



NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLYMAN FELIX W. ORTIZ
CHAIR, CITIES COMMITTEE
CHAIR, PUERTO RICAN AND HISPANIC TASK FORCE

Legislative Highlights Week Ending January 31st, 2014

**Assemblyman Ortiz Receives New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio
As Testimonies Begin on Governor's Proposed 2014 Budget**



This week the Legislature began its budget hearings, affording the public an opportunity to comment on the Governor's proposed budget. As Chair of the Assembly Committee on Cities, Assemblyman Ortiz heard testimony regarding the impact the proposed budget will have on cities across the state. New York City Mayor de Blasio testified before the Budget Hearing Committee, promoting his plan to expand **Pre-Kindergarten Programs** in all public schools. He requested Legislative approval to raise taxes in New York City to pay for the Pre-K Program. In addition, Assemblyman Ortiz secured the Mayor's commitment to aid in the continued revitalization of the **Red Hook Community in Brooklyn** that was devastated by Hurricane Sandy.

New York's Legislative Leaders Unite to Save Brooklyn's Hospitals in Crisis

Governor Cuomo, Mayor de Blasio, Assemblyman Ortiz and fellow Brooklyn Legislators called on the federal government this week to grant a waiver that would allow New York to reinvest \$10 billion in Medicaid funds to help keep afloat two Brooklyn based hospitals, **Interfaith Medical Center and Long Island College Hospital**. Both hospitals are at near closing if they do not receive help soon. Closing these hospitals would eliminate health care services to communities in need and create massive job loss.



Assemblyman Ortiz stands in support of the workers and urges the federal government to take immediate action.

Week 4 Assembly Passes Key Legislation for Women and Families

Ortiz Votes to Pass Women's Equality Act



The Assembly passed a comprehensive bill this week that when signed into law will secure pay equity and end discrimination for New York's women. It calls for equal pay, the end of sexual harassment in the workplace, employment discrimination based on pregnancy, source of income, family status and housing. It strengthens domestic violence laws, protects women's health rights, allows for recovery of attorney fees in credit and lending cases and intensifies human trafficking laws. This landmark legislation brought forth by the Governor has strong support from women across our state, but it faces opposition in the State Senate.

Assembly Passes Ortiz's bill to Educate Public on Spina Bifida - This week, the Assembly passed Ortiz Bill A.5933A which, when signed into law, will make it possible to begin a statewide campaign to educate women of child bearing age of the importance of increasing their intake of folic acid to decrease the chances of birth defects. An estimated five infants are born each day with Spina Bifida. This defect is developed in the womb during the first month of pregnancy. Studies have confirmed that the number of Spina Bifida cases can be greatly diminished if women increase their intake of folic acid prior to and during early pregnancy. A campaign to educate the public will go a long way to decrease the number of infants born with this debilitating defect.

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