



Message from Assemblywoman
MARGARET MARKEY
Reports to the People

SUMMER 2016

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MARKEY 2016 REPORT FROM ALBANY

Work of the Legislature this year produced • Lowest state taxes for middle-income and working families in 60 years • Biggest funding for schools in NY state history • Billions for city's subway system and buses, roads and bridges • Historic minimum wage boost for workers • Help for college students • Start for paid family leave

Dear Friends:

The Legislature acted this year to make life better for all our citizens. We reduced taxes for working and middle-income New Yorkers and made improvements in the lives of all our citizens. As a senior member of the Assembly leadership, as a member of the influential Ways and Means and Rules Committees, and as Chair of the Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development Committee, I have acted this year to ensure that state government works for you. Here are some of the most important accomplishments of the recently ended Legislative session.



TAX CUTS FOR MIDDLE CLASS – We have worked hard in Albany to reduce taxes for middle-income families resulting in the lowest taxes in 60 years for New York residents. New tax cuts we enacted in 2016 will benefit an additional six million NY residents. We did this by cutting \$270 million for middle income families in the coming year which will grow to a total of \$3 billion in savings for taxpayers when these middle-income tax rates are fully phased in over the next few years.

MINIMUM WAGE – Workers deserve a living wage and the opportunity to provide for their families while also seeing a pathway to the middle class. We approved a historic increase in the guaranteed minimum wage that will help low-wage workers and working families. The minimum wage for NYC will go up to \$11 an hour at the end of this year; and increase to \$15 an hour by the end of 2018.

PAID FAMILY LEAVE – No worker should have to choose between collecting their paycheck and caring for a newborn child or a sick family member. The Legislature took the first step this year for it to be possible for workers to eventually receive up to 12 weeks of paid family leave to take care of their family. The new policy will be phased in starting in 2018. Workers will contribute to the cost by a small weekly contribution and be eligible for the program after six months of employment.



MORE MONEY FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN – Support for our school children is one of the most important responsibilities for us in Albany. I am pleased to report that we continued to boost the state's funding for public schools this year by allocating \$24.7 billion, an increase of six percent over last year. It's the largest investment in schools in the history of New York state. This includes money to transform struggling and high-need schools into community schools and provides \$2 billion for classroom infrastructure and technology. Continuing the groundbreaking program we launched in New York City and across the state, Albany also provided more than \$800 million to provide state-wide pre-school education.

HELP FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS – Students cannot expect to get good jobs and be successful in new careers without being able to afford a college education. We must do all we can to make higher education accessible and prevent students from taking on crushing future debt. We stopped the escalating cost of college for students at SUNY and City University by freezing tuition for the coming year. We have also provided increased operating funds for City University and community colleges in Queens and across the state.

ACTION ON ETHICS REFORM – The Assembly has passed a series of bills to reform ethics of state government workers and legislators. One bill that the entire Legislature agreed on was a measure to strip pension benefits from state and elected officials who are convicted of a criminal act while in public office. This measure, which must pass the Legislature a second time next year, requires an amendment of the State Constitution and must be approved by voters in 2017. I was sponsor of another measure which would represent a major achievement for ethical reform: limiting the "LLC loophole" in campaign finance laws. That measure, which has been repeatedly adopted by the Assembly but did not pass the Senate this year, would reduce the improper impact of big anonymous campaign contributions by drastically limiting them and requiring their sources be revealed.



NEW STATE SUPPORT FOR TRANSIT – Our economy depends on trains, subways and buses to thrive. Most of us cannot get to work or connect with family and friends without access to public transit. Albany stepped up this year to provide huge support for the MTA's five-year capital plan by providing \$7.3 billion in the new state budget to buy new buses and subway cars and to improve NYC Transit stations across the city, including work now being planned for the 7, L and M Lines.

HELPING SENIORS STAY IN COMMUNITIES – The state has traditionally supported programs in neighborhoods which have a high concentration of seniors. These designations come with support and social services that are delivered through community based non-profits. This includes funding for Selfhelp Community Services in Woodside. We restored funding in April in order to continue these services for the coming year including Community Services for the Elderly and the NY Foundation for Senior Citizens Home Sharing and Respite Care program. Another measure we adopted preserves a program that helps ensure couples do not lose their life savings in the event a spouse becomes ill.

