



Assemblywoman

**Catherine
NOLAN**

Reports to the
Community

Summer 2011

Dear Neighbor,

This year the New York State Legislature delivered an on time state budget that reduces spending while maintaining critical funding for those who need it most. I did not accept all of the proposed cuts to programs affecting seniors, students and others who are disproportionately affected by drastic budget reductions and will continue to fight for these programs and services.

The 2011-12 state budget restores \$25 million in New York City Title XX discretionary funds to senior centers. Both Queensbridge and Ravenswood senior centers will have the state funds they need to stay open. Although we are in the midst of tough fiscal times, we need to provide seniors with the resources they need to continue living happy, healthy and active lives.

As Chair of the Assembly Education Committee, I worked hard to make sure that the students of New York receive the best education possible. The state budget also restored \$230 million in general support to public schools statewide, including over \$50 million to New York City for classroom instruction.

Sincerely,

Catherine Nolan

Career and Technical Education

Students and administrators from New York City Career and Technical Schools visited with me and other members of the education committee in Albany.

News from Albany

Arts roundtable



As Education Committee Chair, I convened a roundtable of stakeholders in art education including representatives from the State Education Department, New York City Department of Education, Center for Arts Education and art, music, dance and theatre teachers from around the state. Everyone shared their ideas and recommendations about how to provide arts education in this difficult environment.

Assembly hearing on environmental quality in schools

The Assembly Committee on Education heard testimony from the State Education Department, New York City Department of Education, environmental advocates and community groups about environmental hazards in school buildings and public efforts to improve environmental quality in schools. The New York State Board of Regents has adopted guiding principles about environmental quality in schools. Among these principles are a safe, secure and healthy school environment for all school children and the right for every child, parent, and school employee to be informed about environmental health issues and hazards in their schools. At the hearing witnesses testified about PCB's in the schools, environmental impact statements for school leases and "green buildings."



2011 LEGISLATION

Rent Control

This year the state legislature extended and expanded the state's rent laws. For the first time since 1993, there are new tenant protections. These new protections for tenants will provide stability to many middle and low income New Yorkers who can now stay in their own homes. This new legislation extends rent laws for another four years, increases the income threshold for deregulation from \$175,000 to \$200,000, raises the high rent deregulation threshold from \$2,000 to \$2,500, and allows only one vacancy increase per year. In addition, small landlords will be treated more favorably regarding capital improvements.

SUNY/CUNY

The Assembly and the Senate passed legislation to provide resources for SUNY and CUNY which will help the university colleges expand their role as economic engines in our communities.

Additionally, A.8519 creates a tuition credit for student who reside in New York and receive Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) awards. This credit will assure that those students most in need of financial assistance are not further disadvantaged. SUNY and CUNY will also be required to review current TAP award levels and eligibility criteria and make recommendations about how to improve TAP to meet the future financial aid needs of students.

Small Business Capital

The Assembly passed legislation that will give small businesses greater access to capital so they can create jobs and enhance the business climate in New York (A.8452). Specifically, the bill allocates \$55.4 million in federal State Small Business Credit Initiative funds to the New York State Capital Access Program (CAP), the Innovate NY Fund and the Bonding Guarantee Assistance Program.

The Innovate NY Fund will spur economic growth and develop new jobs. The program will provide companies that have developed new technologies with early-stage capital to help further their ini-

tiatives. Approximately \$25 million of federal funds will help attract high-tech companies, generate new business and create jobs.

Mild Traumatic Brain Injury

A.8194, which I sponsored in the Assembly, will help schools help students who suffer mild traumatic brain injury (MTI), commonly known as concussions. As the bill sponsor and the Assembly Education Committee Chair, I am delighted that the Assembly and Senate have come together on this important proposal to assure the safety of students.

This bill directs the State Education Department, in conjunction with the Department of Health, to develop rules and regulations about the risk of traumatic brain injury to students, prevention and intervention to protect students from immediate and long-term consequences of such injuries. Nationwide, 135,000 children and teens are treated in emergency departments for sports – or recreation-related traumatic brain injury. It is a serious risk immediately to life and health and long-term to well-being and academic achievement. It is therefore imperative that schools and their teachers know how to respond.

