



Dear Neighbor,

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been refreshing to see how people have become involved in their communities and have more deeply scrutinized the economic and racial injustices in our society, and sought to hold elected officials accountable. We have seen a greater number of people become advocates and expand their awareness of the importance

of elections and civic engagement. While elections are certainly critical for shaping the policy direction of a locality, along with that increased awareness, it is also incumbent upon us as engaged citizens to expand our knowledge about how our government entities work.

A basic understanding of the roles our City, State and Federal offices and agencies play in maintaining a stable, equitable environment would be beneficial to all New Yorkers. Knowing which office is responsible for which issue or topic would help give community advocates focus and sharpen individuals' efforts to get issues resolved. For example, my office tries to be responsive to all concerns that impact our constituents. However, as a State representative, there are many issues where I am compelled to weigh in or present a position I believe to be in the best interest of the district, but in which I do not have any formal authority or vote – such as City ordinances or rezoning proposals, or the management of City agencies and services.

The past two years have felt for many that the breadth of the world's problems and national interests have outweighed priorities in our local communities. Between the global pandemic, tense national election, and ever-increasing climate crises, it can feel like those basic quality-of-life and more local issues—which are still important—are being overlooked. I appreciate those of you who have contacted my office and have been engaging with us throughout these challenging times. In addition to legislation we passed in Albany that sought to provide financial relief and various supports to individuals, small businesses, and arts organizations, my office has been responding to constituent concerns, as well as working with colleagues in government to address issues which affect local residents almost daily. My staff has assisted hundreds of New Yorkers in connecting to the NYS Department of Labor to address unemployment issues, and has worked to resolve numerous noise, sanitation, construction, and safety concerns.

Since February, we have been active on the Manhattan Vaccine/ Recovery Task Force, convened weekly by Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, where we've joined with city and state offices and community leaders to work toward greater COVID-19 vaccine access and urge an equitable balance in recovery efforts. Recently, my office participated in a walk-thru of the West Village with the NYC

Department of Sanitation, NYC Department of Health, and other elected offices, to survey trash and rat issues along streets heavily utilized by outdoor dining sheds. We are working with our partners in government to help bring relief to residents besotted by dirty and rat-infested streets where mitigations are more difficult because of outdoor dining. We also partnered recently with the new City Cleanup Corps to identify areas of the East Village in need of graffiti removal and general sidewalk cleaning services.

Similarly, my office joined a walk-thru with the City and State Departments of Transportation, the Meatpacking BID, and Hudson River Park staff and users to evaluate pedestrian dangers at key crossings along West Street. Hudson River Park was created through State legislation and is clearly a concern for all of us as open space is critical for public health and well-being. I am hopeful that we can continue to work with both transportation departments to find ways of improving pedestrian crossings with added safety in mind, and I continue to fight for the City to take seriously the dangers caused by the increase in electric bicycles and scooters in recent years.

This year, my office strengthened our relationships with outreach service providers as we worked toward solutions in Washington Square Park to curb drug use and sales. We have also been supportive of homeless encampment reduction efforts by connecting New Yorkers living on the streets with necessary services. We have worked closely with Speaker Johnson's office, Goddard Downtown, and the NYPD to reduce the number of encampments on 6th Avenue and in other areas of the district. We are hopeful this will also lead to a reduction in overall crime.

Finally, this past summer, I had the pleasure of hosting a roundtable discussion with United States Senator Chuck Schumer. My office invited twenty-five community members to participate in a discussion about local issues with the Senate Majority Leader. This discussion elevated seemingly local concerns to an elected official with responsibilities to New York State and the nation overall. As we strive to move beyond the pandemic in the new year, my office will continue to address the local concerns which affect our community most deeply, and I encourage you to stay involved and well-informed about the roles and responsibilities of our City, State, and national leaders.

