

ASSEMBLYMAN

Andrew Hevesi



Winter 2013

Dear Neighbor,

I hope you and your families have a safe, healthy, and happy holiday season and New Year. This past fall has proven to be a busy and interesting time for my office on both local and statewide issues. Over the last few months, I have had the opportunity to chair several legislative hearings, discuss computer science curriculum reform with the leaders of our state educational institutions, and my district office staff and I also held a number of community events and donation drives.

As Chairman of the Oversight, Analysis, and Investigation Committee, I was granted the opportunity to conduct multiple Assembly proceedings. These particular hearings examined Early Intervention in New York State, as well as Statewide Child Protective Services policies.

The Early Intervention hearing focused on payment procedures and provider reimbursement guidelines that were adopted in a prior state budget at the recommendation of the Governor. After concluding that the new payment system for providers was serving as an obstacle to the successful delivery of these crucial preventative services, the Chairmen of the Health and Insurance Committees and myself have introduced S.6002 (Assembly bill number pending) in order to correct that policy. We will be pursuing its passage in the upcoming legislative session.

The second issue, which I co-chaired hearings on in both Buffalo and New York City, was the result of two child fatalities in Erie County. The incidents with both of the children were preceded by contact with the county's Child Protective Services agency, which resulted in a statewide examination of procedural practices of county agencies and their state oversight entity, the Office of Children and Family Services. While these hearings were extremely difficult and emotional, they were also informative, and I will be working with my colleagues on numerous reforms in the coming months.

The 2014 session will also provide an opportunity to continue to pursue the goal of having computer science courses added as general education requirements in secondary and higher education curriculums throughout the state. After writing letters to top administrators at SUNY, CUNY, as well as the NYS Education Department urging reform of computer science curriculum requirements, and after meeting with the SUNY Provost to discuss computer science curriculum in the state's higher education system, I believe there is ample opportunity to achieve progress in the coming year. I look forward to continuing to push to bring New York State to the forefront of technology and computer science education.

This fall my office also hosted several events in the district. We held a community health fair with free clinic services that included blood pressure screenings, dental care, and mammography examinations. Additionally, we were able to hold an electronic recycling event, which collected over 3,000 pounds of old products for safe disposal. We are also holding a food drive through the winter. Please drop non-perishable goods by my office through the coming months.



Assemblyman Hevesi, joined by Councilmember Karen Koslowitz, Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz, and Queens District Attorney Richard Brown, attends the 112th Precinct National Night Out Against Crime.

My staff and I continue to be available to assist with any issues or concerns that you may have. Please feel free to stop by, call (718) 263-5595, or email us at hevesia@assembly.state.ny.us. As always, I am honored to serve as your elected representative in the state legislature.

Sincerely,

A blue ink handwritten signature of Andrew Hevesi.

Andrew Hevesi

Assembly Member, 28th AD

Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi

DISTRICT OFFICE: 70-50 Austin Street, Suite 110, Forest Hills, NY 11375 • 718-263-5595

ALBANY OFFICE: Room 742, LOB, Albany, NY 12248 • 518-455-4926

E-MAIL: hevesia@assembly.state.ny.us

Hevesi Co-Chairs Public Hearing to Review the Effectiveness of Child Protective Services Policies and Office of Child and Family Service Oversight Practices

Assemblyman Hevesi, Chair of the Oversight, Analysis and Investigation Committee, co-chaired a public hearing with Assemblymember Donna Lupardo, Chair of the Children and Families Committee, to review the effectiveness of existing policies that regulate Child Protective Services (CPS). The hearing was meant to ascertain the role current administrative and statutory policies play in ensuring proper care of participants in the Child Protective Services, both in Erie County and throughout New York State. Assemblyman Hevesi re-

ceived testimony on CPS's procedural practices to examine how complaints are handled following a series of child fatalities in Erie County. Hearing participants included agency leaders, caseworkers, advocates, and private residents with experience in the CPS system. Legislators and participants reviewed challenges faced within the OCFS and CPS. The hearing provided valuable insight into potential fixes to the system which may be addressed in the coming legislative session.

Hevesi Chairs Hearing Examining Erie County Child Protective Services

Assemblyman Hevesi discusses the current practices of the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS).



Hevesi Pushes Human Trafficking Reform and Education

In the 2013 legislative session, Assemblyman Hevesi attempted to reform the New York State Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking. Assembly Bill 8042 would have added new experts to the task force and improve reporting and recommendation timeframes. That legislation, which unanimously passed the Assembly, was subsequently packaged into the Governor's 10 point Women's Equality Agenda. Agreement on the full package was not reached in 2013.

Therefore, the issue of the task force will be addressed this coming session. In addition, this fall, Assemblyman Hevesi began collaborating with various non-profits to discuss ways to incorporate Human Trafficking awareness and prevention curriculum into schools. The Assemblyman and his staff are currently working to develop and incorporate age and content appropriate curriculum.

Hevesi Continues to Address Freight Locomotive Environmental Concerns

After securing a \$3 million funding allocation in the FY2013 New York State Budget to upgrade the engines of antiquated and environmentally harmful locomotives that run through our district, Assemblyman Hevesi is currently working towards the expeditious and appropriate administration of this groundbreaking project. Through regular project update meetings with all parties involved including the Governor's office, multiple government agencies, and private-sector partners, the Assemblyman is monitoring the progress of the upgrades. In addition, Assemblyman Hevesi is preparing for this coming session in order to build on last years progress.

