



Assemblyman

Jeffrey Dinowitz

Reports to the People of the 81st Assembly District

SUMMER 2016

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Serving the communities of Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights, Marble Hill, Norwood, Riverdale, Van Cortlandt Village, Wakefield and Woodlawn

Dear Neighbor:

I am pleased to report that we have achieved several major victories on the recently enacted state budget, including a large hike in the minimum wage, the most substantial paid family leave law in the country, large increases in education funding, and stopping huge cuts to CUNY (for more about the budget, see page 3).

A number of local issues are facing our community. The overcrowding at P.S. 24 is now at peak levels, which I believe is the result of bureaucracy downtown and poor decision making by some administrators at the school. Other schools, such as P.S. 307 are in dire need of a new building because its current facility is simply unacceptable. In the coming months, I plan on working with my fellow colleagues in government to make strides in improving these schools, with the primary goal of making sure our children have quality facilities to receive the quality education they deserve.

Another obstacle facing our community is the possible oversaturation of various homeless facilities in our neighborhoods. While I recognize the seriousness of the homeless crisis in New York, the solution should not involve too many facilities in one area. Our neighborhoods are not a dumping ground for the rest of New York City's problems.

Protecting the quality of life in a community isn't always easy. The needs of the larger and local communities must be balanced. As these issues and many others face us over the next few months I will continue standing up and fighting for all of the communities that I represent.

As always, my excellent staff stands ready to help with any issue you may be facing, so please contact my office if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Dinowitz
Assemblyman



Assemblyman Dinowitz and his Chief of Staff Randi Martos presented several students at P.S. 24 and P.S. 7 with the Herb Lieberman Leadership Award for the excellent essays they wrote about their communities.

Assemblyman Dinowitz and Borough President Diaz Claim Victory in Fight for Equal Treatment from Amazon.com, Inc.

Earlier this Spring it came to light that Amazon.com, Inc. was providing same-day delivery services to nearly the entirety of New York City except for the Bronx. Following this discovery, I strongly condemned this anti-Bronx policy and asked New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman to investigate Amazon's inequitable business practices, while Borough President Diaz lobbied Amazon's CEO Jeff Bezos to make a change. I am proud to say that just a week after we took this action, Amazon stated that they would reverse this practice of excluding The Bronx, adding that the company was "actively working to enable service to the Bronx" by the beginning of this Summer.

I am very grateful that Amazon has listened to our concerns regarding the exclusion of the Bronx from their Prime same-day delivery service. I am pleased they will be working to expand access to their services to a borough that has seen one of the fastest economic expansions in several decades – the Bronx. Providing equal services to all New Yorkers, including the 1.4 million Bronxites and countless businesses that call our borough home is not just good for the Bronx, but Amazon as well. Moreover, I am hopeful that this decision means Amazon will take a second look at the several other cities with excluded neighborhoods.

Assemblyman Dinowitz Holds Town Hall With Environmentally Curious P.S. 94 Students



5th Graders at P.S.94 invited Assemblyman Dinowitz to a Town Hall Meeting on environmental issues where they discussed global warming, deforestation, recycling, and other important concerns. In appreciation for their curiosity and environmental stewardship, Assemblyman Dinowitz awarded each of the students who participated, a Certificate of Merit on behalf of the New York State Assembly.

NYC Department of Transportation Approves Pair of Dinowitz Requested Traffic Safety Measures

As my office is constantly looking for ways to increase safety in our community, I am happy to announce that per my request the City Department of Transportation recently approved two traffic safety measures in our community. The first of these improvements will be in Bedford Park, where the DOT has agreed to install a traffic signal on West 205th Street between Goulden and Paul Avenues near the Jerome Park Reservoir, adjacent to the Bronx High School of Science. The second improvement will be a speed hump on Palisade Avenue, between Independence Avenue and Kappock Street. If you are concerned about a dangerous or unsafe traffic condition, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (718) 796-5345. We are here to help get results!

Assemblyman Dinowitz and Senator Klein Direct \$2 million to Increase Diversity in NYC Specialized High Schools

I am pleased that Senator Klein and I were able to provide money to help increase diversity in New York City's Specialized High Schools in this year's budget. The underrepresentation of some minority groups in New York's Specialized High Schools is indicative of a larger set of challenges that face this city's educational system today. As a graduate of Bronx Science, I am proud to have fought for this proposal. The \$2 million we added to this year's budget will provide funding for students to take free test preparation classes, in addition to investing in outreach coordinators at each of the specialized high schools. This funding will go a long way towards raising the numbers of potentially qualified minority applicants attending these schools, while maintaining the schools' academic integrity without changing the objectivity of the entrance exam.



