



Assemblymember **SHELLEY MAYER**

Summer 2015

Community Newsletter

Dear Neighbor:

With the close of the 2014-15 legislative session, I have been enjoying spending the summer in the district, listening to residents' thoughts and concerns and attending events in the community. Please continue to reach out to me and my staff if we can be of assistance to you or if you have an event you would like to share.

Warmly,

Shelley Mayer



With Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senate Minority Conference Leader, Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator George Latimer, Assemblyman J. Gary Pretlow, Mayor Mike Spano, Superintendent Dr. Yazurlo, members of the Yonkers City Council, and members of the Yonkers Public Schools Board of Education announcing new State funding that will prevent devastating program and staffing cuts.

IMPORTANT WIN FOR YONKERS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

As the legislative session went into overtime, the Yonkers' NYS legislative delegation worked with Governor Andrew Cuomo, Mayor Spano, the Yonkers City Council, Yonkers Board of Education, and Superintendent Dr. Michael Yazurlo to address the Yonkers Public Schools' budget gap caused by last year's \$55 million accounting error. I am pleased that Yonkers will be receiving an additional \$25 million to fill the school district's projected budget gap. In addition, the state delegation passed two other bills requested by the city to help regain its

fiscal stability and independence. One bill will allow Yonkers to increase its sales tax by a half-percent to create an additional \$15 million in funding dedicated to the school district. A second bill creates a hotel occupancy tax of 3%. The legislation has already been signed into law by Governor Cuomo. I thank Governor Cuomo and Speaker Heastie for their leadership in responding to our crisis, and I commend Mayor Spano and the Yonkers City Council for identifying the importance of the sales tax increase and the hotel occupancy tax in providing

recurring, reliable funding to ensure Yonkers school children receive the education they need and deserve. In addition to the resources for the Yonkers Public Schools, I am pleased that we are providing \$250 million statewide over two years to non-public schools to reimburse for money they are owed for the costs of performing State-mandated services.

I was pleased to thank my Assembly colleagues and Speaker Heastie for their support for the Yonkers Public Schools.



ASSEMBLYMEMBER SHELLEY MAYER

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PRESS CONFERENCE ADVOCATING FOR LEGISLATION TO ADDRESS PARENTAL ABDUCTION

In late May, NYS Senator Ritchie and I were joined by Senator Martins and Assemblymembers Weprin and Bichotte to press for passage of the Custodial Interference/Recovery of Missing Children bill, which begins to address some of the obstacles in the recovery of missing children. With as many as 354,100 children abducted by a family member each year nationally, child abduction is a serious problem. This bill, which is sponsored by Senator Ritchie and me, removes the burden of proving the abductor intended to hold the child permanently or for a protracted period and thereby shifts the focus to the actual taking and denying access.

We concluded the press conference encouraged by the increased support for the bill that would better protect children from the effects of parental abduction, and hopeful it would move forward in the Senate and Assembly next year.



At a press conference with Bruce May, Victim Specialist, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York; Senator Patty Ritchie (SD 48); Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte (AD 42); Scott Berne, a survivor of parental abduction; Senator Jack Martins (SD 7); and Assemblyman David Weprin (AD 24) urging passage of A1980/S4680, the Custodial Interference/Recovery of Missing Children bill, which begins to address some of the obstacles in the recovery of missing children. Ed Suk, Executive Director, and Yen Tan, Ph.D., Advisory Board member of The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, New York, were also in attendance.



The Friends of Philipse Manor Hall had a wonderful evening honoring past and present Patron Saints of Yonkers. Bob Walters, Director of The Science Barge and tireless worker for Groundwork Hudson Valley, was one of the honorees, and Yonkers Historian, Angie Piwinski provided an informative lecture about the legacy of the second honoree, Eva Smith Cochran.



I had a wonderful time at Leake and Watts' Ames Center where I enjoyed Get Caught Reading month.

PROTECTING RESIDENTS FROM LEWD BEHAVIOR

Under current law, criminals who enter someone's home and commit a lewd act can only be charged with trespassing. The lewd act, which on its own would normally be considered criminal, is not a serious crime because the activity took place in the home. If it had happened on the resident's front lawn, the individual would have been charged with sexual assault, public lewdness or indecent exposure violations.

Legislation (A2761B/S4166-C) Senator George Latimer and I sponsored, which passed both the Senate and the Assembly, would allow law enforcement to tie this crime to burglary -- a felony, thus charging these individuals with an offense that appropriately meets the level of this serious crime. We are optimistic Governor Cuomo will sign this important legislation.



At Yonkers' Armed Services Day Ceremony with Carla Young, who served as a Technical Sergeant and an F-16 Avionics Crafts person in the U.S. Air Force.



I was pleased to join Communication Workers of America (CWA) as they begin their efforts to bargain for a fair contract.

TOURING YONKERS NEW AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YONKERS STUDENTS

Assemblyman Pretlow and I were joined by the New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) and The After-School Corporation (TASC) for a tour of the state-funded afterschool program at Cross Hill Academy, a K-8 Public School in Yonkers, NY. This was one of several Yonkers afterschool programs for which Assemblyman Pretlow and I were able to secure

funding from the New York State Assembly. This funding has allowed Yonkers' community based organizations to collaborate with the Yonkers Public Schools to develop rigorous enrichment programming. We had the opportunity to see students in grades 6-8 engaging in multiple learning and enrichment activities, including hands-on science, 3-D printing, cooking, and step dancing.

THE BOARD OF REGENTS TAKES IMPORTANT ACTION

New York State's enacted budget included a new teacher and principal evaluation system. In response to parents and teachers' concerns about the substance and time frame for implementation of the new evaluation, the Board of Regents took the important step of adopting the New State Education Department's recommendations while providing guidance allowing school districts four month extensions from the November 15th deadline. Moreover, members did not rule out revisiting the regulations to still make changes after the public comment period closes in September. I appreciate the good work of the Board of Regents, especially our newly elected Regent Judith Johnson, who has advocated a thorough review of the evaluation system.

