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**\*\*NEWS RELEASE\*\***

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## ***COUNCIL MEMBER MARGARET CHIN AND SPEAKER SHELDON SILVER CALL FOR PROPERTY TAX GRACE PERIOD FOR YELLOW-TAGGED BUILDINGS***

*Property tax relief must apply retroactively to buildings that were “yellow-tagged” by the Department of Buildings in the aftermath of hurricane Sandy*

**New York, NY** -- Today, Council Member Margaret Chin and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver together with Assemblymember Deborah J. Glick called on the Bloomberg Administration to immediately extend a waiver on property tax penalties for all buildings that were significantly damaged in the aftermath of hurricane Sandy.

Council Member Chin and Speaker Silver called on the Bloomberg Administration to work with the City Council to replicate an existing property tax grace period – currently only available for residential buildings that were “red-tagged” – and apply it to buildings that received a yellow tag from the DOB. In Manhattan, there are currently 255 yellow-tagged properties, according to the Department of Buildings.

This property tax relief, passed by the Council in December 2012, provided for an interest-free extension that allowed homeowners to postpone property tax payments due on January 1, 2013 to April 1, 2013. The legislation applied only to Class 1 and 2 residential properties that were “red tagged” by the DOB, meaning they required structural repairs before they could be re-inhabited or must be demolished.

This grace period – if extended to yellow-tagged buildings - would allow property owners adequate time pay their property taxes without being hit with high late penalties. It would not compromise City revenue sources, as property owners would still be required to pay the full amount.

“Yellow-tagged buildings must be given the same attention as buildings that received red tags when we are talking about hurricane Sandy relief,” **Council Member Margaret Chin** said. “These buildings sustained significant damage -- including flooding, broken water and sewage

pipes, and the loss of fire safety and electrical systems. The owners of these buildings have invested significantly to rebuild and get residents into their homes and business back on their feet. They do not have the capital on hand to pay their property taxes. It is unfair to extend a grace period to one group of property owners and not take into account the hardship hurricane Sandy has caused for property owners in all areas that were heavily impacted – no matter what “color” they were prescribed by the DOB.”

“Property owners whose buildings have been damaged by Hurricane Sandy have already suffered, both personally and financially,” **Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver** said. “It is imperative that we provide this relief so that they do not face even further financial burdens. I applaud Council Member Chin for her proposal and I would like to see this waiver extended to the owners of commercial properties as well.”

“Superstorm Sandy had a devastating impact on properties across New York City,” **Assemblymember Deborah J. Glick** said. “It is essential and only fair that a property tax grace period be instituted for buildings affected by the storm and yellow tagged by the City. These building owners have invested a lot of money to repair their buildings, many without any help from their insurance company. Being cash strapped means they need and deserve the same consideration from the City as building owners of red tagged properties.”

“Extending a property tax grace period beyond red tagged buildings to include yellow-tagged buildings is the right thing to do,” **Speaker Christine C. Quinn** said. “Last month, the Council acted to offer a grace period for red tagged property owners to pay their property taxes and I’m proud to announce today that the Council will be introducing legislation to expand this grace period to include yellow tagged properties as well. This is one small way we can reassure New Yorkers impacted by Sandy who are worried they won’t be able to pay the bill on time that their city government is looking out for them in these trying times. I applaud Speaker Silver and Council Member Chin for proposing this idea, and look forward to working with her and my Council colleagues to find more ways to offer relief and support to New Yorkers impacted by Sandy.”

"The law we passed in the City Council was a first step," **Council Minority Leader James Oddo** said. "Clearly property tax relief must be expanded. Red, yellow, and green designations really don't precisely define who is in need."

“Too many New Yorkers are struggling to financially get back on their feet in the wake of Superstorm Sandy,” **Council Finance Chair Domenic M. Recchia, Jr.**, said. “Property owners of yellow-tagged buildings are facing tens of thousands of dollars in needed repairs to their homes as well as property tax payments. They need and deserve a break at this difficult time. Penalties inflicted by the City for late property tax payments shouldn’t be the straw that breaks the backs of New Yorkers. This waiver gives homeowners greater flexibility and adequate time to pay their taxes and offers relief to those who need our support.”

"A property tax grace period makes sense for those trying to get back on their feet after Sandy," **Senator Daniel Squadron** said. "Residents and property owners are struggling to make ends meet as we rebuild," said Senator Squadron. "I stand with Councilmember Chin and Speaker

Silver in urging the city to give them the best chance to recover by extending the property tax grace period to all buildings that sustained damage."

"Property owners are telling me that they are suffering financially and that they need this relief now," **Catherine McVay Hughes, Chair of Community Board 1**, said. "Good tax policy is indispensable to successful urban development and renewal. This relief proposal is not charity. It is a necessary civic investment in our community's future."

As of today, there are 1,118 buildings citywide that are yellow-tagged. In December 2012, 3,605 buildings had received yellow-tags from DOB. A yellow-tag means that conditions exist at the building that require the owner to make repairs and may restrict the use of the building. This includes nonstructural damage, including but not limited to: a compromised electrical system, the loss of basic sanitary facilities due to broken water or sewer pipes, or life safety systems, including but not limited to fire alarms, sprinklers, standpipes, and carbon monoxide and smoke detectors.

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