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Memorandum of Support A. 4403 (McDonald)/S. 1864 (Gaughran)

The Preservation League of New York State is New York State's statewide historic preservation nonprofit. We lead advocacy, economic development and education programs across the state. **We write in support of Bill A. 4403/S. 1864 relating to the NYS real property tax law. We urge the NYS Legislature to pass this bill, which will help small and mid-sized cities in New York State mitigate the blight caused by vacant and abandoned buildings, while providing them with a more expedient mechanism to place the buildings with owners who can rehabilitate them.**

As New York State's only statewide historic preservation nonprofit organization, the Preservation League of New York State invests in people and projects that champion the essential role of preservation in community revitalization, sustainable economic growth and the protection of our historic buildings and landscapes. We lead advocacy, economic development and education programs across the state and partner with local preservation organizations throughout New York.

The Preservation League listed the South End Historic District of Albany as one of our 2018-19 *Seven to Save*, to draw attention to the plight of vacant and abandoned buildings across New York State. Tools such as land banks can help get foreclosed buildings, especially residential structures, into the hands of owners with the drive and capacity to rehabilitate them. The Preservation League has seen municipalities stymied by the length they must wait when a property is tax delinquent. Often in that two-year period, houses deteriorate beyond repair, leaving the municipality or future owner with a more expensive project or demolition costs, the latter which is typically born by a local municipal entity.

Reducing the tax redemption for properties certified as abandoned under this bill will help local community development and economic revitalization efforts throughout New York State. The Preservation League strongly supports this bill and urges the Assembly and Senate to pass it so that our state's vacant and abandoned housing stock can more easily be brought back to life.