



Assistant Speaker
Félix W. Ortiz



Working for Our Community in Albany and Brooklyn

Spring 2015

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I am pleased to report to you on the accomplishments we have made during the first half of the 2015 Legislative Session.

For the fifth consecutive year, we have passed an on-time budget focusing on education, higher education, the environment, housing, jobs, the economy, and passing new reforms to increase the transparency of our government and the activities of our elected officials.

In February, I was appointed by newly-elected Speaker Carl Heastie, to serve as Assistant Speaker of the State Assembly. I am the first Hispanic to hold this leadership position. It is a great honor for me and our entire community in the 51st Assembly District.

Since first elected, I've served as the Chair of the Subcommittee on Sweatshops, the Committee on Cities, Veterans' Affairs, Mental Health, Alcohol and Substance Abuse, as well as the Food, Farm, and Nutrition Task Force, and the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force.

Also, I have been appointed as Co-Chair of the International Relations Task Force of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), where I work with legislators from other nations and explore ways to promote Brooklyn as an international trade center and port.

It is with the knowledge and experience I gained in these roles that I will continue to move our state forward in the development of sound and progressive policies and more efficient state spending practices.

As the legislative session moves forward, we will focus our efforts on passing the Dream Act, extending the state's rent stabilization laws, increasing the minimum wage, juvenile justice reforms, and addressing campus sexual assaults.

Lastly, as you enjoy the summer, please do not forget to visit my district office to learn about and sign-up for my Summer Reading program.

Thank you, God bless you and please continue to contact me with your questions, concerns, and comments.

Felix W. Ortiz
Assistant Speaker

ASSEMBLY MEMBER FÉLIX ORTIZ NAMED ASSISTANT SPEAKER

Brooklyn Assembly Member Félix W. Ortiz (D-Kings) was named Assistant Speaker of the New York State Assembly by Speaker Carl E. Heastie. Assistant Speaker Ortiz becomes the first Hispanic to hold the title in Assembly history.



Elected in 1994, Assistant Speaker Ortiz has distinguished himself as a strong leader in the Assembly achieving passage of ground breaking legislation and pushing progressive public policies. Ortiz is recognized for his ability to build consensus with legislators on both sides of the aisle. He is well-regarded for his advocacy on behalf of children, families, immigrants, education, housing, and health care.



Questions, comments, suggestions, and invitations to community events are always welcome!

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2015 LEGISLATIVE BILL HIGHLIGHTS



Ortiz fighting for firefighters, police, and military security.

Fire Fighters

Assistant Speaker Ortiz was joined by firefighters from his district advocating for better pensions and employee benefits.

Military Families

Assistant Speaker Ortiz is sponsoring legislation to allow military spouses with professional licenses to transfer their credentials (A.4394). Ortiz is helping veterans feel welcome in New York with opportunities to secure state contracts and establish businesses upon returning home.

Police Security

In light of the tragic deaths of two Brooklyn police officers, NYPD officers Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu, Assistant Speaker Ortiz secured funding in this year's budget to purchase new bulletproof vests and bulletproof glass for police patrol cars. This funding will help to prevent further deaths when police are working to keep our communities safe.



Assistant Speaker Ortiz continues to fight to enhance programs for special needs, people with disabilities, and mental health challenges by requiring every school to be assigned a social worker (A.6763), psychologist and guidance counselor (A.5131) to support the diverse needs of the student body.



Assistant Speaker Ortiz secured \$500,000 in this year's budget to support the ongoing work of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. These funds will help the Chamber continue to provide the services that keep Brooklyn moving forward as the fastest growing county in New York.



Assistant Speaker Ortiz has introduced legislation to create a tax check-off box on state income tax forms for donations to be used to support school-based health centers. If passed, this bill will directly benefit our community by providing needed funds to the Lutheran Family Health Center and all other centers serving our community.



The state's "Basic Health Program" will expand affordable health insurance to protect approximately 438,000 New Yorkers without health insurance coverage. In addition, the Medicaid program will now include protections for couples from losing their life savings in the event that a spouse requires long-term health care.



