



ASSEMBLYMAN

2015 Legislative Newsletter

Matthew Titone

Chair, Task Force on State-Federal Relations

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ASSEMBLYMAN TITONE WORKS TO ENSURE STUDENTS HAVE ALL THEY NEED TO SUCCEED



Assemblyman Titone sits with NYS Department of Education Chancellor Meryll Tisch at a PTA roundtable.

Assemblyman Matthew Titone is working towards securing funding for attorneys to help parents get their child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) tailored to fit their needs.

One in every four Staten Island students has an IEP, the highest special education percentage in the entire city. Parents of children with special needs deserve help obtaining an education curriculum that would be efficient and effective for their child in the long run. Assemblyman Titone has proposed funding to exclusively fund pro bono legal services on Staten Island to help parents fight for proper and consistent implementation of their child's Individualized Education Program.

"This system is disgraceful; it's focused on getting kids in and out and not on their needs," said Titone. "You get these IEPs and many people just tend to follow it, they don't have the resources or the wherewithal to challenge it." When students are shuffled around merely with the intent of getting them through the system, it proves to have destructive results. Parents who are not given the resources or services they desperately require are, in almost all cases, not equipped to manage the situation alone, and the problems worsen," said Titone.

"We must ensure that our focus remains on our children with special needs, and their families, rather than bureaucratic convenience."

ASSEMBLYMAN TITONE INTRODUCES GRAND JURY TRANSPARENCY LEGISLATION

Assemblyman Titone and Senator Diane Savino have introduced legislation that will require more information to be made public from grand jury deliberations. (A.3462/S.1828)

"We recognize and fully appreciate the need to protect witnesses and jurors in the Grand Jury process," Titone said. "However the public trust and confidence in our justice system must be addressed and reforms implemented."

We must do all we can to restore public trust. The outcome of the grand jury decision in the Eric Garner-Daniel Pantaleo case set off protests across the globe, which potentially could have been avoided had all the facts of the case been public information.

New York State law prohibits prosecutors from releasing information on the grand jury, and only a District Attorney can petition a judge to release it. District Attorney Dan Donovan requested that information on the grand jury be disclosed, but it was limited and did not include key parts of the proceedings. The public should be able to view the same information the grand jurors did.



TAX CREDITS AVAILABLE TO \$AVE YOU MONEY

*Don't miss out on tax breaks you and your family
may qualify for*

Too often, hardworking families miss the opportunity to save hundreds or even thousands of dollars in federal and state tax credits. These tax credits are in place to help families make their hard-earned dollars stretch just a little further.

Current programs you may qualify for include:

- the Empire State Child Credit, a refundable tax credit worth up to \$330 per child for ages 4-16;
- the Child and Dependent Care Credit, a tax credit based on a sliding income scale for working parents who pay for child care or those who live with a spouse or dependent who is physically or mentally incapable of self-care;
- the federal Child Tax Credit, a non-refundable tax credit of up to \$1,000 per child under the age of 17, or the refundable Additional Child Tax Credit;
- the Real Property Tax Credit, a refundable tax credit worth up to \$375 for eligible homeowners and renters; and
- the New York City School Tax Credit, a refundable tax credit of up to \$125 for qualifying taxpayers.

Additionally, if eligible, you may be able to recoup portions of the income tax that were withheld from your paycheck throughout the year. In fact, through an often overlooked tax break called the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), eligible taxpayers can get extra cash back from the IRS, New York State or New York City governments. These savings help many families cover their monthly bills and allow them to put some money away for the future.

To qualify for the New York State and federal EITC, you must:

- have worked full or part time at some point during the calendar year;
- have income below \$38,511 (\$43,941 if married) with one child;
- have income below \$43,756 (\$49,186 if married) with two children;
- have income below \$46,997 (\$52,427 if married) with three or more children; or
- be a worker between the ages of 25 and 65, earning less than \$14,590 (\$20,020 if married) with no children.

To be eligible for the New York City EITC, in addition to the above requirements, you must be a full- or part-year resident of New York City, claim the federal Earned Income Tax Credit and file a New York State income tax return.

EZ Pass continues to offer significantly reduced rates (57% less than cash toll) for Staten Island residents. Go to <https://www.e-zpassny.com> and start saving today!



