



Let's use our collective voice and fight for fair property taxes!

Here is a sample letter to mail or email to your elected officials to fight for a fair property tax system and lower property taxes in Upstate NY. Please personalize it with your story and use as talking points for phone calls to your representatives' offices.

See <https://www.taxmypropertyfairly.com/act> for links to elected official contact information in your area.

Please let us know what responses you get. Email us at info@TaxMyPropertyFairly.com
Thank you!

Dear: _____

As our elected official, we have entrusted you to be our eyes, ears and most importantly our voice in Albany.

We need you to be our voice now to reform New York's inequitable and complex Real Property Tax System.

I urge you to look at the results of a study done by Tom Golisano on [TaxMyPropertyFairly.com](https://www.taxmypropertyfairly.com) that compares the sale prices of homes sold in June 2017 to assessed values. The results, shown in major regions of Upstate NY, are inconsistent and reveal that **homes are either over or under assessed, not accurately assessed.**

Since assessed value is supposed to reflect market value, this clearly shows that **the system is broken and is not fair.** Some people are paying too much and some are paying too little.

Not only is our property assessment system a mess, **taxes in Upstate NY are among the highest in the nation relative to home value.** We are tired of waiting for budget cuts that will reduce our tax burden. When will it be the right time to reduce high property taxes and stop the flight from New York?

If we are fortunate enough to realize our property assessment is incorrect we would be lost trying to figure out a way to correct it **without having to spend money we don't have** on lawyers or other experts.

Any **benefits we get from STAR and Enhanced STAR are canceled out** by school budget increases, which drive up our property taxes.

With the insight and courage of Tom Golisano to stand up for fairness and fight for us the taxpayers, we now have a better chance to contest incorrect assessments. But education and awareness alone cannot change this inequitable system.

We need your help to **make the system equitable for all taxpayers and to reduce the government spending** that is sustaining our unaffordable property taxes.

This will require changes in New York State laws.

Here are just a few problems you can address:

- **Simplify the system.** You cannot always fix what is wrong by adding more regulations. There are more than 250 land classifications, categories and subdivisions not including residential buildings. For residential buildings, there are 14 basic classifications, which are then broken down into 64 subcategories for assessment data purposes. There are more than 525 different types of exemptions.
- **Require assessor training.** Many only need a basic certification while others require none. Varying interpretations of the Assessor's Manual, not facts, are adversely affecting assessments.
- **Stop penalizing homeowners for taking care of their property** with higher assessments and rewarding those who let their property get run down with lower assessments.
- **Stop the inequity where condominium owners pay a fraction** of what residential owners pay in property taxes because of how assessors must assess condos.
- **Make it easier for people to stay in New York State by lowering property taxes.** Those left behind must make up the difference of those who left.
- **The 2% tax cap, does not go far enough** to provide relief when taxes were too high to begin with.
- **Look at declining school enrollments and tell us why school budgets keep increasing.** Why is there no connection?
- **Cut the cost of government** and stop trying to make up lost revenue with higher taxes, fees, incentives and gimmicks.

You represent hard-working people like me who will reach retirement and can't stay in the homes we have cared for and communities we love because taxes are beyond our means.

The system needs to be changed now!

I look forward to hearing from you on what you can do for us to create a more equitable property tax system in New York.

Sincerely,
YOUR NAME HERE