



Message from Assemblywoman **MARGARET MARKEY** Reports to the People

WINTER 2015

Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for the New Year

Dear Friends:

Another festive holiday season has come to an end and we've all had the opportunity to enjoy the comfort of family and friends in our homes and at public events, holiday street and tree lightings throughout our neighborhoods.

These photos show some of the festive events in Woodside, Maspeth, and other parts of my 30th District. I was also pleased to make it possible through state funding for Maspeth Town Hall for seniors from Maspeth Self-Help and Woodside Senior Center to enjoy a live holiday performance of "A Christmas Carol" at the Queens Theater in the Park.

With the holidays over, my thoughts now turn to the upcoming legislative season in Albany, which will begin in January as Governor Andrew Cuomo delivers his annual State of the State and Budget. You will read on the following pages about a few of the outstanding, unresolved issues I will continue to address in the coming year, as we face such new challenging issues as the minimum wage, funding transportation, Mayoral control of NYC schools, and adequate funding for youth, senior and social service programs, as well as job-creating economic development activities.

As usual, my office is always available to provide assistance with state and local problems. I also welcome your views on issues that are important to you. See below for my telephone, mail, and e-mail contact information.

With my very best wishes to you and your family for the New Year.

Sincerely,

Margaret Markey



Enjoying festivities at the Maspeth Tree Lighting with Chamber of Commerce President David Daraio.



Sabba Park Snowflake Lighting Ceremony in Woodside, sponsored by the Sunnyside Chamber of Commerce.

Seniors Take a Holiday Theater Outing

I joined members of the Woodside Senior Center and the Maspeth Self-Help Senior Center as they traveled to Queens Theater in the Park to enjoy a holiday performance of Charles Dickens' famed play, "A Christmas Carol." It was a pleasure to help provide this free holiday entertainment for these seniors.



Woodside seniors as they arrived at Queens Theater in the Park.



Maspeth seniors boarding a bus on Grand Avenue for the trip.

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Continuing My Push to Get Justice for Victims of Child Sex Abuse



Attention continues to be focused on the subject of childhood sexual abuse as my campaign to enact the Child Victims Act of New York picks up support in the Legislature.

The bill, A.2872A, which would eliminate New York's archaic civil statute of limitations for these crimes, now has the largest number of co-sponsors since it was first introduced. It would also suspend the civil statute of limitations for one year to give older victims the opportunity to get justice for the crimes against them.

There is no limit on what is a lifetime of suffering and anguish for so many victims of child sexual abuse. That is why there should be no limit on the ability of victims and society to prosecute abusers. Nor should there be any limit on holding accountable those institutions and organizations that have deliberately protected and hidden

perpetrators. Their actions make it possible for pedophiles to continue to prey on new victims.

I have introduced a companion bill (A.8567) in the coming session which would also completely eliminate the criminal statute of limitations for childhood sexual abuse crimes in the future.

Assemblymembers and Senators joined me earlier this year at an Albany rally in support of my Child Victims Act legislation. ABOVE: World champion speed skater Birdie Farrell told about her victimization as a young teen by a trusted coach.



World's Fair NY Pavilion Restoration Now Underway

This fall we celebrated the first milestone in the restoration of the iconic New York State Pavilion in Flushing Meadows Corona Park. I was proud to co-chair the recent 50th and 75th anniversary celebrations of the New York World's Fairs, which put a spotlight on this architectural treasure and the need to act now to preserve it.

We gathered inside the "Tent of Tomorrow" in October to acknowledge the generosity of Allied Trades Local 806 and the Structural Steel Painting Association which repainted the entire structure in its original 1964 colors. Restoration work will continue to stabilize and preserve the tent and the towers with an allocation of \$6 million from the City and Borough President Melinda Katz. The State of New York will soon add another \$1.5 million to continue work now underway.

We all instantly recognize the shape of the New York Pavilion. It's been part of the landscape of our borough for generations. The National Trust for Historic Preservation designated the Pavilion a "National Treasure" and this restoration work will ensure that it continues to be part of our lives in the future.



