

New York State Assemblyman Félix W. Ortiz

Chair, Cities Committee

Chair, Puerto Rican and Hispanic Task Force



2014 LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Summer 2014

Dear Friends,

This has been an extraordinary legislative session. We have made significant progress on issues that matter most to our families and communities. We passed new progressive laws that will help working families get ahead, strengthen the viability and safety of our communities and protect our environment for years to come. We lowered taxes, grew the economy by creating jobs, added more affordable housing and made a historic investment in education, which includes the Universal Pre-K program.

We enacted laws to protect our state's most vulnerable citizens including our youth, senior citizens, the mentally and physically disabled and returning military men and women. We secured Brownfield cleanup funding to make better use of our land and enacted a three year ban on the use of hydrofracking to prevent contamination of our water. We protected tenants and invested in schools and college tuition assistance programs to open more opportunities for coming generations. Thank you for the emails, calls, office visits and conversations that have helped me develop and fight for legislation of importance to you. May we continue to work together to create a more open and transparent process that will grow our democracy, invigorate our youth to reach their full potential and improve the quality of life in our communities.

This report highlights legislation I helped to pass in the Assembly. As always, please feel free to contact me. I hope to see you in the district over the summer.

Sincerely,

Félix W. Ortiz
Member of Assembly

Gun Safety

In an effort to curb the unnerving gun violence that has devastated communities across the country, I was instrumental in passing a comprehensive gun-safety law that is one of the toughest in the nation in January of 2013. The law that goes into effect January, 2015, will ban dangerous assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. It will close the “gun show loophole” to ensure that those who pose a danger to themselves or others due to mental illness will not have access to firearms and it cracks down on perpetrators of gun violence.

Pedestrian Safety

As Chair of the Cities Committee, I worked with Mayor Bill de Blasio to protect the safety of all pedestrians. This session we successfully secured passage of a law to reduce the NYC speed limit to 25 miles per hour, increased penalties for “hit and run” drivers and expanded traffic safety cameras. Thank you to the students who came to Albany to support our efforts as a part of the traffic safety program Vision Zero.

Tackling Teen Drug Overdosing

As a former Chair of the Assembly Committee on Alcohol on Substance Abuse, I worked with my colleagues to develop legislation addressing the rapid rise of teenagers overdosing on heroin and opioids. This new law will help families fight back. The state will develop a large scale media campaign to raise public awareness, insurance plans will cover the cost of treatments and drug dealers will face new stringent penalties. We must fight together to stop the senseless loss of our youth to drugs and suicide.



Rallying with the Ojeda family to pass Briana's Law, requiring regular CPR training of police officers. I secured its passage in the Assembly.

Inhaler Use by Students

I sponsored an important bill authorizing students diagnosed with an asthmatic or respiratory condition, allergies or diabetes to carry and use a prescribed inhaler, EpiPen or supplies related to treating diabetes during the school day and at any school function. I thank those of you who have worked with me over the years to raise awareness of prevention and immediate treatment of those who suffer from these conditions, especially our children.

Building New Schools In Communities With Population Growth

This new law will prevent the overcrowding of city schools by taking into account population growth. Under this bill, New York City's future growth must be factored into the School Construction Authority's five year educational facilities capital plan.

I praise the commitment of all the school parents in my district for working with me to assure passage of this legislation. Our past efforts resulted in the building of a new high school in Sunset Park. **As a result of our continued efforts**



Promoting public awareness for organ donations to save lives.

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2014 LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

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our community is identified to have a new school built under this plan.

Raising the Wage

With overwhelming support from our community, I worked for and voted to raise the state's minimum wage as part of the 2013-14 budget. This long-fought effort to provide a more livable wage for working families will start with an increase to \$8.75 on December, 31, 2014 and to \$9.00 on December 31, 2015. Thank you to all my constituents who advocated in Albany to "Raise the Wage!"



Successfully fought to Raise the Wage!