Sincerely,

Deborah



In November, I was honored to stand alongside colleagues and advocates as Governor Hochul signed two important bills to ensure dignity, respect, and a safe future for transgender and gender nonconforming New Yorkers, and all survivors of human trafficking.

Securing Abortion Access Throughout the Country

When I first introduced the Reproductive Health Act (RHA) over ten years ago, a common response I received was a simple “Why?” The RHA, which was finally passed in 2019, enshrined the abortion protections established in *Roe v. Wade* in New York State law; should the Supreme Court ever overturn *Roe*, New Yorkers’ right to an abortion would remain intact. A decade ago, many thought this bill was wholly unnecessary – even if you supported abortion access, why would you be worried that *Roe* was going to be overturned anytime soon?

Now, in 2021, we have our answer. The make-up of the Supreme Court has changed drastically, solidifying a conservative bloc whose previous decisions indicate a willingness to restrict abortion rights despite Constitutional precedent. The Court is already considering the most controversial aspects of Texas’s law SB 8, which restricts abortions after 6 weeks and deputizes individual Texans to enforce the law by suing anyone who assists in abortions outside of this window. The Court will also hear arguments on the constitutionality of Mississippi’s 15-week abortion ban this winter; should the Court uphold the ban, a key provision of *Roe* allowing for abortions until fetal viability would be overturned, effectively making it open season on abortion rights.

Even if the Court fully upholds *Roe*, state legislatures across the country have shown they’ll continue to pass restrictive laws that violate the Constitution in order to attack reproductive rights. According to the Guttmacher Institute, in the first 6 months of 2021, over 500 bills restricting abortion had been introduced in 47 states; of those, 83 have been enacted, including 10 abortion bans. Despite what many courts have stated for years, *Roe* is anything but settled law – states have enacted 1,313 abortion restrictions since *Roe* was decided in 1973, and many will continue to pass overtly unconstitutional legislation in hopes that a changing court will move to further restrict or eliminate abortion rights.

I have written many times about the importance of abortion access. However, it bears repeating – unless pregnant people can access abortion, they cannot be fully equal under the law. The decision to have a child is deeply complex and personal, and its impacts are immense. Pregnancy and childbirth represent both a physical health risk and a deep financial responsibility, and caring for a child affects everything from employment to educational access to housing to one’s economic future. The ability to become pregnant should not mean that you forgo your bodily autonomy or equal access to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That so many of the people who fight against abortion also fight against funding the services that would aid parents and families makes clear that their aim is to exercise power over pregnant people, not save children.

Despite the onslaught of attacks on abortion access, I remain hopeful. I am grateful that the RHA protects New Yorkers’ reproductive rights, and that new bills have been introduced that would establish even firmer protections. I am heartened by the efforts of many advocates, activists, and those who have received abortions to destigmatize the procedure. In the 1970s, we could barely bring ourselves to utter the word “abortion,” and now the full spectrum of abortions is discussed with care, but not with shame. Those who object to abortion on religious grounds have had their right to refuse abortions respected; advocates for reproductive care have become more assertive in proclaiming that the Constitution also protects Americans from having to adopt specific religions, and from being subjected to others’ religious beliefs about their medical care. I know that many of my colleagues in New York and across the nation stand ready to defend abortion rights, and that we are joined by the majority of Americans who support the *Roe v. Wade* decision. It’s important to know what we’re up against, but it is just as important to remember that we are in a dark moment in a long fight, and that it’s a fight that we can and will win.



I was pleased to celebrate the School Construction Authority filing a School Election Notice for a potential school to be located at Bleecker Street and LaGuardia Place. While there is much work to be done, I joined colleagues and community advocates in celebrating this major milestone.



I convened a press conference with community leaders and colleagues in October to urge the NYC Department of City Planning to deny the proposed Permanent Open Restaurants Text Amendment and uphold local community board control of outdoor dining. Although the program is popular, many concerns remain unresolved.

