



News from the Neighborhood

New York State Assemblyman Joseph R. Lentol

Below Market-Rate Renters Tax Abatement

Affordable housing has plagued metropolitan areas for decades. Cities struggle to balance development and growth while at the same time keeping the cost of housing at a level an average family can afford. In New York City, this problem is prevalent in many areas that were previously distressed but now are quickly developing. When Mayor de Blasio took office he set a goal of building and preserving 200,000 affordable housing units in ten years. I applaud the Mayor and I hope that this goal is met. He has proposed and already utilized several mechanisms to build and preserve units, but there is one mechanism that I have long been advocating for.

With the insight of Benjamin Dulchin, Executive Director of the Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development, Inc., I have introduced legislation over the years to provide a partial property tax abatement for multi-family homeowners that lease units in their building below market rate.

The legislation has a simple approach. Participating owners will receive a partial real estate tax abatement equal to 50% of the difference between the current rent they are being paid and the “fair market rent” of the apartment. The abatement is an incentive to owners not to raise the rent of low income, vulnerable tenants who they would then have to evict, but may not want to evict because, for example, they are long term tenants, elderly or disabled. The legislation also requires that eligible tenants must be low-income, the current rent must equal at least 30% of the tenant’s income, and the tenant must have occupied the apartment for at least one year. Immediate family of the landlord is excluded as eligible tenants.

Incentivizing homeowners to create and preserve affordable housing will do wonders to support a New York for all. I am hopeful that my colleagues in the legislature will support this legislation next session.



Bushwick Inlet Park: Where is our park?! I joined community members and my colleagues in government to advocate for the completion of the Bushwick Inlet Park.



MS 577, Class 601: I visited with Class 601 at MS 577 Conselyea Preparatory School. The students asked incredibly intelligent questions about the work an elected official does and how passing laws works. Thank you to Principal Maria Masullo and Ms. Peterman for allowing me to participate!



New McCarren Skate Park: I celebrated National Go Skateboard Day in style with the opening of the new skate park by McCarren Park! Special thanks to Nike and to the New York City Parks Department for making sure our youth has a rad park!



Smoke Detector Drive: I joined the United Jewish Organizations of Williamsburg (UJO), American Red Cross, Williamsburg Shomrim and Hatzolah of Williamsburg to install smoke detectors in homes throughout Williamsburg.

Stop Corruption

I'm just as tired of the corruption in Albany as you are. That's why I passed a law stripping crooked politicians of their pensions. Taxpayers should not foot the bill to pay the pensions of officials convicted of felonies that breach the public trust.

I also limited big money in politics by regulating PACs

and independent expenditure groups, and by enhancing disclosure requirements for lobbyists. I will also keep fighting to close the "LLC loophole" and stop wealthy special interests from unfairly influencing elections.

I am working hard to restore faith in the legislature and to reduce the influence big business has on our laws.



NYC Together Mural 90th PCT: I was proud to attend the unveiling of a mural at the 90th Police Precinct which showcased the creativity, teamwork, and unity between our youth and our men and women in uniform. Thanks to NYC Together, Dana Rachlin, Usher's New Look Youth Leaders Program, Captain William J. Gardner of the 90th Precinct, Inspector Mark DiPaolo, and Assistant Chief Jeffrey Maddrey of Brooklyn North for coming together to highlight the importance of bringing our youth and police officers together.



NYU Tandon Research Expo: I attended NYU-Tandon School of Engineering's Research Expo. The projects at this expo speak to the amazing work that Brooklynites are doing in the STEM fields and with innovation. Together, we will inspire future generations of entrepreneurs and inventors because innovation is alive in Brooklyn and we are just getting started.

Getting Our Loved Ones on the Road to Recovery

Heroin and opioid addiction is devastating our communities. This past session I helped pass a series of bills to improve the treatment and prevention of heroin and opioid addiction, which has reached epidemic levels in New York and throughout the nation. The legislation builds on previous efforts by the Assembly, which included \$189 million in this year's state budget for treatment and prevention initiatives as well as safe drug-disposal programs.

The legislation takes steps to combat the heroin crisis by educating doctors as well as individuals who are prescribed opioids to, among other things, educate them about addiction, prevent the risk of misuse by limiting the amount of opioids prescribed and requiring coverage for inpatient care.

