



END OF SESSION NEWS

Assemblymember
John T. McDonald III

Summer 2016

LEGISLATIVE SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Bills Passed this Legislative Session

Dear Neighbor:

I am writing to provide you with an update on the accomplishments of the recently ended legislative session and the work coming up in the next session. Much has been accomplished and this newsletter highlights only a fraction of the items addressed this past year. Among the many other priorities is a continued emphasis on ethics in state government. This remains a priority, as well as health care, education, local government, and business growth.

As always, I encourage you to contact me with any thoughts, comments, concerns, or issues that you may have. I am always willing to meet with constituents in my district office, or out in the district community. I can also be reached by email at mcdonaldj@nyassembly.gov, or by phone at (518) 455-4474. Your comments and feedback have been and continue to be helpful as we shape our legislative agenda and meet the needs of those we are privileged to serve.

Sincerely,

John T. McDonald III



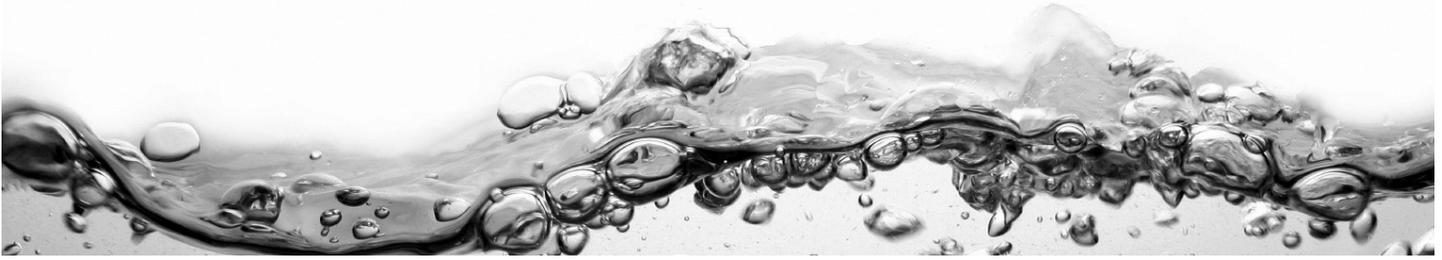
“Among the many other priorities is a continued emphasis on ethics in state government. This remains a priority, as well as health care, education, local government, and business growth.”

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PFOA Water Contamination Legislation



Also passing both the NYS Assembly and NYS Senate this legislative session is bill A.9568-A/S 6824-A. This bill would allow a personal injury action to be brought within three years of the time when a site containing chemicals and other substances has been designated as a state or federal superfund site. Under current state law, the three year statute of limitations for personal injury actions related to the latent effects of exposure begins to

run when an injury is discovered or reasonably should have been discovered, whichever is sooner.

I would like to thank Governor Cuomo for signing this bill into law. This bill will help many New Yorkers across the state who have suffered or may suffer from undetected toxins in their water.

Capital Region Taxi Regulation



I was excited to see a bill sponsored by myself and Senator Breslin, in relation to Capital Region taxi regulation, pass the NYS Assembly and NYS Senate during this legislative session.

The goal of bill A.9878-A/S.7359-A is to authorize the CDTA to enter into an agreement with municipalities relating to the registration and licensing of taxicab vehicles.

The Capital Region has faced ongoing issues surrounding its taxicab industry in terms of customer service, pricing, and overall quality. In an effort to alleviate these problems, several of its municipal governments have sought to work in concert with the CDTA to coordinate and standardize some of the ministerial processes surrounding registration of taxicabs and licensing taxicab drivers. Both Sen. Breslin and I are of the mindset that it is best to allow local governments to work with a known provider such as CDTA to help local governments instead of the other approach which is to create another bureaucracy. By doing this we can improve taxi service in our region without incurring additional costs to taxpayers.

New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal (NYMIR) – Municipal Revenue Opportunity!

A.9337/S.6789 also passed both houses this session. This bill would authorize the Superintendent of the Department of Financial Services to suspend the continued funding of an authorized reciprocal insurer's operating reserves for a fiscal year as long as that same amount is returned directly to municipal subscribers the following year.