Assemblyman Dinowitz, Council Member Andrew Cohen, and Congressman Eliot Engel attended the annual P.S. 24 Parents Association silent auction fundraiser. They are shown here with PA Co-Presidents Laura Moukas and Bob Heisler.



Workers around the country are fighting efforts to reduce benefits and limit wages. Assemblyman Dinowitz joined the Communications Workers of America in demanding a fair resolution of their contract negotiations.

Assemblyman Dinowitz, Council Member Cohen, the FDNY, and the American Red Cross Sponsor Smoke Detector Giveaway

This April I partnered with the FDNY and the American Red Cross to sponsor a free smoke detector giveaway to the community at the Mosholu Montefiore Community Center. Over 110 people showed up to get their free smoke detector and to sign up for a free installation by the FDNY. As this event was such a success I am excited to announce that this June I will again be partnering with the FDNY and the American Red Cross to bring this event to Wakefield! Be sure to attend!

**Thursday, June 30, 2016
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

at the
**RAIN NEREID SENIOR CENTER
720 Nereid Avenue, Bronx, NY 10466**

Assemblyman Dinowitz Secures \$1.25 Million in Grants for NYCHA Security Lighting



Assemblyman Dinowitz secured large grants from the State for The Fort Independence Houses and part of the Marble Hill Houses to improve lighting for security purposes. He is shown on the left at the Fort Independence Houses with former Tenant Association President Barbara Lauray and current President Carmen Mercado; and on the right at the Marble Hill Houses with Tenant Association President Paulette Shomo and other officers of the Tenant Association.



Assemblyman Dinowitz Urges Caution Regarding Tax and Utility Scams

Over the last year many community residents have reached out to my office after receiving calls, specifically scammers claiming to be affiliated with the IRS or their utility provider, who threatened legal action, or to shut off their electricity if they didn't receive payments for alleged debts or tax liabilities. Phone scams take on many different forms and you should beware of any unsolicited contact from someone claiming to be

from the IRS or your utility company. The IRS does not initiate contact with taxpayers by telephone, email, text message, or through social media. Never forget, the IRS will only initiate contact via official correspondence through the mail. If you receive a suspicious IRS-related communication, report the incident to the Treasury Inspector General at (800) 366-4484, and to the IRS at phishing@irs.gov.

2016 BUDGET UPDATE

New York State's final 2016-17 budget is a bold and progressive step forward for the working families of our state and paves the way for a brighter future for all New Yorkers. Thanks to the leadership of Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, we were able to successfully fight for landmark accomplishments such as the most substantial paid family leave program in the country, and a robust increase in the minimum wage that will make a real difference for New Yorkers across the state who will greatly benefit from their enactment. Here are the details of some of our biggest victories:

- **PROTECTION FOR WORKING FAMILIES:** Starting in 2018, employees will receive 12 weeks of Paid Family Leave funded by a small weekly employee contribution. This is the most substantial and aggressive Paid Family Leave program in the country – outpacing all other states by 2 weeks.
- **MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE:** A minimum wage increase (reaching \$15 per hour in New York City by the end of 2018) will improve the quality of life of millions of New Yorkers. Every New Yorker who puts in an honest day's work deserves a livable wage. The new minimum wage recognizes this and increases will help lift countless working families out of poverty and give them a pathway to the middle class.
- **HISTORIC EDUCATION FUNDING:** The \$1.47 billion increase in education aid, creating a total of \$24.7 billion, is the largest in New York State history. The state budget also increases Foundation Aid by \$627 million, provides \$433 million to fully eliminate the Gap Elimination Adjustment, and allocates \$175 million to transform struggling and high-needs schools into community schools.
- **STANDING UP FOR CUNY:** The Assembly fought hard for full restoration of CUNY funds in the state budget after the Governor's proposal to shift \$485 million of CUNY operating expenses to New York City. Not only did we reject the proposal, but were able to increase CUNY's operating funds by \$12 million and ensured a tuition freeze at CUNY and SUNY schools.



This year's Annual Bronx Ball Celebration, which capped off Bronx Week, was a huge success and a great party, bringing in hundreds of Bronxites and numerous elected officials. Pictured are Assemblyman Mark Gjonaj, State Senator Jose M. Serrano, Assemblyman Dinowitz, Bronx Borough President Rubén Díaz Jr., Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Assemblyman Marcos Crespo, Congressman Eliot Engel, Congressman Jose Serrano, Assemblyman Michael Blake, and Councilman Raphael Salamanca.

