



NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY MEMBER FELIX W. ORTIZ
CHAIR, CITIES COMMITTEE

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

February 2nd, 2015

Committed to Progress

The State of New York deserves the best and you should expect the best from your elected officials. This week, the Assembly will elect a new Speaker, bringing in a new era to state government. I commit myself to making sure that your interests, concerns, and issues are addressed and acted on. Last week, I joined several colleagues sending a letter to candidates for Speaker asking for major reforms in how the Assembly operates. Reform can provide greater transparency, increased Member participation, independent staffing decisions and more authority for Members in their areas of expertise. We recognize that implementation of these reforms will require extensive thought and discussion. We have also asked that the candidates for Speaker commit to appointing a task force on reform, representing the diversity of the Assembly membership. This task force would develop specific proposals on these and other reforms. All meetings of the task force should be open to all members of the Assembly as well. This is the time to move forward to build a better and stronger Assembly.

Summary of Transportation Budget Hearing



I talked to MTA Chairman Thomas Prendergast about the mass transit budget and thanked him for his help restoring the B37 bus service from Bay Ridge to Atlantic Avenue. I informed him of the need for full service on this line extended to downtown Brooklyn. Bus lines B77 and B75 in Red Hook and Carroll Gardens also need to be restored. These bus lines provide vital transportation for our residents. Elevators on the 4th Avenue train stations are also necessary for easier and safer transportation.

I informed DMV Deputy Commissioner J. David Sampson about the necessary changes that need to be made to correctly implement Lauren's Law and increase our state's organ donation rates. A simple change in DMV software could increase registered organ donors. Only 22 percent of eligible are enrolled and NY is well below the 48% national average while over 10,000 New Yorkers are awaiting organ transplants.




Improvements to the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway and opportunities to expand freight rail in the state were my priorities for discussion with State Transportation Commissioner Joan McDonald.

For Your Information

Earned-Income Tax Credit Help You

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a federal tax credit targeting low-to-moderate-income working individuals and families. The EITC varies depending on income, family size, and filing status, but overall it serves to alleviate economic stress. Unfortunately, approximately 25% of eligible working families fail to file and claim money that is rightfully theirs. The EITC, for those who qualify, amounts to 30% of one's allowable federal earned income credit, reduced by the amount of any household credit. For example, a household with two children and two parents filing jointly who earn less than \$49,186 (higher than Brooklyn's median household income) can qualify for the tax relief and a substantial refund of up to \$5,460.

Support the co-naming of Bergen Street (between Bond and Hoyt streets) in Memory of Briana Ojeda. #BrianaLaw

 @felixwortiz

 FelixWOrtiz

District Office
 404 5th Street
 Brooklyn, NY 11220
 718-492-6334

Albany Office
 Room 842 LOB
 Albany, NY 12248
 518-455-3821

ortizf@assembly.state.ny.us

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