The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) provides New York City youth between the ages of 14 and 24 with paid summer employment for up to six weeks in July and August. Participants work in a variety of entry-level jobs including:

- Government Agencies
- Hospitals
- Summer Camps
- Non-Profits
- Small Businesses
- Law Firms
- Museums
- Sports Enterprises
- Retail Organizations

SYEP also provides workshops on job readiness, career exploration, financial literacy and opportunities to continue education and social growth. Participants are selected by lottery for the program.

Get more information at www.facebook.com/uauusyep,
Contact the DYCD Youth Connect by phone: 1-800-246-4646
or email: blicata@unitedactivities.org

The deadline to apply is April 10th!

Specialized programming for disabled, foster care, runaway/homeless and court-involved youth are also available.

Honoring Elizabeth Egbert of the Staten Island Museum



We mourn the passing and celebrate the accomplishments of Elizabeth Egbert, a beloved, longtime resident of Staten Island. Egbert's contributions to the community were expressed through her passion for art. In 2002, the Staten Island Museum named Ms. Egbert Museum Director, a position she would hold up until her death. Throughout her remarkable 12-year tenure, Ms. Egbert helped transform the Museum into an extraordinary art institution.

Under Ms. Egbert's guidance, the Staten Island Museum expanded to the newly renovated landmark buildings in Snug Harbor. Thanks in part to Ms. Egbert, the museum increased its permanent collection and is scheduled to open its new facility in 2015 with fresh exhibits. Featured exhibits will range from different disciplines of art, natural science, and regional history. In addition, the museum will continue to uphold its 138-year-old commitment to the environment by becoming the greenest museum in New York City. With the new Museum located in Snug Harbor's Cultural Center, Ms. Egbert helped give the Staten Island Museum a home in one of Staten Island's most culturally diverse educational grounds.

ASSEMBLYMAN TITONE APPLAUDS BAYONNE BRIDGE 24/7 HOTLINE

After numerous constituent complaints, the Port Authority of NY & NJ has initiated a series of programs to help minimize construction impacts for those who rent or own residential property in Bayonne and Staten Island located closest to the Bayonne Bridge work zone.

The agency is committed to proactively addressing community needs, and keeping residents comfortable, safe, and informed during the construction of this important regional infrastructure project.

**To report a complaint (24/7), please call:
(855) 265-5482**

NEW YORK STATE REPEATS AS SECOND HIGHEST PRODUCER OF APPLES!

New York State is once again the second highest producer of apples and the third highest producer of grapes in the nation, according to estimates from the USDA.

New York apples have year-round availability in more than 20 varieties, including Cortland, Empire, Fuji, Gala, Golden Delicious, McIntosh, RubyFrost and Zestar. One medium apple provides one-fifth of dietary requirements for cardiovascular and digestive health and contains no fat, sodium or cholesterol.



7TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF VIETNAM VETERANS DAY



State Senator
Andrew J. Lanza

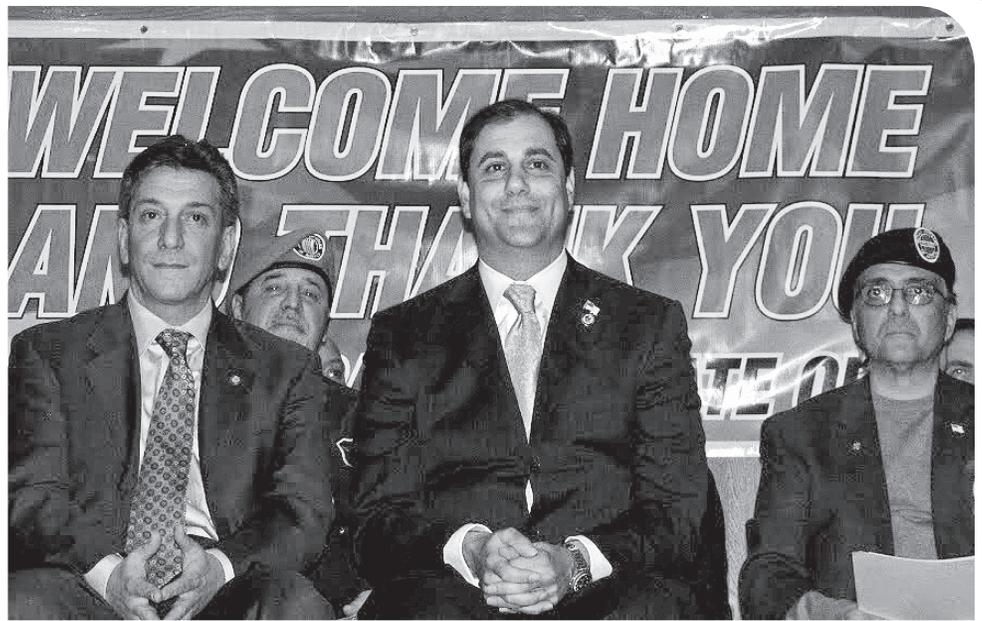
and
Assemblyman
Matthew Titone

7th Annual Celebration of
Vietnam Veterans' Day

Saturday, March 21, 2015 @ 1pm

Tottenville High School
100 Lutens Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10312

