



Assemblymember

# DAN QUART

Reports  
to the People

Summer 2013

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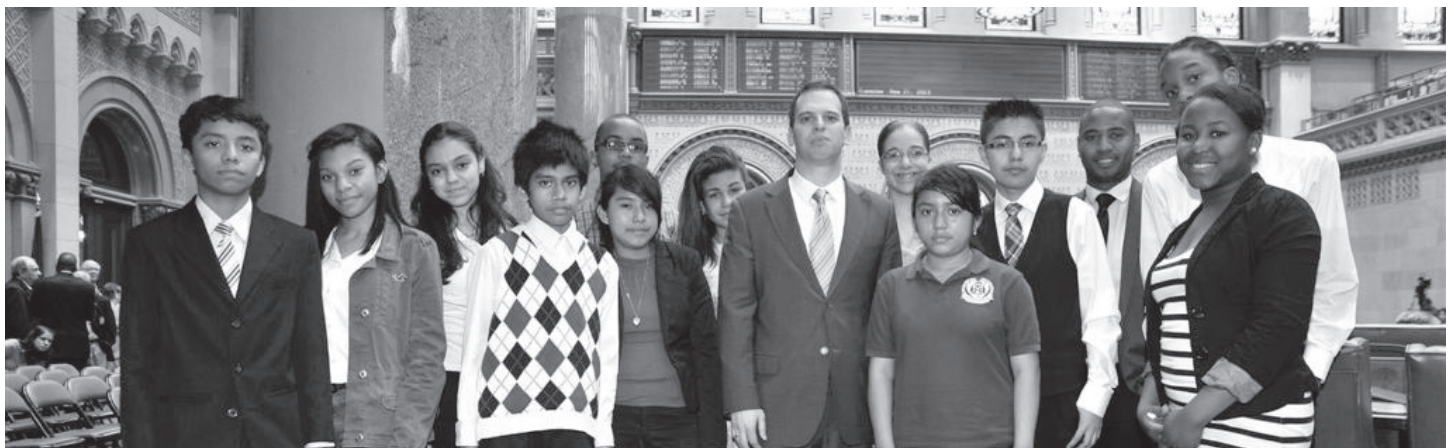
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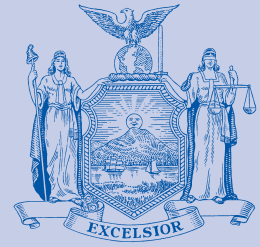
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Assemblymember Quart with a group of students from the Vanderbilt YMCA's Youth & Government Program visiting the Assembly Chambers.



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**DAN QUART**  
*Reports to the People* Summer 2013



# STRENGTHENING OUR GUN LAWS

**The SAFE Act enshrined a number of common-sense regulations:**

- Limiting high-capacity magazines to 7 rounds instead of 10.
- Tracking ammunition purchases in real-time, giving law enforcement access to information about purchasers of large volumes of ammunition.
- Stricter permit obligations for gun owners, and requiring gun permits to be renewed every 5 years.

I was proud to vote for the SAFE Act this past January, which enacted some of the toughest gun control laws in the entire country. The multiple mass shootings our country experienced in 2012, culminating in the unimaginable tragedy in Sandy Hook, clearly demonstrated that the policies in place were not working.

While this bill was a critical step in protecting New Yorkers from gun violence, there is still more we can do. Both Mayor Bloomberg and Governor Cuomo are in the unique position of managing law enforcement firearm purchases and pension funds. This buying and investment power provides enormous leverage over gun manufacturers. I urge the Governor and the Mayor to use the State and the City's buying power to only contract with responsible gun manufacturers.



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Assemblymember Quart speaking to members of the media at a press conference.



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# STREAMLINING ELECTION DAY PROCEDURES

Election Day 2012 took place during a perfect storm of bad conditions: the devastating impact of Superstorm Sandy, record turnout for the presidential election, and new voting machines led to disaster. Long lines plagued many poll sites, last-minute changes were confusing for everyone, and many poll sites were sorely lacking in poll workers. My office received many complaints from voters and poll workers alike.

I was proud to vote for a variety of election reform initiatives this session, including legislation authorizing early voting, easier access to absentee ballots, and earlier pre-registration periods for young people. I have also introduced a package of legislation targeted to the specific problems I saw on Election Day. I am pleased that the Assembly passed two of these bills this session.

My legislation will require the Board of Elections to provide more information in their annual reports. This legislation will require the Board to share basic data about the number

of elections administered, the number of poll workers employed, and the number of unfilled poll worker positions. This legislation will also require the Board to identify how many voting machines break on Election Day and the cost of repairing them.

Recognizing that the Board of Elections is statutorily prohibited from addressing some of the Election Day problems, I also passed legislation that will help the Board recruit more poll workers by providing the Board with the authority to enlist workers for shorter shifts.