Wage Theft Prevention Act

As the former Chair of the Subcommittee on Sweatshops, I continue to be vigilant of workers' rights and wages. This session the Assembly heard from victims who told of their experiences in working for unscrupulous employers. As a result, we passed a series of bills to strengthen the Wage Theft Prevention Act and protect workers from unsavory labor practices. It will increase penalties for wage underpayments, strengthen the state's enforcement tools, and enhance anti-retaliation protections. The added protections will allow the state to recover wages for employees that are not paid.

our combined efforts, the Assembly passed a bill to prohibit police officers from using racial and ethnic profiling during the performance of their duties. The legislation would require law enforcement agencies to adopt written policies prohibiting racial profiling and develop procedures to review and take corrective action with respect to individual complaints; require law enforcement to collect racial, ethnic and gender data when conducting a traffic stop or a stop resulting in a pat-down, frisk and/or search; and allow individuals or the state Attorney General the right to bring legal action against a law enforcement agency for injunctive relief and/or damages for engaging in racial profiling.

Protecting Rent Laws for Tenants

I worked with housing advocates, tenant associations and local residents to pass a series of bills to enhance tenants' rights and protect them from unfair housing practices. The legislation will also expand and protect affordable housing.

Reducing Abusive Debt Collection Practices

Working with consumer advocates and constituents who have been victimized by unscrupulous debt collectors, I helped pass legislation to ensure that if a person does his or her best to get out of debt and put their finances in order, they will be protected from debt collector abuse, and they will be treated fairly.

Three Year Ban on Hydrofracking

I continue to work to protect our environment from the unknown effects of hydrofracking. With support from residents of our district, I helped pass a three year extension of the current moratorium on drilling in New York State to protect our water and prevent contamination of our natural resources. Our efforts were further aided by a recent court decision that gave localities the right to ban drilling in their communities.

Genetically Modified Foods

Having served as the Assembly Chair of the Food, Farm and Nutrition Task Force, I am a strong advocate of making the public aware of the contents in our food products to ensure our health and safety. I sponsored a bill requiring the labeling of genetically modified foods that was passed through two Assembly committees but failed to get to the floor for a vote. I am not deterred! Please help keep up the pressure to help pass this bill next year! More than 62 countries around the world ban GMOS or require labeling. Help put New York on that list!

Securing Public Safety Before Releasing Mentally Unstable Inmates

As the former Chair of the Mental Health Committee, I advocated for protections of our state's mentally ill as well as for the safety of all citizens. A recent tragedy occurred in Brooklyn when two children were stabbed by a mentally ill man who was released from prison without a follow-up mental health treatment plan. Working with my colleagues on the Corrections Committee, we developed and passed legislation to require that all diagnosed inmates have a mental health treatment plan in place before being released into the public. This plan includes appointments with psychiatrists or other prescribing mental health professionals in the community upon their release.

Community Risk and Resiliency Act

Working together with local residents from Sunset Park, Red Hook, Park Slope and Bay Ridge we succeeded in passing a law to make our state more resilient against future climate risks. The law requires that the effects of sea level rise, storm surges and flooding, along with other climate issues, be considered in current and new construction projects. I pushed hard to pass this law after our communities lost property in Superstorm Sandy. Thank you to all residents who supported this effort.



U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer and Assemblyman Ortiz discussed the urgency for quick turnaround times for veterans seeking treatment at health care facilities in our state.

Ending the Sale of Ivory in New York

Working with humanitarian organizations and animal rights advocates, we passed legislation to ban the sale and purchase of elephant ivory and rhino horns. By doing so, we ended New York's role in the deadly elephant and rhino trade and helped support the safety of people living in African elephant range states.

Women's Equality Act

Honoring our steadfast commitment to women and children, the Assembly passed the Women's Equality Act for the 2nd year in a row. The legislation moves to end the discrimination and obstacles facing women. In addition to addressing pay inequity, sexual harassment, pregnancy discrimination in the workplace, human trafficking, domestic violence and family status discrimination, the bill reaffirms a woman's right to control her own personal and private reproductive health decisions.

