



THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

CHAIR  
Tourism, Parks, Arts &  
Sports Development

COMMITTEES  
Labor  
Racing & Wagering  
Rules  
Ways and Means

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## REPORT FROM ALBANY TO THE 30<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Dear Friends:

It is my great honor to begin a new term as your representative in the New York State Assembly and I am writing to update you on recent activities in Albany and report on the challenges and priorities for the session ahead.

**NEW LEADERSHIP:** After a brief period of uncertainty, my colleagues and I in the Assembly have selected a new Speaker. I am confident that we can look forward to productive work in the session ahead under the fresh leadership of Speaker Carl Heastie. Events of the past weeks have put a sharp focus on several “bad apples” among elected officials, but I believe it is wrong to vilify, by extension, all the overwhelming majority of honest, hard-working legislators who are committed to doing their very best for the people of New York State.

**STATE BUDGET:** Among our most important responsibilities in the Legislature is working with Governor Cuomo to formulate a new State budget for New York and we are already hard at work on the next year’s budget. I am deeply involved in this budget process as a member of the pivotal Ways and Means Committee and I am optimistic that we will reach agreement to produce a new on-time budget for the fifth consecutive year that meets the needs of the people of New York State.

**SCHOOLS:** One of the most important issues we face again this year involves children and our schools. For New York City, there will be extensive discussion about the renewal of Mayoral control of the public school system. More equitable funding for New York City schools continues to be a high priority and the number of authorized charter schools is up for discussion. I am concerned about the tone of some of the public discussion about the quality of education in our local public schools. Learning itself seems to get lost in much of the public debate about teachers and measuring performance. Too often, I think, teachers are getting a bad rap and I believe the rhetoric needs to be toned down. When I visit school buildings in my district, I see eager students and committed principals and teachers at work.

**CHILD VICTIMS ACT:** I have championed the Child Victims Act for many years and once again, I have hopes it will become law this year. My bill would eliminate the statute of limitations for childhood sexual abuse crimes, providing better access to justice for victims, and exposing pedophiles who continue to abuse children. New York State is among the very worst of all states in America for how it treats victims of child sex abuse and it is time to change that. My Child Victims Act has already been passed four times by the Assembly in previous years, but

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never been taken up by the Senate. As we approach this new session, more than a third of the full membership of the Assembly has already signed up with me to co-sponsor the bill; a companion bill in the State Senate is also gaining steam at long last.

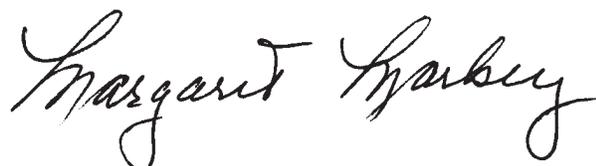
**SOME OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES IN ALBANY:** Some of the other important issues that will be examined and debated in the Legislature this year include the Education Tax Credit bill for parents of schoolchildren (of which I am a co-sponsor); a new increase in minimum wage rate, with a special bump for New York City workers (which I support); adoption of the full Women's Equality Act by both houses of the Legislature (which I support); renewal of rent regulations to ensure that middle-income families are not pushed out of their homes by skyrocketing rents (which I support); whether or not to legalize professional public performances of mixed martial arts in New York State (which I oppose); and the Governor's State of the State proposal to give a 4 percent tax reduction for small businesses (which I support).

**LOCAL ISSUES THAT NEED ATTENTION:** There are two important local issues confronting the 30th District that will require attention over the coming months. I am looking carefully at the Cross Harbor Freight Study now being conducted by the Port Authority of NY & NJ. The project appears to be a re-invention of a long-standing concept that would ultimately result in funneling of additional train traffic on railroad lines that pass through our neighborhoods. Discussion of the environmental impact study (EIS) that is now underway needs to compare the potential benefits of the proposal with the adverse impact on our residential neighborhoods. I will closely examine the proposed EIS and speak out about it before the March deadline for comment. Another subject that has re-surfaced involves the potential development of portions of the Sunnyside Yards. Since I represent a portion of these rail yards and some adjacent residential blocks, I am anxious to hear more details about this subject. I think the opportunity to productively use appropriate portions of these yards is something to be seriously considered, but only when it is done in consultation and collaboration with local officials and community leaders who can represent the best interests of the neighborhoods that will be most severely affected by any development.

**MY ASSEMBLY LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES:** I am pleased to continue to Chair the Tourism, Parks, Arts, and Sports Development Committee in the new session. Thanks to this role, I have been able to direct significant support to the Queens Tourism Council over the past several years. With my new appointment to the Rules Committee, I am now a member of the two most important committees in the Assembly: Ways and Means, which manages the state budget process; and Rules, which is determines which legislation comes to the floor of the Assembly. I am also a member of the Labor Committee and the Racing and Wagering Committee.

I am grateful to the people of the 30th District for their confidence by returning me to the Assembly for a new two-year term. As always, I welcome your comments and observations about the work of the Legislature and my office stands ready to assist constituents on issues that involve state agencies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret Markey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Margaret M. Markey  
February 25, 2015