



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

49TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT, BROOKLYN

SUMMER 2014

Dear Friend:

Addressing issues that directly affect seniors has always been a top priority of mine. Whether its enacting legislation that punishes criminals who commit crimes against the elderly, improving health care for seniors or providing basic information about benefit programs for you, I've always strived to see that the voices of seniors are heard.

Enclosed, you'll find some information pertaining to senior citizen issues that we have addressed in the legislature. I've also included information about programs that you may qualify for. If you need further assistance please do not hesitate to contact one of my offices (718-236-1764 or 718-232-9565). Although we have been able to make strides in improving the quality of life for seniors, more still needs to be done.

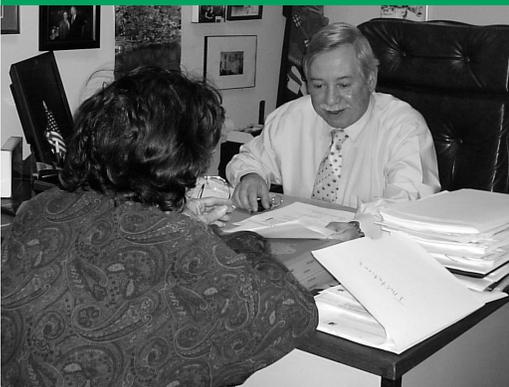
My efforts will continue to make sure that senior citizens get the kind of benefits and help they truly deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter J. Abbate Jr.".

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

Always Here to Help



I believe that one of my most important responsibilities is to listen carefully, answer questions, and try to help solve your problems.

My two district offices are open Monday through Friday and my staff and I are ready to assist you in many different ways. Each year we help hundreds of people sign up for The Neighborhood Heating Fund run by HeartShare that helps pay for heating oil through the cold winters. My staff and I also help those in need, whether it is victims who have been misplaced by house fires or senior citizens who have been scammed by home improvement contractors. Whatever you may need help with, my offices will always be there to help.

ASSEMBLYMAN PETER J. ABBATE, JR. DISTRICT OFFICES

6604 17th Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11204 • 718-236-1764

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Important Changes to SCRIE

As part of this year's State Budget, my colleagues and I in the Assembly fought hard to increase the maximum income requirements for the Senior Citizen Rental Increase Exemption, better known as SCRIE. If eligible, your rent is frozen under the program and you are not required to pay most rent increases. The budget we passed increases the income threshold for the program from \$29,000 to \$50,000, which is expected to surge the number of beneficiaries by 15 percent. This will help over 7,000 New York City senior citizens stay in their homes.

Starting July 1st, 2014, the new income requirements will go into effect. If you are over 62 years of age, pay more than a third of your yearly income on rent and have a valid lease, you may qualify. When applying, please make sure you have proof of age (birth certificate, driver's license, etc.), proof of income and a current lease for your apartment.

If you need help applying or would like additional information, please feel free to contact either of my District Offices and my staff and I will be happy to help.

*Annual Household Income	*Monthly Household Income	**Current monthly rent must be greater than or equal to
\$15,000.00	\$1,250.00	\$416.67
\$20,000.00	\$1,666.67	\$555.56
\$25,000.00	\$2,083.33	\$694.44
\$30,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$833.33
\$35,000.00	\$2,916.67	\$972.22
\$40,000.00	\$3,333.33	\$1,111.11
\$50,000.00	\$4,166.67	\$1,388.89

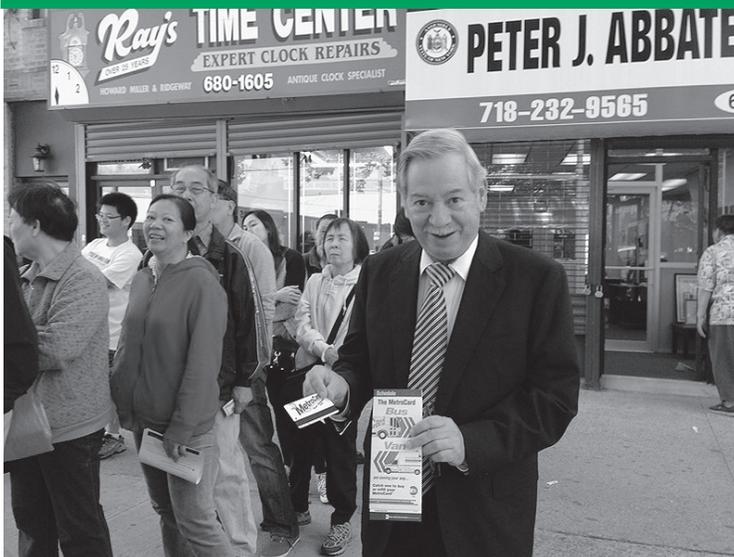
*Income is SCRIE calculated income, not to be confused with Adjusted Gross Income

