



# Earlene HOOPER

*Deputy Speaker*

*Assemblywoman*

*18<sup>th</sup> A.D.*

## Message to the People

Summer/Fall 2012

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### *A Message to the People...*

This has been a challenging session. However, I am proud to report to you our successes:

- We passed a balanced budget on time (two years consecutively);
- School districts are to receive a 4% increase in aid;
- Taxpayers were spared a tax increase;
- MTA payroll tax eliminated and/or reduced for self-employed, small businesses and schools (public/private); and
- Regional Economic Development Councils crafting business assistance programs, thus creating better job growth.

The State of New York has historically been a leader in innovation and we are reclaiming our rightful status in this respect.

We have invested in the SUNY College of Nanoscale and Science Engineering in Albany, promoting high-tech innovation across New York State.

President Barack Obama visited the site on May 8th, where I had the privilege to chat with him regarding the Silicone Valley of New York State.

Our mission has been to provide more good-paying jobs at our local level in order to address the economic morass.

Much has been accomplished but much more needs to be done.

We, in the Assembly, intend to continue our efforts to assure our constituents that this is of primary concern and to provide a quality life in New York State.

### 2012 Session: Legislation Introduced/Passed

Several pieces of legislation were introduced in the 2012 session. Each bill was introduced with the intent of serving the people with legislation that addresses those matters which impact their lives. These are some of the most vital bills introduced—some passed in the Assembly only (Senate did not pass) and others passed and are either signed by the governor into law or pending the governor's signature.

**A.10589:** This bill would protect taxpayers from being doubly-taxed. The county has indicated it will require school districts to refund real property over-payments. This would require school districts to increase their budgets with the tax-cap law in place; it would be a hardship on school districts to assume this fiscal burden. A.10589 requires the state comptroller to ascertain the cost to the district; the law would require the county to REDUCE that amount of its county tax to the taxpayer and thus, allow the school districts to assume this financial responsibility without a double-tax to the taxpayer. Passed the Assembly. Did not pass the Senate.

**A.10692:** Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) requires signatures of the Villages of Hempstead and Freeport for PILOTs from Town of Hempstead and Nassau IDA's. Passed the Assembly. Did not pass the Senate three times.

**A.10690:** Extends until March 31, 2013, the expiration of assessment review in county of Nassau. Passed Assembly and Senate. Sent to Governor on July 6, 2012.

**A.10588-B:** Would have allowed the Villages of Freeport and Hempstead to adopt a demonstration program with red light cameras wherein 70% of revenue dedicated to youth/senior programs; 15% to tax relief and 15% for maintenance/operation of program. Both villages rejected.

**A.9267-A:** Allows school districts to transport children for a lesser distance of two miles. Passed Assembly and Senate.

### Freeport Approved for Grants to Support Flood Recovery Efforts

Grants have been awarded to small businesses and non-profits on Long Island via the Business Flood Recovery Grant.

These grants are designed to offset costs of storm-related repairs and restoration of structures not covered by insurance or other sources. Two establishments in Freeport are recipients of this grant. They are 250 Woodcleft Avenue Corporation, for real estate repair/replacement and Otto's Sea Grill also for real estate repair/replacement.

I am pleased that among the 585 entities receiving grants to assist with the aftermath of the 2011 storms and flooding, it will encourage our communities as they continue to rebuild.



*Deputy Speaker with Barbara Jagnow and Ilona Jagnow, owners of Otto's Sea Grill, Freeport's Nautical Mile.*

## Six Million Dollars (\$6 Million) Additional Aid to Roosevelt S.D.

A.10526 in 2002 enacted laws that provided the Roosevelt School District with \$6 million in additional school aid above the regular formula.

Much of my legislative energy has been directed to ensuring the Roosevelt students, teachers and administrators have the necessary funds to provide a class “A” education to our future leaders.

The new schools are completed; the high school is under renovation with no tax to the people.

This budget session, again, granted an additional \$6 million dollars to the district.

Roosevelt School District receives \$12 million additional aid above and beyond the SED aid formula.

As I stated in my “Message to the People,” this has been a most challenging session. But, with the support of Sheldon Silver, Speaker, again we have sought to protect the school district’s students, taxpayers, employees and all who have, at heart, the best interests of the children.

## Good News for Nassau County Community College

State base aid to the community college has been allocated in the State budget \$150.00 per full-time student. This is a \$3 million increase for the college. In addition, \$20 million for capital projects on the campus for building renovation and energy conservation will help the school’s future endeavors.

The day-care facilities on the campus were not cut. The 40% proposed cuts would have negatively affected this program. Proudly, no change in the law will require the college with “charge-back” payments from other counties associated with students from those counties who attend NCC.

These budget proposals will assist the college administrators in their decision not to increase tuition for the 2012-13 fiscal year.

## Nassau County Awarded \$100,000 Incentive Grant

Fraud hurts and costs all persons, whether receiving assistance or paying taxes to assist those in need.

Nassau County has been awarded a one hundred thousand dollar (\$100,000) grant for Child Care Fraud Prevention and Detection. This incentive grant will provide Nassau County’s Department of Social Services with resources for detecting, prosecuting and preventing child care subsidy abuse.

Those families who need and deserve grants would be better served. Meanwhile, employees would be needed to implement the grant, thus, preventing several layoffs.

This is my continued commitment to the safety, health and well-being of the children and families of New York State. Also, for those dedicated civil servants of Nassau County whose mission is to the well-being of children and families, as well.

## Protecting Tenants’ Rights

I am committed to ensuring affordable housing is accessible. The following 2012 rent legislation addresses this issue:

- Rent surcharges authorized for capital improvements (upgrade generators, new windows, new/improved appliances such as refrigerators, stoves) STOP when the cost of the improvement has been recovered (A.2459-A).
- Reduce the amount of rent increases after a 20% vacancy to 10% and limit the allowable number of increases per year (A.2593-A).

**This is very important in senior citizen housing when landlords increase rents and forget to stop the increase when the item or improvement has been paid.**



Deputy Speaker receives award from A Supreme Mathematics, Executive Director, presented by Youth Empowerment Institute Inc., Hempstead Village.

## Making Our Community Safer

### “Get Criminals Off Our Streets”

In efforts to get criminals off our streets, we passed a law that expands the DNA databank by increasing the list of offenses that require a DNA sample from convicted offenders. The law also gives the wrongfully convicted more access to DNA testing and the DNA databank to help prove their innocence—if an innocent person is sitting in prison, the real perpetrator is out on the street and is still potentially dangerous to our community (Ch. 19 of 2012);

### “Protect Our Children From Predators”

A new law makes knowingly accessing child pornography online illegal, an act that brings New York into line with federal law and keeps our children safe (A.10713);

### “Cyberbullying”

A new law has been created for a safe and secure learning environment for all students (A.10712).

The legislation requires:

- prompt reporting procedures to ensure incidents of bullying or cyberbullying are addressed as quickly as possible
- an official school policy for handling harassment or bullying, as well as anti-bullying education classes for staff and students in kindergarten through 12th grade

### “To Crack Down On Domestic Violence Offenders”

We passed a new law that will protect domestic violence victims while cracking down on repeat offenders (A.10624), pushed for federal reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act and helped pass extensive anti-domestic violence legislation earlier this year.

## Additional Funds for Literacy Volunteers of Nassau County

Literacy Volunteers of Nassau County has been awarded one hundred sixty-seven thousand four hundred ninety-eight dollars (\$167,498) from the State Education Department. This results from a statewide allocation that we enacted in this year’s budget to which the assembly provided an additional one million dollars (\$1,000,000).