Sincerely,

Margaret Markey
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ASSEMBLYWOMAN MARGARET MARKEY

55-19 69th Street • Maspeth, NY 11378 • 718-651-3185 • Room 712, Legislative Office Building • Albany, NY 12248 • 518-455-4755
 Email: markeym@nyassembly.gov

On Memorial Day We Honor Those Who Served and Died to Protect Our Freedom



I was pleased to present Assembly citations to the two Grand Marshals of the Maspeth Memorial Day Parade, Mary Ann Todzia, founder of Matthew's Mission, and Fred Gundel, a Vietnam War veteran, and Commander of the Frank Kowalski Post in Maspeth.



It was an honor to salute the service of Lt. Michael Keitly at the Woodside Memorial Day Parade.

Every year we gather throughout our neighborhoods to pay tribute to those who have died to defend our freedoms and to also thank every man and woman for their service in our Armed Forces.

New Yorkers should be proud to know that our commemoration of Memorial Day began right here in New York State. In 1866, families first gathered in Waterloo, NY, to honor the sacrifice of their loved ones by placing flowers on their graves and lowering American flags to half-staff.

Family and friends now come together all across America in the same spirit of commemoration like we do here in Maspeth and Woodside and other communities in Queens, to hold remembrance ceremonies to show gratitude to those who lost their lives to preserve our liberties.

This year once again, I took part in the Maspeth Memorial Day Parade sponsored by the United Veterans and Fraternal Organizations of Maspeth, the annual Memorial Day Parade in Woodside sponsored by the Catholic War Veterans St. Sebastian's Post 870 and the commemoration sponsored by the Boulevard Gardens American Legion Post 1836.

As part of our modern observance of Memorial Day, we also take the opportunity on this day to show our appreciation to those living veterans among us for their distinguished service --- as well as to thank those who continue to serve in the military. I am honored to be able to provide support for all three of our local observances and to join in their commemorations.



Woman veterans, like Eileen Wilmer, were saluted by the Boulevard Gardens St. Sebastian Post.

New Space at Middle Village School



There were many smiling faces when ground was broken recently in Middle Village for a desperately needed expansion at our local PS/IS 49, the Dorothy Bonawit Kole School. The three story addition will add 13 regular classrooms, two special education classrooms, three resource rooms, a medical suite, and an exercise room, as well as an expanded cafeteria. Among those there for the ceremony, in addition to Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley and I, were Community Board 5 District Manager Gary Giordano, Principal Thomas Carty and Michael Minsola and Gordon Tung from the School Construction Authority as well as District 24 Superintendent Madeline Chan.

AT WORK IN ALBANY



DECLARING IRISH REPUBLIC DAY IN NY – As past-president of the American-Irish Legislator’s Society, I was proud to join in calling on Governor Andrew Cuomo to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 2016 Easter Uprising by declaring April 24, 2016 as Irish Republic Day in the State of New York. Here, at the Executive Mansion as Albany marked St. Patrick’s Day, I joined in presenting the Assembly resolution to Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul, along with NY Irish Consul General Barbara Jones and Paul Kehoe, Irish Minister of State.



NY METS CHAMPION – The game of baseball and the New York Mets took center stage in Albany when Lee Mazzilli, a popular member of the fabled 1989 World Championship Mets team, visited the Assembly floor just as the 2016 baseball season got underway.



PART OF WOMEN’S HISTORY – The Legislature’s Women’s Caucus mounted a display of their own members to mark Women’s History Month this year, putting a spotlight on the diverse array of notable women from every party and every part of New York State who have been elected by their neighbors to represent them.

My Push Continues for Reform NY’s Archaic Statute of Limitations Laws to Punish Predators for Their Child Sex Abuse Crimes

Supporters of my Child Victims Act came to Albany in May to lobby the Legislature for passage of reform legislation to eliminate the archaic statute of limitations for child sex abuse crimes in New York State.

Sponsored by me in the Assembly along with more than 60 other co-sponsors, and Senator Brad Hoylman in the State Senate, the bill has been adopted in the Assembly four times in various forms since 2006, but has never made it to the floor of the State Senate.