I was part of the happy group inside the NY Pavilion to acknowledge the generosity of Local 806 and the Structural Steel Painting Association, including Borough President Melinda Katz, Congressman Joseph Crowley, State Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon, and Queens Borough Parks Commissioner Dorothy Lewandowski and FMCP Administrator Janice Melnick.



HILLARY IN QUEENS – *It was a great pleasure to welcome former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on a recent visit to Queens.*



HONORED BY NOTABLE WOMEN – *Five notable women Queens elected officials were Honorary Co-Hosts at a recent reception to honor me. They included Borough President Melinda Katz, Congresswoman Grace Meng, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, Assemblywoman Cathy Nolan, and Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley. Seen here with me from left: Lily Gavin of Dazies Restaurant, Assemblywoman Nolan, Councilwoman Crowley, and community leader Deidre Feerick.*



NURSES MAKE THEIR CASE ABOUT STAFFING – *I met with this delegation of women from the New York State Nurses Association who visited in Albany to make me aware of the serious problems in staffing at local hospitals that could be remedied by passage of the Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act.*

State Grant for Queens Tourism is Big Catalyst for the Borough's Economy

Tourism means jobs and economic activity. As Chair of the New York State Assembly's Committee on Tourism, Parks, Arts, and Sports Development I was delighted to learn that the total economic impact of tourism in New York State reached an all-time high of \$100 billion last year.

A significant portion of this economic activity takes place in New York City, and increasingly, in Queens.

Seth Bornstein is Executive Director of the Queens Economic Development Corp. (QEDC), parent of the Queens Tourism Council (QTC). Testifying at a recent hearing of my Tourism Committee, he said tourism is a great catalyst for economic development in Queens thanks to an estimated seven million annual visitors who spend \$3 billion each year.

There are now more than 130 hotels in Queens, with more planned. We also have 10,000 food establishments, 50 cultural venues, professional sporting activities, and a wide range of parks. These assets represent the rich and robust diversity that makes Queens unique and a place of interest for visitors. They are a vital part of our local economy that creates jobs, services and increases the tax base.

To help support and expand this economic vitality, I was pleased to direct a State grant of \$100,000 this year to support the outstanding work of the Queens Tourism Council as it spreads the word about our magnificent borough. The council is directly responsible for the worldwide attention that Queens received after being named Tourism Destination of the Year for 2015. This support from the State of New York will help them



The Queens Tourism Council announced a new \$100,000 grant from New York State for tourism marketing in Queens at a recent meeting of its members. Here, I am with Queens Tourism Council Director Rob MacKay and Seth Bornstein, Executive Director of QEDC.

keep our local economy growing by supporting local businesses and creating new jobs.

This is the third year I have been able to direct a State grant to QTC, which has grown and flourished, now facilitating monthly networking events, managing social media under the "It's In Queens" brand, and organizing promotions and tourism industry media familiarization tours.



QUEENS DAY AT US TENNIS CENTER – *An international audience flocks to the USTA Center in Flushing Meadows Corona Park every year and I joined local civic and political leaders to host the annual Queens Day preview for the event, an important economic engine for our borough.*

Funding for Non-Profit Service Groups That Help Our Neighbors

I am proud that year after year I have been able to bring State funding home to support effective non-profit organizations and programs in our neighborhoods.

Here are worthy organizations provide vital services to seniors, youth and social service organizations and dedicated civic initiatives. These are some of the non-profit groups and activities that have received funding in 2015 as a result of my work in Albany:

- Central Astoria Local Development Coalition
- Astoria Queens SHAREing & CAREing
- Greater Ridgewood Restoration Anti-Graffiti Program
- Maspeth Chamber of Commerce
- Woodside on the Move
- Child Center of New York
- Maspeth Town Hall
- Polonians Organized to Minister to Our Community
- St. Mary's Golden Age Club
- United Veterans and Fraternal Organizations of Maspeth
- Everyone Reading

Cross Harbor Freight Study Puts Our Neighborhoods in the Bullseye

Like the uninvited guest that never seems to go home, our Western Queens neighborhoods are once again in the bullseye as an environmental impact statement is underway for the Port Authority's Cross Harbor Freight Study.

