



Assemblyman

Jeffrey Dinowitz

Reports to the People of the 81st Assembly District

FALL 2017

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

Dear Constituent:

We face so many local issues in our neighborhood and in the city, including a major crisis in our public transit system and the ever-worsening homelessness problem, not to mention all of the problems our schools face. Yet, wherever I go, constituents are all talking about the same thing: President Trump. And not in a complimentary way.

People can respectfully disagree with each other on issues they consider important. But there have been some things about which there used to be virtually universal agreement. Everybody, across the political spectrum, knows that neo-Nazis, the Ku Klux Klan, anti-Semites and white supremacists, and others who are part of the so-called alt right are haters whose points of view should always be denounced and opposed. Until now. The fact that the President (who apparently thinks he has a huge mandate because he came within three million votes of his rival) has trouble denouncing these groups is shocking and scary. Of course this is the same President who thought it was okay not to mention the slaughter by the Nazis of millions of Jews in his statement on International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

The President's effort to equate Nazis and white nationalists with anyone else is a disgrace. Perhaps he is not aware that the Nazis were responsible for the murder of six million Jews during the Holocaust. Maybe he thought that was fake news. Over sixty million people perished during World War Two, the war launched by the Nazis and their allies. Maybe he doesn't believe that. We know he makes up things all of the time, such as the racist lie that President Obama was not born in the United States.

After seeing these horrible people march through the city of Charlottesville to protest the planned removal by the city of the statue of the confederate, Robert E. Lee, with their macho tiki torches chanting "Jews shall not replace us," it might have dawned on him that it was incumbent upon him to immediately denounce them. Any other President, regardless of political party, would have. But this President didn't want to alienate that portion of his political base that subscribes to these racist and anti-Semitic beliefs. Shame on the President. He is not only an embarrassment to our wonderful country, but he is also a danger.

I was thrilled that perhaps as many as two hundred people recently attended a rally against hate in our community organized by religious, community and political organizations on just a few hours' notice in reaction to the President's outrageous response to the hate rally in Charlottesville and murder of a peaceful counter-protester in what has been legitimately characterized as a terrorist incident perpetrated by one of these pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic, white supremacists. At the rally I mentioned, among other things, these so-called patriots were carrying plenty of Nazi flags and Confederate flags, but I didn't see a whole lot of American flags. I'm proud of our community and the countless people who expressed their disgust at what happened in Charlottesville and the disgraceful and disgusting reaction of the President.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Dinowitz
Assemblyman

Assemblyman Dinowitz to Host FREE Shredding Event September 17th

On Sunday September 17th, in partnership with AARP, I will once again be hosting a free shredding event right outside my office at 3107 Kingsbridge Avenue from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. Anyone is welcome to come and personally watch papers and documents too sensitive to put in the garbage be shredded before their eyes.

It is critically important to properly dispose of documents that thieves and predators might use to steal your identity or your personal information. Millions of people are victims of identity theft and fraud every year, and senior citizens are frequently targeted. Many people do not have the luxury of owning a shredder, or the time to find a publicly accessible one. Don't fall prey to identity theft. Come and shred your papers for free and with no hassle.



Assemblyman Dinowitz is pictured leading a coalition of elected officials and transit advocates demanding that the MTA improve bus service, which has declined in recent years.



Assemblyman Dinowitz is shown here with Deputy Inspector Terence O'Toole of the 50th precinct at National Night Out against crime.

Rider's Respond Tour

After months of delays, derailments, power outages, track fires and more, I took to the tunnels with my colleague, Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, and other elected officials and transit advocates to get feedback, suggestions and concerns from riders, while getting a full picture of the system that sustains our city. Council Member Rodriguez and I chair the committees in the Assembly and the Council that have oversight of the MTA.

Our 24-Hour #RidersRespond Transit Tour subway trek took place from 7 A.M. to 7 P.M. on two consecutive, hot days in August, touching all five boroughs.



Joined by elected officials, advocates and volunteers, we traveled from station to station to document feedback about riders' commutes, assess the state of the system's infrastructure and gain a feel for each line in the city. We shared our results on the August 8th NYC Council Transportation Committee Hearing on the NYC Subway System. The surveys we took, our observations and other feedback, and our leadership has led to a growing coalition of elected officials who demand better service and will hopefully have a positive impact.



Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, who chairs the Assembly committee with oversight over the MTA, and City Councilman Ydanis Rodriguez, who chairs the Council's Transportation committee, led a 24 hour Riders Response tour of the city's subways. They spoke with commuters in all five boroughs as part of their efforts to bring improvements to our subways and buses.

Bus Service Plan

As Chairman of the Committee on Corporations, Authorities, and Commissions, with oversight of the MTA, I have organized a coalition of Assembly Members calling for bus service to be included in plans to address the transit crisis. We have the support of a number of transit advocacy organizations as well. Included are requests for an accelerated implementation of transit signal priority, the adoption of all-door boarding technology, and a collaborative effort between NYC Transit, DOT, and local communities to reexamine bus routes and street-level infrastructure such as dedicated bus lanes and bus islands where appropriate.

