Honorable Andrew Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224  

Dear Governor Cuomo:  

In the closing hours of the legislative session, with almost no public debate, the legislature passed A.8082/S.6219, a bill that penalizes cooperative shareholders and condominium owners. While well-intentioned, this measure will raise costs on middle-income households across New York City, making homeownership even more expensive. For the reasons expressed below, we hope you will veto this measure when it arrives on your desk.

As you know, the Cooperative and Condominium Tax Abatement was created in 1996 as a first step toward equalizing tax treatment between co-op and condo owners and owners of single-family homes. The abatement—which reduces property taxes between 17.5% and 28.1% depending on the averaged assessed value of the units in the development—is critical to ensuring that coop and condo owners are not unfairly penalized.

Unfortunately, if signed into law, A.8082/S.6219 has the potential to raise costs on half of all co-ops and condo buildings in New York City by requiring these buildings to pay prevailing wage to all building service workers at the property. But, because of how the legislation is written, it will apply to the most expensive condos on 5th Avenue and in Brooklyn Heights in the same manner as to small co-op buildings in Central Harlem with units that sell for under $500,000.

If signed into law, this bill will certainly result in the elimination of building service jobs and/or increases of monthly fees paid by cooperative shareholders and condominium owners. We hope you will agree with us that forcing hardworking middle-income shareholders and owners to decide between higher operations costs or higher tax costs is unwise in a city in which homeownership is increasingly out of reach. Consequently, we encourage you to veto this measure.

Sincerely,