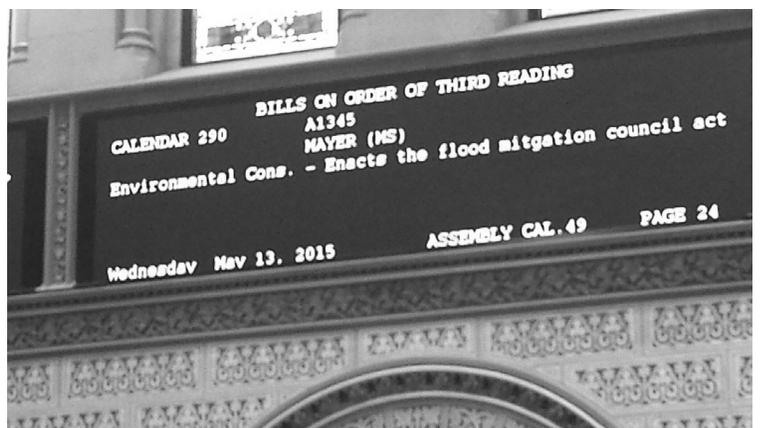


An afternoon with Assemblyman J. Gary Pretlow, New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) and The After-School Corporation (TASC) at JCY-WCP's afterschool program at Cross Hill Academy.

FLOOD MITIGATION COUNCIL ACT PASSES SENATE AND THE ASSEMBLY

In response to persistent flooding and frustration at the lack of coordination in the response, last year State Senator George Latimer and I introduced bills to address flooding issues that have continued to plague neighborhoods in Yonkers. The bills were drafted to begin to bring a comprehensive approach to a problem that has remained unaddressed and has suffered from a disjointed approach to a multi-government, multi-agency problem. Because flooding crosses municipal lines and governmental entities, New York needs a comprehensive approach to planning, mitigation and remediation. A 1345/S 4940 establishes a flood mitigation and flood prevention task force based within the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The task force will include representatives of various agencies and local government officials charged with identifying regions most affected by flooding, prioritizing mitigation efforts, identifying sources of funding, and support additional research on mitigation efforts. This year Senator David Carlucci carried the flood

mitigation and prevention task force bill in the Senate, and it passed both the Senate and the Assembly. I am optimistic Governor Cuomo will sign this important legislation into law.



Watching as the Flood Mitigation Council Act (A1345) passes the Assembly.

MORE TAX RELIEF FOR HOMEOWNERS AND SENIORS

At the end of the legislative session we passed legislation to provide \$3.1 billion in property tax rebates that will give homeowners much-needed property tax relief. The rebates will be provided in addition to homeowners' School Tax Relief (STAR) benefits and are contingent upon schools and municipalities staying within the 2 percent property tax cap.

After the first year, the program will operate similar to the "circuit breaker," which I have long supported, where the amount of the rebates will be based on a household's annual

income for families earning up to \$275,000. Senior citizens in the Enhanced STAR program will receive the property tax rebates, which will increase to 34 percent of their current savings over the next four years. This will go a long way in helping those seniors who are living on fixed incomes and struggling to stay in their homes. This relief is in addition to a program created last year that will provide residents rebates in 2016 if their school district and municipality take steps to reduce costs and adhere to the tax cap.

Please join us!

Please Join Senator Latimer and me for coffee and Danish at the **Mont Olympus Diner 1 Fort Hill Ave, Yonkers, NY 10710 on Saturday, July 25th from 9-11 A.M. Light refreshments will be served and no appointment is necessary. **For more information or if you have questions, call Assemblymember Shelley Mayer 914-779-8805****

Please Join Senator Latimer and me as we host a forum on **Shareholders' Rights and Responsibilities in Cooperative Ownership. Thursday, July 30th 7 P.M. Scotti Community Center (680 Bronx River Rd. Yonkers) For more information or if you have questions, call **Assemblymember Shelley Mayer 914-779-8805****

CRACKING DOWN ON SYNTHETIC DRUGS

After many discussions and great concern from Yonkers law enforcement and community members, I was pleased to help pass legislation to ban a new class of synthetic drugs – often referred to as “N-Bomb” or “Smiles” – which are designed to mimic the hallucinogenic effects of LSD (A627A/S 738A). This bill builds on the legislation passed in previous years to

ban manufactured stimulants commonly known as “bath salts.” These types of drugs are typically sold to young people, who are led to believe that the substances are legal alternatives to well-known recreational drugs but are often even more dangerous. I am pleased we are continuing to work to eliminate synthetic drugs and educate our kids about the dangers these drugs pose.

CONNECTING RELEASED PATIENTS WITH INFORMATION ABOUT SOCIAL ADULT DAY CARE PROGRAMS

Social adult day services (SADS) and other local aging programs are incredibly important for seniors being released from the hospital. They provide important respite to family caregivers and delay or prevent nursing home placement and the need for other costly services. Currently, when patients are discharged from the hospital, they or their

caregiver may not know that there are social adult day programs available in their area. A7791A/S5892, which I sponsored, passed both the Assembly and the Senate, will ensure patients and their caregivers receive current information regarding the myriad of Social Adult Day Care programs throughout the State.

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Assemblyman J. Gary Pretlow and I welcomed John Rubbo and Sharif Taleb of Yonkers Brewing Co. to Albany for the New York State Craft Breweries' reception.



I was fortunate to welcome Westchester high school students, Jacquelyn Raio and Vanessa Aceituno, to Albany for the 13th annual Students Inside Albany conference sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York.