on economic development on Long Island, according to Scott Burman, LIREG Executive Board Member and Past President.

The two bills – Senate Bill 1947 and Assembly Bill 1261 – would expand the definition of a public works project, requiring any construction project that receives any public funding or a public benefit to pay prevailing wage to construction workers. According to some estimates, this would increase the average cost of projects on Long Island by as much as 35-40%, making “the majority of construction projects no longer economically viable,” Burman said. “They simply would become cost-prohibitive and affordable housing developments would grind to a halt.”

LIREG maintains the legislation would impose dramatic and far-ranging spillover costs on the Long Island economy, including reduced job growth, a significant reduction in construction jobs, and a shrinking tax base. Moreover, it would adversely impact high-priority community development goals such as building affordable and more diverse housing in the region and retaining a skilled workforce.

The advocacy is unprecedented for LIREG. “Our organization has never taken a position on a governmental issue before,” Burman said. “Our focus has always remained on offering our members opportunities to expand their contacts and knowledge within the Long Island development community and raising funds for worthwhile local charities. However, given the potential effects of this legislation on our industry and Long Island’s economy, our Executive Board felt we had to raise our voice.”

In opposing the prevailing wage legislation, LIREG joins a wide array of regional organizations, including the Association for a Better Long Island, Long Island Association, Long Island Builders Institute, Commercial Industrial Brokers Society, Long Island Housing Partnership, and Don’t Block NY Building, a new statewide coalition of more than 30 business, construction, affordable housing, healthcare and economic development groups.



The organizations' efforts are focused on lobbying NYS Governor Andrew Cuomo and New York State senators, who are currently reviewing the bill, which has already passed the State Assembly. LIREG urges its members and other individuals to support Long Island's continued economic growth by emailing the following state senators regarding their opposition to the bill:

NYS Senator Andrea Stewart Cousins: scousins@nysenate.gov

NYS Senator Todd Kaminsky: kaminsky@nysenate.gov

NYS Senator Anna Kaplan: kaplan@nysenate.gov

NYS Senator James Gaughran: gaughran@nysenate.gov

NYS Senator John Brooks: brooks@nysenate.gov

NYS Senator Monica Martinez: martinez@nysenate.gov

NYS Senator Kevin Thomas: thomas@nysenate.gov

LIREG is a networking and philanthropic group composed of almost 400 professionals in the real estate industry and allied trades on Long Island. Since its founding in 2004, LIREG has contributed more than \$1.4 million to numerous real estate-related projects undertaken by charities on Long Island.

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