

Spotlight on Casino Gambling

This November, voters approved a controversial change to the NYS Constitution that allows up to seven casinos in New York State. The law now gives localities the ability to partner with casino interests to advance proposals in select regions of the state.

Supporters cite the ability to keep revenue from going out of state, and to Native American resorts, while creating jobs. Opponents question the economic development argument and point to social ills and other public costs that may follow.

For pros and cons, visit the following web sites or call Pete for a summary:

http://gaming.ny.gov/pdf/UpstateNYGamingDevelopmentAct_FINAL.pdf

<http://cagnyinf.org/>

Want more information?

Have an idea, suggestion or concern?

Give Pete a call, or contact him at any of the following!

Pete Lopez

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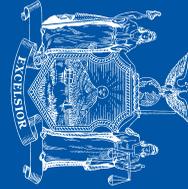
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REBUILDING NEW YORK
A Special Report from
ASSEMBLYMAN
Pete Lopez



New York State Assembly
Albany, NY 12248

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Dear Friends,

In my 1,000-miles-a-week travels across this seven-county Assembly district, I am often asked "How is everything – How is everyone doing?"



While we are blessed by the many good things we have to be thankful for, my honest observation is that many folks are struggling – responding to natural disasters, a prolonged recession, budget cutbacks, and other challenges facing them and their communities.

With our homes, farms and businesses facing hardship, we must continue to make them a priority and work closely with each other to help them recover and rebuild.

I value the many gifts of energy, compassion and intellect we have in our communities, and look forward to working with you as we continue to lift our people up.

Sincerely,

Assemblyman Pete Lopez



Pete Lopez: **REBUILDING NEW YORK**

Disaster Recovery Update

With ever-changing and intensifying weather patterns, our communities are being hit harder than ever before. As we continue to recover, Pete is working tirelessly with other dedicated groups and individuals to rebuild our communities and strengthen them for future events.

In addition to the millions in funding Pete has helped bring to the region for storm recovery, he continues to push for additional relief funds, including making sure those affected by Irene and Lee were also included in the Sandy relief package.

As part of these efforts, Pete is focusing on a multi-faceted approach that would address:

- New Housing - Despite broad-based government support, there has not been significant attention given to providing residents with new housing options, particularly for single family homes.
- Stream Stabilization & Preventative Water Releases: Cleaning up our waterways, as well as ensuring dams and reservoirs are below risk levels, are important preventive measures that need to be taken to protect our communities from further damage every time it rains.
- Emergency Response: Bringing federal, state and local groups together to improve emergency communications and sharing of resources.
- Disaster Resiliency - Promoting local planning efforts that support land use and building construction to offer greater community protection from future storm events.

Pete knows that many of our neighbors across the district continue to suffer. If you, or someone you know needs help, please reach out to Pete and his staff.

For eligibility information, program details or to apply for Sandy, Irene & Lee Relief, please go to NYSandyHelp.ny.gov or call 1-855-NYS-SANDY.

UPDATE ON EDUCATION

Our schools continue to operate on shifting sands – From state budget challenges, to the property tax cap, to Regents Reform, to the impacts of “Race to the Top,” our schools have been reeling as they work to offer the best possible education to our students.

Pete is very distressed by the overall impact of these rapid fire changes to our schools, and is working to bring these concerns to the forefront. He feels we must work both locally and in Albany to stabilize New York’s public schools and help them meet the twin goals of quality and affordability (sustainability).

Regents Reform / Common Core - The Regents Reform Agenda was intended to increase the quality of education in New York State by placing a strong emphasis on college and career readiness. As a result, the Regents are aggressively advancing new standards for teaching and learning (known as “Common Core”) at all grade levels across NYS. This push, along with increased testing, has sparked a firestorm of protests from every corner of our state. In response, Pete is hosting and participating in public meetings calling for the Commissioner to step back from using the Common Core standards and is also supporting legislation calling for its withdrawal (A.7994). For more information on the Common Core Standards, please visit the NYS Education website: <http://www.engageny.org/common-core-curriculum-assessments>.

The Property Tax Cap and the Governor’s Mandate Relief Task Force - While enactment of the property tax cap is largely accomplishing its intent of slowing down the pace of property tax growth in NYS, the lack of real mandate relief to compensate has left many small and rural schools barely keeping their heads above water, forcing cutbacks in programs and services. Pete is pushing to have the Governor and the Legislature honor the commitment to enact real mandate relief and provide sustainable funding to our schools. To view the Final Report please visit http://www.governor.ny.gov/assets/documents/Final_Mandate_Relief_Report.pdf.

LOOKING AHEAD...

Pete has a deep, profound belief in grassroots democracy and is determined to help rebuild our communities from the ground up. He also believes this effort must focus on strengthening our farms, families and small businesses at its core.

Pete is actively working to rebuild our local economy, putting special emphasis on agriculture and manufacturing, alternate energy and tourism, while highlighting successful local projects as models for further public and private investment.

Energy:

Former Governor Paterson once made reference to energy as “the new currency.” This phrase has real meaning to Pete as he looks for ways to promote affordable, abundant energy in our homes, farms and businesses. Pete places special emphasis on sustainable and locally-generated sources of energy and is pursuing legislation and special projects that can move our communities forward.

Agriculture:

Pete is heavily influenced by the belief that we are stewards and have the responsibility for feeding, clothing and caring for our people while ensuring that our resources are available to future generations. Our family farms represent this, and Pete feels they are key to promoting our economic recovery even as they provide us with safe, nutritious local food.

Small Business, Tourism and Manufacturing:

Pete continues to protect local jobs and promote new ones. He works with countless businesses on their individual issues with the belief that their success will refuel the growth of our economy and create new private-sector jobs while supporting vital programs and services in the region.

Pete believes we are all interconnected - if our farms, families and businesses succeed, we succeed.