The measures will:

- mandate three hours of education on pain management and palliative care for prescribers to be completed every three years;
- require insurance companies to provide coverage to patients for a minimum of 14 days of inpatient treatment without prior authorization;

- set a seven-day limit on a patient's first prescription of opioid medication for acute pain; and
- require pharmacists to provide consumers with educational materials regarding the dangers of addiction, availability of treatment and prescription disposal options when they are dispensing a controlled substance.

The legislation also expands access to addiction treatment. It requires insurers to provide five days of coverage for withdrawal treatment and eliminates the need for prior authorization by managed care companies for buprenorphine and Vivitrol – drugs used to treat opioid dependence. Another piece of legislation will allow social workers and certain other licensed professionals to administer Narcan – a drug that counteracts an opioid overdose – in an emergency.

It's crucial to have a treatment plan in place for someone who is admitted to the hospital for an overdose so that they can get on the road to recovery. Hospitals cannot continue to discharge patients who clearly have a substance abuse disorder without providing further guidance. This plan will ensure those who are struggling with addiction can get the support they need.



Pulaski Bridge Bike Lane Ribbon Cutting: *I was proud to attend the ribbon cutting for the long-awaited Pulaski Bridge dedicated bike lane, which is a testament to NYC's commitment to alternative forms of transportation. I worked with my colleagues in government and many of my constituents to fiercely advocate for this dedicated bike lane because we all know that the transportation network in North Brooklyn is quickly becoming overburdened. This bike lane will alleviate overcrowding and create a safer environment for those that walk or bike over the Pulaski Bridge.*



Vincent "Vinnie" Abate Street Renaming: *I gathered with friends and community leaders for the street co-naming ceremony honoring the life of Vinnie Abate, the former Chair of our own Community Board 1. Vinnie passed away in January 2015. He and I worked closely together for decades promoting the interests of Greenpoint and Williamsburg. He was a tireless fighter for this community and he is sorely missed by all who loved him. Rest in peace my friend.*

Supporting New York's Music and Gaming Industry

I am happy to announce that the legislature passed legislation expanding the Empire State Music Production Credit and creating the Empire State Digital Gaming Media Production Credit.

Both programs create a baseline tax credit of 25% on all qualified expenditures with an added 10% for productions produced outside of the counties of New York (Manhattan), Bronx, Kings (Brooklyn), Queens, Richmond (Staten Island), Rockland, Nassau, Suffolk, Orange, Putnam, Dutchess, and Westchester.

The music production tax credit is only eligible on music production costs, ranging from studio rental fees to mixing and mastering services. The digital gaming media

production tax credit is eligible on any costs for property used and wages or salaries paid to individuals directly employed on the game, for areas such as concept creation, design, and editing. Under both programs, all costs eligible for the credit must be incurred and paid in New York State. The legislation allocates \$25 million for the first year of each program, for a total of \$50 million.

New York was once the epicenter for music production and we have lost much of this business to other states' aggressive tax incentive programs. We need this business back. With these tax credits we have a great opportunity to retain music and game production talent right here in New York.



Tax Credit: *I was joined by Senator Golden, New York Is Music, and leaders from the music and video game industry to urge Governor Cuomo to sign the Empire State Music Production Tax Credit and the Empire State Digital Gaming Media Production Tax Credit.*



East River State Park Dog Run: *I had the pleasure of cutting the ribbon on the newly completed East River State Park dog run. Our furry friends will now have a place to run around safely and freely!*

Additional Speed Safety Cameras in School Zones

Protecting the safety of children through law is always of paramount importance to a legislator. This past session I sponsored legislation to remove the cap on the number of speed safety cameras allowed in New York City school zones. The current cap of 140, only allows 7% of New York City school children to benefit from a safety camera nearby. All students should enjoy a safe environment both inside and outside the school building and this legislation works to achieve that.

The New York City Department of Transportation reports that there has been a 60% drop in speeding infractions in locations where speed safety cameras have been installed. The program is working and it is time that all students can feel safe on their way to school.

I am proud to stand with my colleagues in the legislature to slow drivers down to save lives.



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619 Lorimer Street, 1st Floor Storefront • Brooklyn, NY 11211 • 718-383-7474
Room 632, Legislative Office Building • Albany, NY 12248 • 518-455-4477 • lentolj@nyassembly.gov