Ending Racial Profiling

As the Chair of the Puerto Rican and Hispanic Task Force and a member of the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus, I worked with my colleagues in government, labor, clergy and community leaders and victims to develop a law to ensure the safety and security of our residents. As a result of

ASSEMBLYMAN ORTIZ WORKING IN BAY RIDGE



Enjoying the festivities with constituents at the Bay Ridge Street Festival.



Welcoming the return of Bus 37 at the Guild for Exceptional Children.

Meeting with residents of Bay Ridge Towers on public safety and the quality of life issues.



Working to clean up the environment with students from High School of Telecommunication, Arts and Technology on 67th Street.



Walking with Bay Ridge residents from Leif Ericson Park to the Bay Ridge Islamic Center to call attention to the nine teens that died this year due to drug overdosing. We must continue to raise awareness and fight back against drugs in our communities to protect our families.



Discussing UPK, Common Core and the new state funding coming into our community to reduce overcrowded classrooms with PS 170 Principal Tony Wu, PS 971 Principal Ruth Stanislaus and IS 30 Principal Carol Heeraman.



Assemblyman Ortiz Introduces \$2 Billion Bond Infrastructure Act Legislation

As Chair of the Cities Committee, I introduced a \$2 billion Bond Infrastructure Act to help cities assess and rebuild infrastructure including water pipes, sewage systems, roads, electrical works and housing. This legislation is supported by all 62 cities in New York State. I feel strongly that while our state is investing in new industries, manufacturing and economic development growth, we must be just as committed to rebuilding our infrastructure systems, to sustain communities and protect the safety of our citizens. *Please help pass this bill by sending me an email of support.*

Joined by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. in Brooklyn to bring awareness to the issue of climate change and how it affects the environment.

“BROOKLYN IS KING OF ECONOMIC GROWTH”

Assemblyman Ortiz lauds small businesses & manufacturers

Brooklyn’s economy is adding jobs and businesses at a faster pace than the rest of New York City according to a report released by State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli. “Business in Brooklyn is booming and people want to live there because of the borough’s economic opportunities, its diversity and its outstanding schools, museums and nightlife,” DiNapoli said.

Assemblyman Ortiz hailed the small businesses and manufacturers who have moved into Brooklyn. “We are proud to be the borough of choice,” said Ortiz. “Our greatest resource has been the residents and neighbors who gave so much of themselves to help rebuild after Superstorm Sandy. We will continue to work together to develop a smart plan to grow jobs along the waterfront and provide services for the community to accommodate this growth” added Ortiz. Ortiz encourages people to visit the waterfront area to eat, shop, bike ride and enjoy the park and playgrounds.

Assemblyman Ortiz Successfully Improved Education from Start to Finish

- Helped parents balance work and family by expanding access to affordable child care
- Secure \$600 million for full-day UPK to give children a solid start to education
- Increased NYC school aid by \$435 million to help ensure every student gets a first class education
- Reformed Common Core to address parents’ concerns and alleviate the stress on students
- Added a \$2 billion bond act to construct new classrooms and improve technology, if approved by voters
- Increased TAP and other college opportunity programs, making college more affordable

Assemblyman Ortiz Delivered Tax Relief to Brooklyn Residents

- \$350 tax rebate checks for families with children
- A cut in energy tax on residents and business
- \$5000 in tax credits for businesses that hire unemployed youth ages 16-24, expanding the NY Youth Works program
- Tax credits for renters, co-op and condo owners through a “circuit breaker” which bases taxes on ability to pay
- An expanded Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption program to help seniors afford to stay in the homes



NYS Board of Regents Chancellor Meryl Tisch is working with Assemblyman Ortiz to create a stronger education system to support the needs of all families including those with language barriers and/or emotionally and physically challenged students.

New York State Assembly, Albany, New York 12248

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Assemblyman
Félix W. Ortiz
*Working for
our community
in Albany and Brooklyn*



Mayor de Blasio and Assemblyman Ortiz announced passage of a law to give tax relief to homeowners who rebuild after the impact of a hurricane.

ASSEMBLYMAN FÉLIX W. ORTIZ COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICE

Open to help you full-time this summer.

Call or drop by.



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