Two and a half million New Yorkers depend on buses to get around every day, especially those with accessibility concerns and

those in outer boroughs with limited transit options. I want to make sure that the concerns of all New Yorkers are heard, even if they don't get the same amount of media attention. Transit signal priority and all-door boarding are no brainer changes that could reduce bus travel times by 25% for minimal investment. Let's not delay any more, and bring our bus system into the 21st Century.

Expanding Bx20 Service

I am continuing my mission for better bus service with a new focus on the disjointed and inconvenient Bx20 route. I have asked for an expansion of service in both the morning and evening rush hours.

Mass transit is the lifeblood of New York City, and buses are particularly important pieces of that picture – especially for people who live in the outer boroughs. The first scheduled Bx20 bus leaves at 7:26 A.M. That is preposterous. Many people have to get to work before 9 A.M. Currently they have to take the Bx10 bus to the Bx7 bus to the A train or the Bx10 to the 1 train to the A train. The Bx20 goes directly to the A train but runs only for a limited number of hours each weekday. The Bx20 should never have been reduced in the first place. The schedule needs to be adjusted to suit the needs of commuters.

In addition, I have long pushed for the creation of an additional transfer for pay-per-ride MetroCard users, which has passed both houses of the legislature in 2015 and 2017. The bill was vetoed in 2015, and has not yet been delivered to the Governor in 2017. Hopefully the Governor will do the right thing this year and sign the bill. I continue to press the MTA for additional Bx10 buses, which run from Norwood, through Van Cortlandt Village and Kingsbridge to Riverdale.



Assemblyman Dinowitz is leading the charge in demanding full accessibility for everyone in our subway stations, which means providing more and better elevator service.

Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz Calls on MTA to Craft New Plan for Subway ADA Accessibility

The MTA is approaching the end of their 1994 Key Station Plan for subway accessibility, but has not included elevator installation in their recent capital budgets. I am a leader of a group of elected officials and disability advocates to demand a new plan for 100% subway station accessibility. Currently, only 23% of subway stations have at least one accessible entrance and the MTA has not released an updated accessibility plan since 1994. The MTA is on pace to have full accessibility in 70 years.

A rally was organized by TransitCenter, a national organization that advocates for better public transportation, to call on the MTA to focus on disability issues after they released a report titled "Access Denied" which highlights the impact that a lack of elevator access has on transit users. So many people rely on elevators to access our transit system – people

with strollers, walkers, wheelchairs, canes, or even just a lot of bags.

We demanded several actions for the MTA to take. First, the MTA should include ADA accessibility improvements into future Capital Needs Assessments and Capital Programs. Second, they should accelerate their pace of elevator construction with the ultimate goal of achieving 100% accessibility. Third, they should improve elevator maintenance and provide accurate outage updates so users can plan trips accordingly. This is not a change that happens overnight, but we should have a strategy and schedule to ensure we continue making progress.

The 27th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act was July 26th.



Assemblyman Dinowitz at the Amalgamated Train Park with "Ginetta's Vendetta".



Assemblyman Dinowitz once again sponsored several free community concerts with the Bronx Council on the Arts. Shown in the photo are Council Member Andrew Cohen, "Mystery Tour Beatles Tribute Band," Assemblyman Dinowitz, and Eric Dinowitz.

Annual Summer Concerts a Smashing Success

I am so pleased that we had such a fantastic turnout at my free Summer Concert series hosted over the course of July and August. There were a total of 7 concerts that I hosted in partnership with the Bronx Council on the Arts. Hundreds and hundreds of people of all ages showed up to enjoy free music and dance. Every concert had unique performers and musicians like John Benitez and his Salsa band, The Just Nuts Party Dance Band, the Mystery Tour Beatles Tribute Band, Ginetta's Vendetta and River Keeper, the Gene DiNapoli Variety All-Star Show and the NY Skyscrapers and Friends.

5731 Broadway Shelter in Kingsbridge

I have expressed my strong opposition to the actions of the developer, Stagg Group, in secretly converting a recently constructed apartment building billed to the community as "market rate housing" on 5731 Broadway between West 234th Street and West 236th Street into a homeless shelter. Stagg applied for 421-A tax credit from the city based upon the premise that the building would be market rate with some "affordable" units available. However, Stagg, and Adolfo Carrion, Jr., the former Bronx Borough President, were apparently in communication with the Department for Homeless Services (DHS) and the "not-for-profit" that will run the shelter, Praxis Housing Initiatives, to negotiate the deal to turn the building into a shelter while they simultaneously misled Community Board 8 by stating the building would not be a shelter. Stagg even had a website where people could submit applications for the housing units. In my opinion, this may have been done to deliberately mislead people about the nature of the building. Without the slightest consultation with the community board, members of the community, or my office, we find out that we were the victims of a classic bait and switch.

