



# NEWS FROM NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLYMAN **PETER J. ABBATE, JR.**

49th Assembly District, Brooklyn

SPRING 2014

*Dear Neighbor:*

*The 2014-15 NYS Budget marks the fourth on time budget for the first time in over 40 years. While in Albany, my focus is on protecting and fighting for those whom I represent. With a combined focus on pursuing these goals and protecting the interests of our community, I fought hard to ensure we passed the best budget possible.*

*In addition to details on the new budget and how it benefits you, this newsletter also includes a sampling of the issues on which my staff and I have been working. Whether it is taking on a government agency that has unfairly raised costs or taking steps to ensure our streets are safer by installing traffic signals at dangerous intersections; my efforts continue to focus on addressing the needs of my constituents and our community.*

*As always, please contact me at any of my offices if you ever need any assistance.*

*Sincerely,*

*Peter J. Abbate, Jr.*

## **2014-15 Budget Preview**

Negotiating and voting on the New York State budget is one of the most important parts of the legislative calendar. This year's budget agreement is representative of my commitment to the working families of my community and the State of New York. It provides essential funding for schools, continues to alleviate the tax burden on working class families and helps create a better economic environment that will spur job growth throughout New York City and the State. As your representative in the NYS Assembly, I take my commitment seriously for the people who elected me and I am always fighting to advance the priorities of working-class New Yorkers like my neighbors in the 49th Assembly District.



**Clifford W. Crouch**  
Member of Assembly

**Peter J. Abbate, Jr.**  
Member of Assembly

## **Assemblyman Peter Abbate**

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## Investing In Our Children's Future

Every child in New York deserves to benefit from a quality education. This year's budget represents New York's largest investment in our children's future. The 2014-15 budget agreement increased the base funding for school aid by over \$1 billion or 5.4 percent. This budget also includes many programs that will significantly impact our schools:

- This State budget allocates more than \$8.6 billion to New York City Schools, an increase of over \$435 million from last year's budget.
- The final state budget also includes the "Smart Schools" initiative, a \$2 billion bond act that voters will consider that will fund the construction of new classroom space for full-day pre-kindergarten and is expanded to include loans for educational technology hardware to non-public schools.
- Helping students obtain the best education to prepare them for college is the first step, but making sure they can afford a college degree is of utmost importance. The 2014-15 state budget helps grow our higher education system by providing \$10.4 billion for SUNY and \$4.3 billion for CUNY that will directly benefit Brooklyn College and Kingsborough Community College in our area.
- To help students afford the rising cost of college, this budget increases funding for the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) for the first time in 14 years. The maximum TAP award will be increased by \$165 for a maximum award of \$5,165 per full-time equivalent student.
- Ensuring the safety and development of students throughout their education is very important to me. This budget provides for a 5-year phase in of after-school funding beginning in 2015.
- The Assembly continues our long-running commitment toward libraries with \$5 million in state aid.



**Assemblyman Abbate meets with IS 187 students in his office.**

## Universal Pre-K

Since the future success of our children is dependent on how we prepare them for it, the Assembly fought to include Universal Pre-Kindergarten for New York City. There is a dedicated \$300 million per year for two years to make sure that every child has the opportunity to succeed. By passing the first part of a historic \$1.5 billion commitment to early childhood education, we are making New York one of five states to create Universal Pre-K.

*"Making sure our children receive the best education possible is my top priority"*



## Helping Parochial and Private Schools

After years of improper funding, this budget will supply \$163 million in CAP (Comprehensive Attendance Policy) and security funding. It also provides \$7 million for the Mandated Service Reimbursement (MSR), which reimburses non-public and parochial schools for state mandates they have met.

# Making New York City Affordable for All

*While New York State's economy is slowly growing, many hardworking families are not benefiting from this growth. As your Assemblyman, I fight to ensure we do not price families out of their homes and away from their communities. Listed below are a few initiatives that will ease the burden and make NYC more affordable:*

- This budget increases the income limit for the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) from \$29,000 to \$50,000 for a two-year period.
- As a way to provide much needed tax relief for NYC residents, the state is now providing \$85 million in tax credits for homeowners, condominiums and co-op owners and renters by implementing a "circuit breaker" plan. This will run for two years and will factor in household income for the property tax breaks.
- With utility rates rising, the Assembly fought hard to phase out the 18-a utility surcharge which will lower the surcharge rates by \$200 million annually for residential and commercial customers.



## Important Improvements for Infrastructure

After one of the most brutal and long winters in recent memory, we are now faced with repairing roads that have seriously deteriorated. This budget dedicates \$40 million in funding to help local governments repair local roads impacted by this harsh winter. This will help cover the costs without overloading New York City's budget.

## Commitment to Our Veterans

The New York State legislature is always looking for new and innovative ways to provide economic opportunities and improve services for our Veterans. The State passed the Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act, which sets a 6 percent participation goal in the awarding of state contracts to service-disabled veteran-owned businesses.

*"We need to be helping the brave men and women who put their lives in danger to protect our freedom find jobs when they return home."*



## Supporting the Community



- Every year my district offices participate in the Heart Share Neighborhood Heating Fund; a program that helps low-income families with the cost of their high heating bills. This year, between both my district offices, we helped secure over \$11,000 for 70 families.
- The Metro Card Bus will be available at my office on Fort Hamilton Parkway in May to help senior citizens sign up for reduced fare metro cards.
- My office was instrumental in getting a traffic light installed at 67th Street and 13th Avenue. This intersection is near the Norwegian Christian Nursing Home and will greatly improve the safety of pedestrians and drivers.



*Assemblyman*

**PETER  
ABBATE**

*Reports to the People*

SPRING 2014

## Passing Legislation to Help Victims Rebuild Their Lives

This year marks the 30th Anniversary of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. To commemorate this, the Assembly passed a package of bills that would increase aid and assistance for crime victims and their families to help rebuild their lives. These bills will address many concerns that families have after a crime has been committed against them or their family.

- One bill would allow courts to direct certain fines to the Office of Victims Services, creating additional revenue.
- The Assembly passed a measure that would change the reporting requirements pertaining to restitution to allow for a more thorough analysis of the manner in which crime victims' needs are met.
- Also included in the package is a bill that would protect the rights of tenants to report criminal acts.