For those municipalities that participate in municipal reciprocals (over 850 statewide), this is an excellent opportunity to receive additional revenue based on the performance of the reciprocal. In this age of the tax cap and other pressing costs, any additional revenue is welcome. As a former Mayor I am pleased to have passed this legislation to help our local governments and the residents they serve.



Heroin and Opioid Crisis Package

Many of you may remember a bill that I was working on this legislative session to help limit the initial prescription of a controlled substance for the alleviation of acute pain.

I am pleased to share that bill was passed this year within the Governor's package to combat the heroin and opioid crisis in New York. Bill A.10727 would limit opioid prescriptions from 30-day supplies to 7-day supplies for someone receiving an **opioid prescription for the first time**, and would require pharmacists to provide additional education and counseling to those receiving opioids. I would like to reiterate that this limit is for acute pain and will not affect those using opioid medications for long term, chronic pain.

I believe this bill is one small step in a long process to help New Yorkers fight this epidemic. Over 75% of heroin users say their addiction started with prescription opioid use. By limiting the initial prescription of a controlled substance we are essentially taking on our most challenging opponent which is the unnecessary overprescribing of opioids.



This package is just the first in a series of actions the legislature and I are willing to take to help end this terrible disease. We also made advancements on continuing education for prescribers and pharmacists as well as suspending the prior authorization process for an initial 14 days of inpatient treatment if required which will also allow for the patient to seek additional days while in treatment. Still, the heroin and opioid crisis is a long journey we must endure. These actions are just a few of the many steps we need to take focusing on education, enforcement, treatment and recovery.

A.4339 Prohibit Naming Buildings after Public Officials

I was glad to see my bill, A.4439 pass in the NYS Assembly this legislative session. This legislation prohibits the naming of a building after an elected official that helped secure state funding for an entity while that elected official is still in office.

While the elected officials responsible for securing the funding should be commended, a structure bearing the name of that elected official seems to imply that he/she donated their own personal funds. Ultimately, it is the taxpayers who make such expenditures. Thank you taxpayers!



LLC Landlord Transparency Bill

The LLC Landlord Transparency bill, A.9639, would require the disclosure of the names and residential addresses of the natural persons who are members, managers, or other authorized persons of a limited liability company (LLC) when such limited liability company executes a lease agreement in which the State of New York is the tenant.

Leases of private properties to state government entities are abundant throughout New York. Often, state leases are highly sought after by landlords as they are very valuable and state government is generally a steady and reliable tenant.

Additionally, LLCs have generated a large amount of media and good government group attention due to the large amount of political contributions that are made through LLCs to candidates

and elected officials. While there is no reason to believe that contributions by LLCs would influence selection of potential sites for lease agreements, it is apparent that in today's atmosphere of challenges related to ethical transgressions committed by some elected officials at all levels of government, it is best to consider enhancing transparency when it comes to LLCs executing state leases.

The LLC Landlord Transparency Bill, accomplishes the goal of requiring such state leases to disclose the names and residence addresses of LLC members, managers, and other authorized entities down to the natural persons. This bill will add sunlight to another process in government which is necessary to further enhance public trust in government.

Electronic Prior Authorization Bill

In the last few days of budget negotiations I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to debate and finally pass A. 6983/S. 4721-A, sponsored by myself and Sen. Hannon who is the Senate Health Committee Chair. The bill, known as the electronic prior authorization bill, is now ready to go to the Governor for consideration. I am hopeful the bill will be considered with positive approval as it will help ease the challenges for patients in regard to receiving determinations of prescription medications that require prior approval.

This bill directs the Department of Financial Services (DFS) to review and determine the next stage in prior approval processing via electronic standards. Many individuals do not realize that when a medication is not covered by their plan there is a process (known as prior approval) that can be pursued but the steps necessary to complete PA are difficult and timely.



It is my intent that this bill, if signed into law, will streamline the prior approval process which will result in patients receiving the care they need and hopefully seeing even better health care outcomes.



Assemblymember McDonald serves on the following committees:

Aging
Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
Cities
Insurance
Mental Health
Real Property Taxation

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- Capital Region Tax Regulation
- PFOA Water Contamination Legislation
- New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal (NYMIR)
- Heroin and Opioid Crisis Package
- Prohibit Naming Buildings after Public Officials
- Electronic Prior Authorization Bill