Protecting our right to vote is critical to preserving our functioning democracy, but those protections must include ensuring the Board of Elections is given enough flexibility to do its work and is also held accountable for Election Day conditions. The Board can play a critical role in encouraging more voters to exercise this right; we must guarantee that it does.

## PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY FROM RADON

Improving the air quality in our neighborhoods has been one of my highest priorities since taking office. While natural gas can improve our air quality by reducing emissions of fine particulate matter, which is associated with a variety of health problems, increased use of natural gas raises a new concern: radon.

Radon is the product of the decay of uranium or thorium. It's odorless, tasteless, colorless, and most importantly, radioactive. Inhaled radon continues to decay in the lungs, transforming into a variety of solid particulates, some of which are especially radioactive and carcinogenic. Because of this, radon exposure is associated with increased risk of lung cancer. In fact, radon exposure is one of the best predictors of lung cancer, second only to smoking.

Our current supply of natural gas comes from the Gulf Coast, which has relatively low levels of radon. This natural gas then travels 6-8 days to reach New York, allowing time for that low level of radon to decay significantly. New York State will likely begin to use more natural gas from the considerably more radioactive Marcellus Shale, which stretches across Ohio and Pennsylvania. Natural gas from this area has a shorter transit time, between 15-20 hours, allowing much less time for the higher level of radon to decay.

During the next legislative session, I will sponsor legislation that will require anyone who produces, transports, or sells natural gas in New York to ensure that their product is safe for New Yorkers to be exposed to. Companies will be required to test their gas regularly and implement an automatic shut-off procedure that will be triggered any time the radon level meets or exceeds the EPA's recommended mitigation level. This bill will be an important first step to ensure that our energy sources are not contaminating our neighborhood's air quality.



*Assemblymember Quart introducing panelists at a Pedestrian Safety Forum.*

# IMPROVING WOMEN'S RIGHTS

**In January, Governor Cuomo announced his intention to introduce legislation to improve gender parity, the Women's Equality Agenda. He proposed ten provisions:**

## **Strengthening Pay Equity**

Employees who share wage information would be protected and plaintiffs who successfully sue in pay equity discrimination cases would be entitled to higher levels of damages.

## **Ending Discrimination Against Parents**

Employers would be prohibited from withholding work or promotions from workers with children.

## **Expanding Sexual Harassment Protections**

Current sexual harassment prohibitions would be extended to the 60% of New York workplaces with four or fewer employees.

## **Enacting Housing Protections for Victims of Domestic Violence**

Landlords would be prohibited from discriminating against victims of domestic violence.

## **Stopping Source-of-Income Discrimination**

Landlords would be prohibited from discriminating against tenants based on their source of income, including Section 8 vouchers and other public assistance.

## **Strengthening Human Trafficking Laws**

Victims of human trafficking would be given greater protections, including increased penalties for trafficking and the creation of an affirmative defense in prostitution cases due to status as a victim of human trafficking.

## **Ending Pregnancy Discrimination**

Employers would be specifically required to make reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers.

## **Protecting Choice**

Roe v. Wade would be codified in New York law, protecting abortion access in our state.



*Assemblymember Quart debating a piece of legislation on the floor of the Assembly Chamber.*

I was proud to have voted for all ten of these provisions. The Assembly voted for these ten provisions as part of a single piece of legislation. Unfortunately, the State Senate voted on nine of the ten pieces of legislation separately, and refused to vote for the legislation protecting abortion access. The Senate's refusal to vote to codify Roe v. Wade is particularly frustrating in light of New Yorkers' overwhelming support for reproductive freedoms.

Every piece of the Governor's Women's Equality Agenda is critical and I urge the Governor to call a special session, bringing lawmakers back to Albany to pass this legislation. I will continue to fight on your behalf to protect reproductive freedoms and to ensure full equality for women.

# FIGHTING FOR TRANSPARENCY IN THE PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT PROCESS

This session, I was proud to vote for an extension of the tax abatement for condominium and cooperative apartment owners. This legislation prevented New York City cooperatives and condominiums from an immediate tax increase. The delay in passing this legislation is emblematic of the City of New York's approach to property tax reform. This abatement has been extended five times in seventeen years, each time with a requirement that the City create a permanent fix for the system. That has never happened.

While I continue to urge the current Mayor, and those who seek to succeed him, to address these inequities, I was pleased to have passed legislation this year that will bring more transparency to our property tax system. Many property owners are frustrated with the property assessment process, finding it opaque and difficult to navigate. My

legislation will require the City's Department of Finance to provide additional information on the annual Notice of Value and the Department's online database. Currently, there are numerous obstacles preventing property owners from gaining access to the data used by the Department of Finance to determine their assessment. Property owners should not be required to file FOIL requests and retain an attorney to understand how their assessment was arrived at. For property owners who believe their assessment is incorrect, this information is crucial.

My multiple pieces of legislation passed the State Assembly and the State Senate and is currently before the Governor, awaiting his signature. This legislation will make a real difference for New York City property owners.