Every year Assemblyman Titone and Senator Lanza join veterans and other elected officials to recognize the sacrifices of those who served in the Vietnam War at their Vietnam Veteran's Day Celebration.



Legislation authored by Lanza and Titone, designating March 29 as Vietnam Veterans' Day in the State of New York, was signed into law in 2008.



On a tour with students at the Staten Island Community Charter School.



Assemblyman Titone and staff serve turkey dinners at the Richmond Terrace Houses this past Thanksgiving.



Meeting with members of the New York State Nurses Association to discuss Safe Staffing.



Assemblyman Titone and Bari (a licensed therapy dog) visit children with autism at A Friendly Face school.

IS YOUR PET PLAYING WITH TOXIC TOYS? ASSEMBLYMAN TITONE AUTHORS PET SAFETY LEGISLATION

Assemblyman Matthew Titone has authored legislation to regulate the use of toxic chemicals in pet products. Despite evidence of toxic chemicals in many common pet products, there have been no enacted standards of regulation.

“Toxic chemicals are used in many common pet products like ‘Greenies,’ Nylabones, rawhide, fetching batons, and many products used to kill ticks and fleas, including collars, sprays, and dusts. Enacting regulations on pet products would not only protect pets, but also young children and toddlers who come in contact with these poisons even when not touching a pet,” Assemblyman Titone said.

“Based on the very limited data available, it appears that hundreds, maybe thousands of pets have been injured or killed through exposure to pet products containing toxins. As with small children, pets cannot report when they’re being poisoned at low doses. The threat to humans and pets by the poisons in commonly available products is intolerable and unnecessary.”



ASSEMBLYMAN TITONE: MAKE HOMELESS SHELTERS SAFE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Assemblyman Matthew Titone introduced legislation that will prohibit level 2-3 registered sex offenders from being placed in homeless shelters where there are children present.

“The issue of high-level sex offenders taking up residence in emergency shelters intended for homeless families remains a concern since first coming to our attention in 2007. Federal law prohibits public housing admission to level 2 and 3 sex offenders –

and we are seeking to extend that protection to our most vulnerable children and families,” said Assemblyman Matthew Titone. “Today 80% of New York’s homeless are women and children; every day that the current law remains in place, each of New York’s 25,000 homeless children remains in avoidable risk.”

The companion bill recently passed in the Senate 55-0.

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THERE MAY BE UNCLAIMED FUNDS IN YOUR NAME!
Visit <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/ouf/> to see if you are owed money.

ASSEMBLYMAN TITONE LEADS THE FIGHT FOR NORTH SHORE BUS RAPID TRANSIT

Staten Island is the borough with the least transportation options resulting in lengthy commute times and costly commuter tolls. To reduce the Staten Island commuter struggles, Assemblyman Titone led the fight to get \$100 million included in the Assembly budget proposal for bus rapid transit programs throughout the state, including one on Staten Island.

In February, Assemblyman Matthew Titone gathered in Albany with other strategic individuals for Transit Awareness pertaining to the North Shore Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line. The BRT line would connect Arlington to St. George along a five-mile, fully decked bus path.

“The Assembly budget is good news for believers like me in the North Shore Bus Rapid Transit project,” Titone said. “Ensuring that the North Shore BRT is on the negotiation table for the final budget is a priority of mine, and the Assembly resolution does exactly that.”

In addition, other changes are planned to prevent or eliminate certain systematic issues when using public transportation on Staten Island in the North Shore. Transportation Systems

Management (TSM) is working on alternatives to optimize the existing schedule, travel time, and including more buses to the routes. Currently, effective and cost efficient alternatives are being updated such as heavy rail transit, light rail transit, and ferry or water taxi service.



Staten Island Delegates meet with NY League of Conservation Voters, SI Chamber of Commerce, and others for Transit Advocacy Day in Albany.



Assemblyman
**Matthew
Titone**

Reports to the People



**Assemblyman
Matthew Titone**



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