Assemblyman Dinowitz Dreams Big for Kingsbridge Armory

Having grown up in Kingsbridge Heights, the redevelopment and improvement of the Kingsbridge Heights community has long been a goal of mine. Opening up the Jerome Park Reservoir to the community, creating parkland around the Reservoir, and building a platform over the Concourse Rail Yards and constructing schools and housing on it are part of my vision — as is the development of the Kingsbridge National Ice Center (KNIC) in the Armory. When it is built, KNIC will be the world's largest indoor ice center, creating hundreds of construction and permanent jobs while delivering a net new economic impact of \$1.9 billion to NYC. Moreover, the Community Benefits Agreement will bring enormous benefits to the area and has been hailed as a national model of public-private partnership.

Over the years there has been an outpouring of support for KNIC from the private sector, and recently the state has committed up to \$138 million in construction financing. This major investment is a significant vote of confidence in the project. KNIC has the potential to be not only transformative for the neighborhood but a major factor in the great renaissance taking place in the Bronx. Big ideas don't always easily become reality. Is this project a dream? Yes. But I am one of those people who never left the Bronx when times were bad. The Bronx is now on the verge of becoming greater than ever, and I believe the Kingsbridge National Ice Center can be part of that greatness. Dreams can come true.

REMINDER: The Rent Freeze Program, formerly known as the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE), Has Expanded

If you qualify, your monthly rent amount will be frozen, and the City of New York will give your landlord a property tax credit equal to the amount of your increase. In 2014, the New York State legislature expanded the SCRIE income eligibility from \$29,000 to \$50,000 a year. If you would like more information or assistance filing an initial application, please feel free to call or stop by my office. To be eligible you must be at least 62 years of age, your income must not exceed \$50,000, and your annual rent must be greater than one third of your annual income.



Assemblyman Dinowitz rallied with the New York Nurses Association for the Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act (A. 1548), which is a common sense measure that would ensure the best possible care for patients while drastically improving conditions for New York's hard working nurses.

Assemblyman Dinowitz Hosts Summer Concert Series

Summer is approaching, which means it's time for my Annual Free Summer Concert Series! I am once again partnering with the Bronx Council on the Arts to host a series of concerts across our community, and this year's concerts will be as fun as ever. Last

summer hundreds of people attended, and I'm hopeful to see even more in attendance at this year's eight concerts! I hope you and your family will join me for any of the below fun-filled evenings of music, dancing, and wonderful summer weather!

- **July 19th** The Gene DiNapoli Variety All-Star Show at the Riverdale YM-YWHA, 7 p.m.
- **July 21st** John Benitez and his Latin Jazz Band at the Amalgamated Train Park, 7 p.m.
- **August 1st** The Just Nuts Party Dance Band at Henry Hudson Park, 7 p.m.
- **August 4th** Ginetta's Vendetta at the Amalgamated Train Park, 7 p.m.

- **August 9th** Mystery Tour Beatles Tribute Band at Henry Hudson Park, 7 p.m.
- **August 16th** Latin Jazz Band at the Amalgamated Train Park, 7 p.m.
- **August 18th** Orquesta SCC at the Williamsbridge Oval, 7 p.m.

Play Ball! Assemblyman Dinowitz Joins Local Little Leagues to Begin Their 2016 Season



Assemblyman Dinowitz marched with Little Leaguers from North Riverdale and South Riverdale to launch another great little league season.



Assemblyman Dinowitz and Council Member Cohen are pictured with little league players in Kingsbridge during their opening ceremony.

Free Notary Service

Our office provides free notary service during regular office hours, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please bring two forms of identification, at least one with your photo and signature, if you would like your signature notarized.

2016 Elections

This is a big election year for New York!

Here are the dates you need to know:

JUNE 28, 2016 is the Congressional Primary.

SEPTEMBER 13, 2016 is the State and Local Primary.

NOVEMBER 8, 2016 is the General Election.

To register to vote, or for more information, visit <http://www.elections.ny.gov/> or call 1-800-FOR-VOTE (1-800-367-8683).



Assemblyman Dinowitz presented a proclamation to Betty Campbell-Adams in recognition of the 30th anniversary of Lloyd's Carrot Cake, one of the many great small businesses serving our great community.