Update from Albany

2021 was a productive legislative year. I am proud to have had several important bills passed during the Session earlier this year, and I thank Governor Hochul’s leadership in signing these bills into law:

A.4075 - Protecting homeowners and the dogs they love

Currently, insurance companies are allowed to discriminate by refusing to insure, cancel, or charge higher premiums on homeowners insurance solely based on the breed of dog that lives in the home. Research has failed to show a correlation between breed and propensity to bite. This law will keep families from having to choose between housing security and their four-legged companion.

A.5775 - Keeping pets safe after divorce

Divorces can be stressful for all involved. Unfortunately, pets are often caught in the middle of contentious splits and are currently seen no differently than other objects that must be divided by the court. By requiring judges to consider the best interest of companion animals when determining custody, this law will ensure all pets are properly cared for after a divorce.

A.6809 - Excellence in engineering

Engineering is a highly technical profession that requires a deep understanding of math and science. With technological improvements in the field making this profession more complex than ever, this law updates the licensure requirements so that every new engineer will now need to receive a bachelor’s degree in engineering.

A.7604 - Modernizing architecture education

Like engineering, architecture is a complex and demanding profession. This bill makes clarifying changes to the requirements for all architects to regularly engage in continuing education throughout their career.

A.7490 and A.7491 - Increasing diversity of the teacher workforce

Currently, there is a state requirement that all applicants for graduate teacher education programs have a 3.0 undergraduate GPA, and submit a GRE score. These requirements are not predictive of success in the classroom, and exacerbate the lack of diversity and representation of people of color in education. These bills remove the requirement that all applicants to graduate education programs submit a GRE score, and allows graduate departments to exempt up to 50% of their admissions from the minimum GPA requirement, allowing schools to admit talented candidates based on their own criteria.

A.7667 - Protecting loft tenants from unscrupulous landlords

Due to a judicial interpretation of the loft law, loft tenants have been denied the ability to bring their landlords to court for denying the most basic essential services. Housing court must be available to all tenants, whether they live in a loft apartment or not. This bill fixes this grave misinterpretation of the loft law so that loft tenants can bring negligent landlords to housing court.

NYS Licensed Professions Explained

As Chair of the Assembly Higher Education Committee, I regularly work with New York's colleges and universities on legislation and advocacy. Another important part of my work is focused on the NYS licensed professions. Over a million people are licensed in 54 professions in New York, overseen by the NYS Department of Education, which include: Certified Public Accountants, Engineers, Architects, Pharmacists, Nurses, Psychologists, Veterinarians, and many more. Every profession has an educational pathway which usually includes a specific education level and coursework along with experience. Each one also has a scope of practice, which is what that professional is able to do with their license. For example, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), because of their more advanced educational pathway, has diagnostic authority, while a Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) does not, but both professions are able to provide therapy and counsel people.

We work closely with the NYS Education Department, which handles giving licenses and imposing any disciplinary action. Any change in the educational pathway or scope of practice for a profession is done legislatively and these changes fall under the purview of the Higher Education Committee. Professions bills are highly technical and often involve years of research and working with different stakeholder groups, including the NYS Education Department, the specific profession, and sometimes other professions that could be impacted by the legislation. Although not the most widely known part of the Higher Education Committee, legislative work in professions is an in-depth, important part of the committee for myself and my staff.

2022 Legislative Preview

With the 2022 session in Albany beginning shortly, I want to share a selection of my legislative priorities for the upcoming year.

Enhancing school zone speed cameras

I am proud to have been the original sponsor of New York City's school zone speed camera demonstration program legislation in 2013, and the sponsor of enhancement legislation that was passed in 2019 after years of senate inaction. In 2022, one of my highest priorities will be to continue to improve this life-saving program. Speed cameras in school zones reduce instances of serious injury and death due to motor vehicles, and recidivism rates are low among violators. Unfortunately, speed cameras are not currently authorized to operate on weekends or overnight, when many deadly crashes occur near our schools. This legislation will allow speed cameras to monitor the streets around schools for reckless motorists without arbitrary time restrictions.