A highlight of the two-day effort put the focus on statute of limitations issues in New York State by looking at the chronicle of hidden abuse in the Catholic Church as reflected in the Academy Award-winning film “Spotlight”. Oscar-winning screenwriter Josh Singer participated in a forum about the film and the issues it revealed. A screening of the film followed the roundtable. On the other Lobby Day, Professor Marci Hamilton, a national advocate for statute of limitations reform, moderated a forum that illustrated the pervasive nature of the problem of child sexual abuse in many other sectors of society.

New York is among the very worst states in America for how it treats victims of childhood sexual abuse. We rank right at the very bottom among the 50 states along with Alabama and Mississippi. Our current statute of limitations requires an abuse victim to bring criminal or civil charges by the time they turn age 23. But abuse victims are often very slow to come to grips with what happened to them, some not until middle age or even later in life.

Our current statute of limitations protects the wrong people. It gives a free pass to predators and those who hide them, but most often denies justice to their victims. It victimizes both victims and all of society. Reforming these statutes will help expose predators who remain hidden and continue to abuse new generations of children.

My Child Victims Act would completely eliminate the civil statute of limitations for child sexual abuse crimes in the future. It also includes a one year window during which the statute of limitations is suspended so older victims can get justice. A companion bill seeks to eliminate the criminal statute of limitations for child sex abuse in the future.



The spotlight was on “Spotlight” when the Oscar Award Winning screenwriter Josh Singer joined me in Albany to speak up for reforming the statute of limitations for child sex abuse crimes. Joining him was priest-abuse survivor Phillip Saviano and the actor who portrayed him in the Best Picture movie, Neal Huff. From left are: Saviano, Huff, Singer, Queens Assemblyman David Weprin, one of 60 Assembly co-sponsors of my bill; and three State Senators, Tim Kennedy, Minority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Brad Hoylman, CVA sponsor in the Senate.



A forum about the pervasive nature of child sex abuse in so many sectors of modern society included survivors of abuse in schools, entertainment, families and youth and elite sports. Moderator was Professor Marci Hamilton of Cardozo Law School and University of Pennsylvania, an author and national expert on statute of limitations reform. Here she introduces me and Senator Brad Hoylman, Senate sponsor of my bill.



FIGHTING FOR FAIR WAGE AND A FUTURE -

As a member of the Assembly Labor Committee, I strongly support organized workers who want to protect their jobs and their hard-earned benefits at contract time. I was pleased to lend my support to members of the Communication Workers of America who recently reached agreement with Verizon after a prolonged strike. Fair wages, good working conditions, and future good jobs are the backbone of a strong middle class in our community. Here I visited strikers as they demonstrated in front of a company store in Astoria.



MASPETH VIGIL FOR FALLEN OFFICERS - *Thank you to COMET and our local precincts for organizing the Memorial Vigil to honor fallen police officers in Dallas and Baton Rouge. Commanders from the 104th, 108th and 110th Precincts and their senior officers stood before empty chairs to pay tribute to these fallen heroes and express our continuing gratitude and support for the men and women of New York's Finest.*

WARNING: THIS IS A SCAM

My office has received many calls recently from constituents asking about a telephone scam being conducted in our neighborhoods where the voice on the phone poses as an agent of the Internal Revenue Service and tells the person who answers that he or she owes money to the IRS and legal action will be taken if they do not respond immediately.

When we checked with an IRS representative, we were told that these calls, some of them automated, are completely bogus. The IRS says if you receive such a call, hang up immediately. Do not give personal information of any kind. Do not call any number you are referred to call. If you receive such a call, or may have already mistakenly responded to one, the U.S. Treasury Department urges you to report it by calling the IRS Impersonation Hot Line at 800-366-4484.



Assemblywoman

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SAFE SHREDDING FOR WOODSIDE RESIDENTS - *Getting rid of sensitive personal information was easy for Woodside residents recently when Congressman Joseph Crowley and I teamed up for a free paper shredding event at Boulevard Gardens in the spring. Among those bringing papers to be safely disposed of are Denise Keehan-Smith and Casey Smith.*



HELP FOR HOMEMAKERS - *As a member of the Assembly Labor Committee, I recently met with a group of women in Albany who were pressing for additional support for the State Department of Labor's services for displaced homemakers. These include women or even sometimes men who have previously provided unpaid services to their family who are currently unemployed or underemployed, including Career Centers to help them in finding a job and beginning a career.*