Hevesi Urges Reform of Computer Science Curriculum in Public Schools

Assemblyman Hevesi, along with over fifty of his colleagues in the State Assembly, sent letters to top administrators at SUNY, CUNY, and the New York State Education Department urging reform of computer science curriculum requirements in educational institutions. Assemblyman Hevesi believes it is fundamental that our technology meets the requirements of the 21st century workplace. The letters were sent following Assemblyman Hevesi's introduction of two bills (A.6540/A.6543) that propose inclusion of computer science courses into core secondary and higher education curriculums. Under the proposal, the courses would act as science or math credits, and would be applicable towards graduation requirements.

Hevesi's Oversight Committee, and Committees on Health and Insurance, Held a Hearing on Early Intervention funding

Assemblyman Hevesi co-hosted a hearing alongside Assembly Health Chair Richard Gottfried and Assembly Insurance Chair Kevin Cahill in order to get to the bottom of the crisis of Early Intervention provider reimbursement. Changes imposed by the State Department of Health caused payments to lag for the past six months. The hearing also sought to unearth solutions for clearing up the backlog and repairing the glitches.

"The fiscal agent system authorized in the 2012 State budget, and administered by the Department of Health through "third-party contracts" has proven overly complex

and burdensome to Early Intervention service providers in New York State," said Assemblymember Hevesi. "The hearing brought impediments in the payment structure to light that are causing delays in reimbursements to EI providers for services. This will be rectified so that they can continue to carry out their vital work for our children."

The Department of Health's Bureau of Early Intervention, the Department of Financial Services, service providers, parents, and insurance plan representatives all testified at this hearing regarding changes to the state's billing system for EI.



Hevesi, Miller and Crowley Sponsor Community Health Fair at the Shops at Atlas Park

On October 26th, Assemblyman Hevesi, Assemblyman Mike Miller and City Council Member Elizabeth Crowley held a Community Health Fair at Atlas Park Mall in Glendale. The event included free blood pressure screenings, the NYU Dental Van, mammography screenings, as well as numerous organizations and non-profits that contribute to the health of our community.

Hevesi Sponsors 25th Annual New York Cares Coat Drive

This winter, thousands of New Yorkers will have to make a choice between buying a warm coat and taking care of some other basic needs. Without a place to store their coat during the summer, many of our low-income residents will rely on a donated coat this winter to keep

warm in the colder months. New York Cares Coat Drive is in its 25th year of receiving and donating coats. If you are interested in donating, please drop by our office, or call to find the closest drop off location in your area.

How the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) May Benefit You This Winter

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) helps low-income homeowners and renters pay bills for heating fuel, equipment and repairs. HEAP is a federally funded program that assists eligible households with grants to pay regular and emergency energy heating costs. HRA administers the program in New York City, and the benefits do not have to be paid back.

HEAP eligibility is determined by whether the household income is below the current New York State income guidelines that correspond to the household size and the household energy costs. HEAP may be able to offer a benefit even if heat and utilities are included in the rent or the applicant lives in subsidized housing and pays directly for heating costs.

For more information, please contact the HEAP hotline at (212) 331-3150.

Serving our Community

My office is here to assist with any questions or concerns you may have. Below are recent examples of constituent services my office has handled:

- Helped an individual navigate the New York State Health Care exchange in order to obtain insurance.
- Assisted constituents in applying for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP).
- Helped an individual obtain a copy of their Birth Certificate from the New York City Department of Health.
- Assisted in getting a street repair completed from National Grid.
- Aided individuals with understanding the new requirements for the Basic and enhanced STAR program.
- Assisted in connecting a non-profit with a contractor to rectify a damaged fence in Middle Village.

Hevesi Co-Sponsors an E-Recycle Event



On November 2nd, Assemblyman Hevesi joined with City Council Member Karen Koslowitz to hold an E-Cycling event at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs. Over 3,000 pounds of electronics were collected at the event. Reusing and recycling consumer electronics conserves our natural resources and avoids air and water pollution, as well as greenhouse gas emissions that are caused by manufacturing virgin materials. Old electronic devices, such as computer, laptops, cell phones, chargers, calculators, etc., were obtained for safe disposal.

Legislative E-Mail Program

In addition to my office's ongoing programs, I encourage you to participate in our Legislative E-mail program. This program allows you to interact with me and my staff concerning current and proposed New York State policies. You may request bill information and reg-

ister support or opposition to legislation. The feedback constituents provide me through this program is greatly valued in the decision making process. If you would like to join, please contact my office at hevesia@assembly.state.ny.us.



ASSEMBLYMAN
**ANDREW
HEVESI**

Reports to the People

Winter 2013

Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi's District Office Food Drive

Assemblyman Hevesi will be holding a food drive through this winter to help replenish city food pantries. Kosher and non-kosher canned foods and non-perishable products will be accepted for the duration of the food drive. Please bring donations to our district office Monday through Friday between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., or call to find your closest drop off location.



Assemblyman Hevesi addresses the Juniper Park Civic Association in regards to pressing community issues.