The legislation gives schools, parents and students the information they need to make informed decisions about mild traumatic brain injury. First, information will be posted on state web sites and included in any parental permission forms. Second, teachers, coaches, school nurses and other frontline school personnel will be trained about mild traumatic brain injury. Through regulation, the commissioners of education and health can establish training protocols that are both efficient as well as effective by using such options as on-line programs. With this training, school personnel can identify students in danger and, erring on the side of caution, remove a student who has or who may have suffered a mild traumatic brain injury from a game, competition or physical education class and direct the student to seek medical care for diagnosis and treatment. The legislation further protects students by requiring a physician to allow a student to return to sports activities.



Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan debates a bill in the Assembly Chamber during Session of Spring 2011.

Around the District

Women's History Month

LaGuardia Community College President Dr. Gail O. Mellow and I hosted a luncheon to honor and celebrate women in public service from Queens. We were joined by women in government, business, community service and culture to honor Assemblywoman Michele Titus, Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas, Assemblywoman Grace Meng, City Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley, and City Councilwoman Diana Reyna. We were also joined by Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney and Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez.

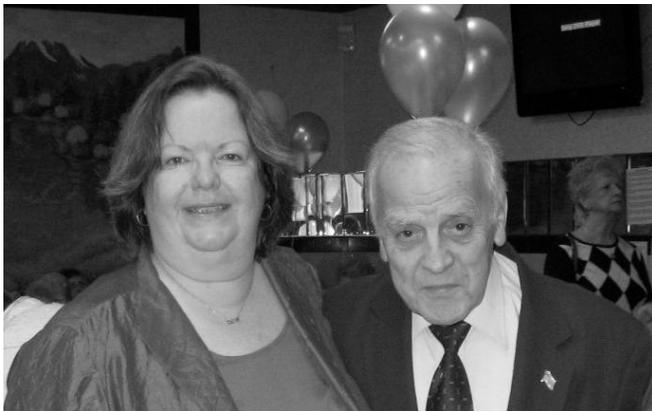


Ladder 128 Rally



Ladder 128 must remain open to service the residents of Western Queens. It is important that we do our best to maintain vital services for our community, including keeping the firehouses in Queens operating. Fire safety is a top concern for residents in Queens. Closing firehouses will put residents and the city at risk in an emergency.

Ridgewood Senior Center



Former Department for the Aging Assistant Commissioner Albert Buzzeo and I joined Peter and Providenza Cardella at the Ridgewood Senior Center to celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary. Peter founded the Center and has long advocated for services that help seniors live active lives. Assemblyman Mike Miller and Senator Joe Addabbo also attended.

PS 81 School Visit with New York City Department of Education Chancellor Dennis Walcott

Chancellor Walcott and I visited with administrators, staff, teachers and students from PS 81 in Ridgewood this spring. We discussed issues facing this school such as overcrowding and the use of temporary classroom units. I look forward to working with Chancellor Walcott to improve schools in Western Queens.



Court Square Station Opening

I am happy to announce, after many years of effort, and thanks to steady leadership by Community Board 2 Chair Joe Conley the Center Square station in Long Island City will finally be remodeled and upgraded to be accessible to the disabled. When I served as the Assembly representative to the MTA Capital Program Review Board, I successfully advocated for major improvements at the Myrtle-Wyckoff station. I also advocated for the rehabilitation of the 7 line, sound abatement in Long Island City to reduce MTA noise and the opening of the Queensbridge 21st Street Station to Roosevelt Island. Remodeling and upgrading the Court Square Station in LIC is another much-needed improvement for our community.

Supporting Seniors

Assemblywoman Nolan meets with Western Queens and Ravenswood residents to discuss the work that she has been doing in Queens.



Libraries

Assemblywoman Nolan recently hosted an informational State Fair in the Ridgewood Library. State and City agencies were on hand to pass out information and answer questions.

Local Business

Assemblywoman Nolan addressed the Long Island City Business Improvement District earlier this year. She was also joined by City Councilmember Jimmy Van Bramer and State Senator Michael Gianaris.



Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan

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