



Assemblywoman
Jo Anne Simon

Reports to the People

December 2016

Thank You

I am gratified to have been given an opportunity to serve another term in the New York State Assembly, and to represent the most activist, caring, and intelligent constituents.

I pledge to continue to do my best to represent you, the 125,000 constituents of the 52nd Assembly District, and the people of the state of New York.

No Locks. Yes Lox!

On Thursday, October 7th, I participated in a press conference calling attention to the problem of love—well “love locks” on the Brooklyn Bridge.

The Department of Transportation has now posted signs warning bridge visitors not to fasten “love locks” anywhere on the mile-long span, or risk a \$100 fine.

Reminiscent of Paris, each year more and more padlocks—and recently things such as earphones, shoe laces, jewelry, and even plastic bags are attached on the bridge. This costs the City over \$100,000 each year to remove, and—unlike Paris—it can be dangerous to the traffic below.

On Sept. 8, a wire attached to a cable stabilizing an overhead light on the bridge snapped under the weight of dozens of locks. This caused the City DOT to shut down a lane for 2 hours for repairs. Since 2013, the City has removed over 34,000 such locks.

So, when you visit the bridge, memorialize your love with a selfie—but leave the locks at home!



Dyslexia Awareness

We recently held Brooklyn's first-ever Dyslexia Awareness Nite at St. Francis College. We will be holding more events throughout all 5 boroughs in the near future. A popular segment of the program is the panel of people with dyslexia who share their experiences, their triumphs, and their great capacity to help fellow travelers. Our next event will be in Staten Island on December 12th. Please call my office for more details of these events. My office can be reached at 718-246-4889.



Why this is important:

- Between 15-20 percent of people are affected by dyslexia. That means in every class of 30 students, 5 or 6 of them have dyslexia—but most of them will not be identified for years, and many never are. Dyslexia is a neurobiologically-based learning disability characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition, so students decode incorrectly and/or very slowly and with great effort. Folks with dyslexia have difficulty connecting the letters to the sounds they make and have trouble recognizing words—even those they have seen frequently—making them slow and inaccurate readers.
- This bill will amend the education law to permit the word “Dyslexia” appear on a student’s IEP and not just the broad category of learning disability. Right now, the majority of school districts don’t allow the word Dyslexia to be used. That really matters because knowing the type of learning disability helps teachers and administrators know how to target reading interventions.
- It also requires that teachers in training take courses in methods of teaching reading that build on the 5 pillars of reading (phonemic awareness, phonic, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension), including what is referred to as “Orton-Gillingham” instruction—structured, research-based, multisensory approaches. These are supported by the National Reading Panel’s findings in 2000. Right now, NYS Education regulations require schools to ensure their staff have the knowledge and skills to use explicit instruction in these methods, but too many teachers aren’t given that instruction until they have been teaching for many years, if at all. This bill will build that instruction into teacher preparation programs, making sure that all future educators have the tools to help students be successful readers.
- This will also lead to early screening and identification, when children can make the most progress and before they have fallen far behind their peers.

Constituent Corner

This issue's featured constituents are PS 58's school crossing guards. Meet **Linda Maresca, Keisha Holness, and Madeline Todaro**. They are the exemplary figures who assist children in their arrival and departure from school. Their presence on a busy street like Smith Street provides security and safety for all of us. Protecting children and pedestrians from oncoming traffic and danger is a very important role we value and appreciate. Carroll Gardens would not be safe and sound without Linda, Keisha, and Madeline who make a difference every day!



The Power of Community

In February of this year, Avery Hall Investments presented a proposal to the community on what their plans were for developing the site of the Key Food on 5th Avenue and Sterling Place. Their proposal consisted of two new buildings with a total of 165 residential units, 25% of which were to be affordable, as well as ground floor retail including a small 7,500 square foot grocery store. Through a survey, the community expressed that this proposal was in no way acceptable. What was needed was a much larger affordable and community-oriented supermarket with a long-term lease. After months of negotiation between AHI, community stakeholders, and elected officials an agreement was reached. What resulted was a new proposal which includes a 22,000 square foot supermarket that meets NYC Fresh criteria, accepts SNAP and WIC, and is ADA-compliant.



High-end grocers will not be allowed to bid, thus ensuring affordability as well as quality to meet the needs of the diverse community that resides in the neighborhood and has been well served by the current Key Food. Just another example of how a community united can determine its own destiny.

Assemblymember Simon was happy to support and walk in this year's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk in Prospect Park.





Holiday Open House

*On Friday, December 16th,
from 4:00–6:00 p.m.
there will be a holiday open house at my office,
341 Smith Street, in Carroll Gardens.*

*Light refreshments will be served.
RSVP is required for planning purposes.*

*Please contact Jim Harvey from my office if
you have any questions. He can be reached at
718-246-4889 or
Harveyj@nyassembly.gov.*



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