For the second time in a decade, this project is seeking ways to reduce commercial truck traffic into New York City over Hudson River crossings. The possible solutions include marine alternatives, but most importantly they also propose a rail tunnel from mainland New Jersey to Long Island.

We have a lot of negative experience with trucks and trains in our local Western Queens neighborhoods. We know about health and safety issues caused by both excessive truck traffic and rail train movements in and adjacent to our residential and commercial areas.

None of these concerns were adequately addressed in a recent Environmental Impact assessment by the Port Authority. Many neighborhoods in Western Queens already carry a burden as a result of these rail traffic and other environmental issues. Phased increases projected in rail movement of municipal waste on the narrow rail corridor through our communities are certain to make existing matters even worse.

In a letter to the Federal Highway Administration and the Port Authority, I said that any of the rail alternatives proposed could be catastrophic for our communities. The subject of the physical limitations of the existing rail network and rail yard facilities was not sufficiently addressed, nor was the subject of potential new truck distribution centers in Queens.

It appears that our local Queens neighborhoods are being unfairly forced to pay the price for solving what is a regional problem. I called for the Port Authority to abandon its plan for a rail tunnel under New York Harbor and instead concentrate on marine transportation alternatives to meet its goals.

My New Bill Requires Garbage to Be Transported in Sealed Rail Cars

Neighbors along the rail lines that pass through Western Queens, particularly those who live near the Fresh Pond Rail Yards, have lived for years with the increasing ill effects from transport of smelly waste by local railroads.

Often, this waste is either completely or partially uncovered, emitting odors, and leaking or spilling along the tracks, posing a health concern for residents and larger environmental consequences. With the increasing volume of waste being transported by rail through our communities, this bill will help protect the residential areas adjacent to the rail lines.

The bill, which revives an earlier attempt to change the environ-

mental conservation law, will require that all putrescible garbage waste transferred by rail in New York State be properly contained to prevent leakage and spillage along the tracks. The bill is being sponsored in the Senate by State Senator Joseph Addabbo.

The legislation will require the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation to exercise its responsibility for permitting and regulating waste transfer stations in the state by ordering that all waste cars hauling putrescible garbage be sealed under hard lids before exiting the transfer station and that those carrying non-putrescible waste be securely covered.



TEAMING UP WITH ELMHURST FOR FREE FLU SHOTS –
My thanks to Elmhurst Hospital for partnering with me to provide local residents with free flu shots at my District Office again this year. This public service has been an important annual program I am pleased to provide right here in the neighborhood for seniors and those who are most at risk for severe illness from the flu.

Markey Law Helps Families of First Responders Who Died in Line of Duty

Governor Andrew Cuomo has signed my bill that provides financial assistance to families of Police and Fire officers who have been killed in the line of duty.

This new law ensures that families of brave first responders have the support their loved ones can no longer provide. I am proud to sponsor this bill to recognize the dedication and sacrifice of heroic fire and police officers throughout New York State.

The law, the Line of Duty Widow's COLA, provides a 3% cost of living increase in accidental death benefits paid to widows, widowers and children of deceased officers for the current fiscal year. I have sponsored this legislation every year since I arrived in Albany to ensure that the financial burdens of the families of fallen heroes are alleviated.



Assemblywoman

Margaret
MARKEY

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FUNDING FOR SENIOR PROGRAMS –
Again this year I have been able to secure substantial funding to support the fine work at two local senior centers, the SelfHelp Maspeth Senior Center on Grand Avenue and the Woodside Senior Center, where I greeted members on a recent visit.



GRANT FROM LEGISLATORS SOCIETY –
It was a great pleasure to share in the enthusiasm on a recent visit to Maspeth Town Hall. I was there to bring good news that the American Irish Legislators Society, of which I am a past President, has awarded a grant to Maspeth Town Hall for its Irish cultural programming.