Assistant Speaker Ortiz worked to secure and increase education funds including pre-K and higher education monies for SUNY and CUNY and community colleges.



Assistant Speaker Ortiz met with members of AARP to discuss the importance of the NY Care Act. Ortiz supports legislation of the NY Care Act which equips caregivers with appropriate resources to safely take care of their elderly loved ones.

ASSISTANT SPEAKER ORTIZ WORKING IN OUR COMMUNITY



Assistant Speaker Ortiz believes that reading is fundamental. The Brooklyn Public Library offers a variety of books for people of all ages and exceptional programs that will benefit residents.



Assistant Speaker Ortiz working with the Muslim community to support food pantries and other communal events.



Assistant Speaker Ortiz is a strong advocate for the cessation of sweatshops and implementing equal rights for women within New York.



Assistant Speaker Ortiz attended an event at St. Nicholas Home in Bay Ridge.



Graffiti Clean-Up

Assistant Speaker Ortiz joined the NYPD 72nd Police Precinct to help clean up the graffiti in Sunset Park buildings. If you are interested in joining the cleaning crew please contact the 72nd Police Precinct directly.



ATTENTION: Tuberculosis (TB) Outbreak

Assistant Speaker Ortiz recently hosted a Community Health Fair at the Sunset Park Recreation Center in response to reports of an increase in tuberculosis cases in Brooklyn. His office will continue to work with local healthcare providers and community organizations to provide residents with the proper resources. For information on how to get tested or treated, contact his office at (718) 492-6334.

ASSISTANT SPEAKER ORTIZ SUPPORTING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Name	When & Where	Description
Sunset Green Market	Open Saturdays, 7/11 to 11/21 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. 4th Ave. between 59th & 60th St., Brooklyn	EBT/Food Stamps, Debit/Credit, and WIC & FMNP checks accepted
Brooklyn Puppetry Art Festival	Saturday, June 27, 2015 11:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m. JJ Byrne Park, Fourth Ave. at Fifth Street	Presented by Puppetry Arts Puppet show and craft making \$2 activities; (\$4 T-Shirt)
ESL Classes	Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow 783 4th Avenue, Brooklyn, NY	Register for classes July/August Classes start in September Call (718) 369-0303
Senior Relaxation/Meditation Workshop	Fridays, 2:00 p.m. Park Slope Senior Center 463A Seventh St. at Seventh Avenue	Relaxation and Meditation classes for seniors; Free
Reading is Fundamental	Fridays, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Sunset Park Public Library 5108 Fourth Ave. at 51st Street	Kids earn free books; Free

ASSISTANT SPEAKER ORTIZ FIGHTING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES



Assistant Speaker Ortiz attended the Earth Day press conference to support legislation to reduce Mercury and make children's products safe (A.5612).



Assistant Speaker Ortiz discussed the importance of labelling products that have been GMO influenced so consumers are aware of the substance in their purchases.

Cleaner Environment

Assistant Speaker Ortiz fought for an increase in funding for the Environmental Protection Fund, a 10-year extension of the Brownfield Cleanup program to clean contaminated land in Sunset Park and Red Hook. The Superfund program, which helps clean up contaminated properties, will be increased and secured over a 10-year period, insuring clean-up of the Gowanus Canal.

Ortiz has also introduced legislation to create the Climate Action Plan to research climate change impacts (A.5943). This plan will prepare recommended actions to reduce the severity of climate change effects and New York State's position.

Housing

Assistant Speaker Ortiz secured \$100 million for NYSCH capital repairs to help Red Hook rebuild from Super storm Sandy. The state must also inform residents in advance how funds will be spent in public housing buildings. New funding will enable continuation of building affordable housing and maintain the New York City Housing Authority Tenant Watch Program.

Ortiz continues to fight for tenant rights by sponsoring legislation (A.7526) which strengthens New York communities. This legislation will regulate rent tenant protection to ensure New Yorkers have access to safe affordable houses.



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