Understanding unmet reproductive needs of pregnant people

Reproductive health care decisions can be extremely time-sensitive, so it is important that all pregnant New Yorkers have access to unbiased, convenient, regulated quality care. Unfortunately, there exists much anecdotal evidence of so-called "limited service pregnancy centers" engaging in misleading, coercive tactics in an effort to keep pregnant people from receiving abortions. This crucial bill will task the NYS Department of Health with collecting data from limited service pregnancy centers across the state and report their findings to the legislature so we may better address the unmet needs of pregnant New Yorkers seeking reproductive health care.

Removing lead from the environment

Lead is a highly toxic metal that has been systematically removed from many consumer products. Yet lead continues to be by far the most commonly used material with which to manufacture firearm ammunition. Lead shot fragments upon impact with a hunted animal, leading to toxic shrapnel-laced meat. Lead ammunition poses a danger to other wildlife as raptors and other scavengers consume lead-laced entrails left behind in the field. This legislation reinvigorates progress originally made 30 years ago when President Bush's administration federally prohibited lead shot for hunting waterfowl by prohibiting the use of lead ammunition on all state lands.

Holding the MTA accountable

MTA capital projects are constantly behind schedule and over their budget. New Yorkers deserve to have a well-maintained public transportation system, and to know how efficiently their tax dollars are being spent. This legislation will require the MTA to annually report to the legislature on every cost overrun that exceeds \$1 million over their contract, giving the agency an important added layer of oversight and accountability.

Banning wildlife killing contests

Although seen as an objectionable activity to some, hunting can be practiced in methods grounded in wildlife conservation, and in respect to fair chase and fair ethics. Wildlife killing contests – contests in which the indiscriminate killing of large numbers of animals for the entertainment of killing – is an insult to respectable hunting and to the



A pleasure to be with transit advocates and fellow legislators to raise awareness of the MTA Access Bill that was passed earlier this year and is still awaiting the Governor's signature. The bill requires the MTA to develop a strategic action plan to improve bicycle and pedestrian access at its bridges and passenger stations.

natural environment. This bill will put a stop to all contests predicated on the killing of animals for prizes or for entertainment

Re-examining biometric surveillance

The use of biometric surveillance such as facial recognition, voice recognition, and retina scans is largely unregulated. Use of these new tools for law enforcement purposes may benefit criminal investigations, but serious civil rights and privacy concerns must be addressed. This bill would pause law enforcement agencies' use of biometric surveillance technology (excluding DNA comparisons, fingerprint scans, and other more developed technologies) until a convened task force can analyze all relevant data and make recommendations for the safe, secure use of such technologies.

Creating a Crash Victims Bill of Rights

Victims of traffic crashes and their families continue to suffer well after they experience a crash and in the terrible case of a death, unimaginable hardship remains for the family. This bill will ensure rights for survivors of traffic violence, including fast access to all police reports free of charge, the ability for victims to provide an impact statement to any DMV proceedings against a driver's license, time off of work to provide impact statements, and a study to make recommendations on a crash victims compensation fund to help provide financial assistance for burial fees and counseling.

Bird friendly wind turbines

Under the threat of global climate change and the commitment to drastically cut use of fossil fuels in New York, renewable energy sites will be increasing around the state. Wind turbines will be a large component of our future renewable energy generation, yet they have a negative impact on wildlife by killing birds who unknowingly strike the rotating rotor blades. Building off emerging research that shows painting a single rotor blade to make the blades more visible can precipitously reduce bird strikes, this legislation will require all wind turbines to have one painted blade.

I look forward to working hard to enact these and many other bills into law in the coming year.