This move is particularly egregious given that affordable housing is desperately needed in Kingsbridge. While the homeless problem in the city is a crisis that every community has an obligation to assist with, DHS awarding a contract to Stagg Group rewards a developer for misleading communities and will embolden them and others to do so over and over. Shame. And to add insult to injury, the city will be paying an exorbitant amount of money to house people in this "transitional housing and the Stagg Group will reap an enormous windfall.



Assemblyman Dinowitz joined residents of the Marble Hill Houses celebrating Family Day. Pictured are Tenant's Association President Tony Edwards, Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark, Vice President of the Tenant's Association Wilma Adams and Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz.

DOT takes Measures to make West 230th Street Corridor Safer

After months of continued urging from my office to implement changes on the West 230th Street corridor, the Department of Transportation (DOT) has agreed to install a left turn signal at the intersection of West 230th Street and northbound Broadway. The traffic corridor has the highest traffic incident rates in the area including serious injuries and deaths. In total 131 independent incidents occurred in 2016 with 61 of those occurring on or near the exit/entrance ramp to the Major Deegan Expressway. Tragically, a pedestrian was recently struck on Broadway and West 230th Street as she crossed the street and later died of her injuries.

The intersection of West 230th and Broadway has been particularly problematic given the awkward configuration of the intersection as it joins in an irregular shape with Exterior Street making it difficult to navigate safely for drivers and pedestrians alike.

I have called on the DOT to review the entire West 230th Street corridor from Riverdale Avenue to Bailey Avenue. I recently requested DOT to make specific changes at West 230th Street and Broadway including possibly adding a "no left turn sign," for northbound traffic. While the change made is not a "no left turn sign," the green arrow is certainly a big improvement. All of West 230th Street needs to be reexamined.

Assemblyman Dinowitz Calls on Governor to Sign Bill to Examine Lead Paint Levels at Elevated Subway Tracks

State Senator Jose Peralta and I have urged Governor Andrew Cuomo to sign into law our legislation (S.5754-A/A.7562-A) requiring the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the NY Transit Authority to undertake a study to determine the amount of lead paint in the elevated subway stations, tracks and trestles throughout the City. Both houses of the legislature passed this important public safety measure which requires that the MTA and the NYCTA determine and report which areas of the aboveground transit infrastructure are plagued with hazardous levels of lead paint and which parts of the City's aging transit system must be immediately remediated.

There have been reports that some samples of paint chips falling onto the streets from the elevated 7 subway line structure contained 224,000 parts per million of lead paint, more than 40 times the 5,000 parts per million legal threshold. In light of this situation, we called on the MTA to resolve the problem created by the falling lead paint chips onto the streets underneath elevated train stations, elevated tracks and trestles. Additionally, the study by the MTA will establish the degree to which the state agency complies with federal and state laws and regulations, such as the Federal Clean Air Act.

Assemblyman Dinowitz Passes Bill Cracking Down on Illegal Non-Rental Fees

The Legislature passed a bill sponsored by myself and State Senator Marisol Alcántara cracking down on illegal non-rental fees some unscrupulous landlords use to pressure tenants out of their apartments or trick them into paying more than they owe. Pending the signature of the Governor, the division of Housing and Community Renewal (HCR) will be mandated to provide the full list of legally allowable non-rental fees on the lease rider it issues for all rent-stabilized tenants. Often, fees will appear on the monthly rent bill or other correspondence without any explanation, which leads many tenants to incorrectly believe that they must pay these fees in order to stay in their housing.

Rent-stabilized tenants deserve freedom from arbitrary and in some cases illegal charges which makes housing even more unaffordable, adding to the City's housing crisis.

Some landlords pressure tenants, who may not know their rights, into paying for various legal fees, late fees, and fees for background checks by putting those fees directly into the lease agreement and monthly rent bills. HCR has called into question the legality of some of these fees, and has put out Fact Sheet #44 to help tenants know their rights. It is my hope that the Governor will demonstrate his support of tenants' rights by signing this into law.

Bronx Children's Museum Groundbreaking

I recently joined with fellow elected officials to break ground on a new Bronx Children's Museum. The project, in Mill Pond Park at 725 Exterior Street near the Harlem River, will give a permanent home to the Museum and provide a children's museum in the only borough currently lacking one.

As Chair of the Bronx Assembly Delegation I am so pleased we were able to secure millions of dollars in funding to help make this great day possible, with special thanks to Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie for his support. Founded in 2005, the Bronx Children's Museum currently provides roving educational programming to approximately 15,000 children and adults annually. The \$10.3 million project is anticipated to be completed in winter 2018, and will deliver a 13,800-square-foot home with studio, office, and exhibit space. The new Museum will occupy the second floor of the former powerhouse for the Bronx Terminal Market.



Students from P.S. 81 visited Senator Jeff Klein and Assemblyman Dinowitz in Albany to learn about the New York State government.

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Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz appeared once again on "BronxTalk" with Gary Axelbank where he discussed neighborhood issues and the recent legislative session in Albany.