**Current rent is defined as the new rent after all lawful rent increases for any lease term

To qualify for SCRIE, you must:

- Be at least 62 years old;
- Rent an apartment that is rent controlled, rent stabilized or hotel stabilized;
- Be named on the lease or the rent order or have been granted succession rights to the apartment;
- Live in your apartment as your primary residence; have a combined income in your household that is \$50,000 or less in the previous calendar year; and
- Spend more than one-third of your monthly household income on rent.

Sign Up for Your Senior Citizen Reduced-Fair Metrocard



Recently at my office on Fort Hamilton Parkway, I sponsored the MTA's Metrocard Bus to sign up Senior Citizens for their reduced-fair Metrocard. Those who are at least 65 years of age or have a qualifying disability can sign up to receive half fair rides on MTA buses and subways. This benefit is available to customers with one of the following forms of identification: NYC Dept. for the Aging ID card, Access-a-Ride card, Reduced-Fare ID card (pre 1995), Medicare card. Reduced-Fare Metro Card automatically deducts correct reduced fare, and allows you to transfer for free between NYC Transit subways and buses.

Preserving Spousal Refusal

The 2014-2015 final budget agreement continues to ensure proper health care is available for our most vulnerable populations. This includes rejecting the governor's recommendation to eliminate allowing spousal refusal, restoring \$10 million. The practice of spousal refusal protects healthy spouses from being required to spend their life savings to care for ill spouses in need of long-term care.

After a lifetime of working, you should be able to relax, enjoy and have a sense of stability upon retirement. No one should have to lose everything in order to afford care for an ill spouse.

"We need to show the elderly the respect they deserve by preserving spousal refusal."



Important Changes to EPIC

This year's budget provides \$4.1 million for the expansion of eligibility for the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) Program by increasing the income limit for the deductible plan from \$35,000 to \$75,000 for those who are single and \$50,000 to \$100,000 for those who are married. I know how important EPIC is for many of the seniors in my community in affording their prescription drugs and I am pleased to announce that for many more in need, they will no longer have to worry about paying for their medicines.

The EPIC program helps more than 270,000 income-eligible seniors aged 65 and older to supplement their out-of-pocket Medicare Part D drug plan costs. It covers

almost all prescription medicines, including insulin and insulin syringes. Just complete the application and mail or fax it to EPIC. No documentation is required and you can apply any time throughout the year. EPIC verifies information with the Social Security Administration and the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance.

It's easy to apply for EPIC; application forms can be obtained through the EPIC helpline at 1-800-332-3742 which is available from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Just complete the application and mail or fax it to EPIC. No documentation is required and you can apply any time throughout the year.



Protecting Homeowners

In times of crisis, when assistance is needed most, no one should be denied the coverage they thought they had, simply because they lacked adequate information about their policies. I'm proud of the State Assembly for passing the Homeowners Bill of Rights. Every homeowner has the right to know what kind of insurance they have and what kind of coverage they might need if a natural disaster strikes. Unfortunately, many homeowners are not fully informed about the details of their coverage, leaving them unprepared for potential catastrophic damage to their homes. The Assembly's legislation would require insurance companies to provide consumers with easy-to-understand notices so they are better prepared.



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Assemblyman

**PETER
ABBATE**

with News for Seniors

SUMMER 2014

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IMPORTANT UPDATE:

As of January 6, 2013 the US Postal Service (USPS) has instituted strict rules on the placement of mail panels on folded self-mailers. While the graphics department will make every attempt to accommodate your layout ideas, please keep in mind we must follow the requirements set forth by the USPS. Unfortunately, what you may have done in previous years may no longer be allowed because of these new requirements.

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Important Numbers to Remember



NYC Department for the Aging- 212-442-1000

Elder Abuse Prevention: 1-800-342-3009 (Option 9)

Veterans Affairs Office: 212-442-4171

EPIC Hotline: 1-800-342-3688

AARP Hotline: 202-434-2277

Verizon Lifeline: 1-800-836-4766

Access A Ride: 877-337-2017