I optimistically expect Governor Hochul to sign the following bill into law before the end of the year:

A.5472 - Planning for SUNY and CUNY's success

Affordable, high-quality public higher education is the foundation of upward economic mobility. NYS is fortunate to have the SUNY and CUNY schools, but their continued success depends on constant maintenance and upgrades. This bill would require the state budget to plan SUNY and CUNY's capital investments in five-year increments, allowing for smarter planning and budgeting of our campuses.

Correspondence Corner

Letters play an essential role in the offices of elected officials and I want to highlight a few of the letters my office has sent in the past few months to share this important part of our work with you.

Addressing the Gansevoort Marketplace Demolition

In October, I joined elected colleagues in writing to the Department of Buildings (DOB) and Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) to ask that they take all possible steps to preserve the historic Gansevoort Marketplace. While renovating 44-54 Ninth Avenue and 351-355 West 14th Street, developer Tavros Capital found the buildings to be structurally unstable. LPC and DOB then allowed them to proceed with the removal of the buildings' facades while retaining as much of the structures as possible. We requested a halt to work at these historic sites and asked the development team to engage in meaningful conversation with the community in order to find a possible solution which would preserve the site whilst also upholding safety measures for the buildings.

Bitcoin Mining's Environmental Impact

This Fall, I wrote to Commissioner Seggos of the Department of Environmental Conservation in strong opposition to the renewal of Greenridge Generation LLC's Title V (Air) and Title IV (Acid Rain) permits for the Greenridge Generation Station, the company's energy

source for bitcoin mining. Greenridge, a natural gas plant and former coal plant, aims to generate excessive amounts of power to support bitcoin mining, which utilizes a huge amount of energy to support the computing power needed to verify transactions. This leads to harmful emissions for the environment and negative impacts on fish populations, water temperature, and overall quality of life on and near Seneca Lake. Meeting our Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act goals should be a priority and I asked Commissioner Seggos to deny the permits and halt Greenridge's debilitating environmental actions.

Reducing Single-Use Plastic Utensils

In November, I wrote to City Council Speaker Johnson in support of Introduction 1775-2019 (Van Bramer), which would require NYC restaurants to provide single-use plastic utensils only when requested. Plastic utensils create litter, clog our drains and catch basins, and create various other environmental issues as more people continue to order takeout or delivery due to the pandemic. While most residents can recycle plastic utensils, the Department of Sanitation are not able to recycle utensils that come pre-packed with napkins, so they end up in landfill. Intro. 1775 would be a great start to helping us reduce the use of plastic and its harmful effects on the environment.

Rat Mitigation!

You are likely aware of a growing population of rats in the city, which can be a nuisance as they tend to contaminate food, spread disease, and cause damage. In order to manage the increase in rats, the NYC of Health recommends the following:

- Maintain a clean environment as garbage and clutter provide rats with hiding places.
- Store all garbage in hard plastic rat-resistant containers with tight fitting lids and provide enough trash containers for all of the occupants of your property.

- Trim any shrubs that are close to the ground and tall weeds in the landscaped areas around your property.
- Check regularly and repair any cracks or holes in the foundation of your building, sidewalk, and under doors.
- Take a free rat prevention training course at the city's "Rat Academy." Learn more at: www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/rats-control-training.page or www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/rats.page.

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Deborah Glick's

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Disposing of Large Items?

There has been an uptick in the amount of large items being left outside for disposal, making it difficult for pedestrians to navigate the sidewalks and causing clutter in the streets. To help address this, the NYC Department of Sanitation allows residents to schedule the pickup of non-recyclable items larger than 4 x 3 feet. This service is meant only for residents and is not available to commercial addresses. To schedule a pickup, visit www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/site/contact/collection-request-for-large-items. Before arranging to dispose of your items, you may wish to see if they can instead be donated or recycled, by visiting www1.nyc.gov/assets/donate/site/home or www.nyc.gov/recycle.



In October, I was delighted to join the dedicated community members of Friends of City Hall Park for park cleanup and bulb planting – looking forward to seeing what blooms in the Spring!