

Dear neighbors,

With this year's state budget now complete (if a little late), I wanted to reach out with some important updates as we continue the fight for working people, our North Brooklyn neighborhoods and the planet we all share.

First, the good news: the New York State Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-23 included an additional \$1.1 billion in rental relief for tenants and landlords financially impacted by the pandemic; a \$2.1 billion increase in state aid to public K-12 schools; unprecedented \$7 billion investment to expand child care access across the state; increased funding for CUNY and SUNY; \$250 million in utility debt relief; a \$4.2 billion Environmental Bond Act for climate resiliency, flood mitigation and open space protection that will be on the November ballot; and, of course, to-go cocktails at bars and restaurants.

In many crucial respects, however, this budget did not meet the urgency of this moment. The Governor derailed negotiations by insisting on inserting non-fiscal policy language rolling back pre-trial reforms in the state budget, exploiting a very serious nationwide spike in crime to scapegoat unrelated criminal legal reforms without any evidence, which will only result in more pretrial incarceration of poor and working class New Yorkers who can't afford bail. At the last minute, a public financing deal for a new football stadium owned by a Florida billionaire was revealed. Crucial investments like a meaningful raise for homecare workers, a voucher program for unhoused people, and healthcare coverage for all New Yorkers were abandoned or pared down. Finally, a lobbying campaign funded by oil and gas companies spread misinformation and fear, blocking the adoption of clean energy standards that are absolutely necessary for meeting our legally-mandated climate goals.

Luckily, we New Yorkers don't give up. From organized workers beating the world's most powerful corporations (congrats to the Amazon Labor Union in Staten Island!) to communities across the state stopping new fossil fuel infrastructure and demanding a green economy, we can and we will build a better future. I'm frustrated but hopeful, because even where the budget fell short, I can see a new future is on the rise. Most of all, I'm determined to fight for it, and ever grateful to the people who sent me here to work for them.

This newsletter includes updates on key legislation and news from around the 50th District. As always, my office is ready to assist you in navigating government resources and services, resolving bureaucratic obstacles, and just generally helping make our neighborhood a better place.

With gratitude,

Emily Gallagher

Assemblymember Emily Gallagher



On the roof of Greenpoint's Kingsland Wildflowers, calling on the EPA to accelerate the clean up of Newtown Creek (March 1, 2022).



Standing with fellow legislators at the Capitol in solidarity with the people of Ukraine (March 24, 2022).

LEGISLATION FOR THE PEOPLE

My most important responsibility as your representative in the New York State Assembly is crafting legislation that lifts up all New Yorkers and protects the environment we share. Here are just some of the bills I've introduced. Reach out to our office if you have ideas, questions or concerns!

Shining a light on LLCs

The LLC Transparency Act (A9415) would require that anonymous shell companies like LLCs disclose their true owners. This bill would allow the government to identify assets held in New York by Russian oligarchs and international kleptocrats in violation of sanctions and would shine a light on negligent landlords and bad-acting developers who hide behind LLCs while they let code violations go unchecked in residential housing. The bill has the support of many prominent national and international corporate transparency advocates and is carried in the Senate by Brad Hoylman.



Celebrating \$75 million in new funding for the completion of Bushwick Inlet Park (February 6, 2022).



With Constituent Services Director Ada Roszkowska at a free COVID-19 test giveaway at our Greenpoint office (January 14, 2022).

Tackling building emissions

The All-Electric Buildings Act (A8431A) would phase out gas hook-ups in new residential construction smaller than 7-stories in 2024 and all new non-commercial construction by 2027. Along with transportation, buildings are our state's leading source of carbon emissions—and New York's buildings are the most polluting in the nation. The All-Electric Building Act would save 4 million metric tons of CO2 by 2040 — the equivalent of keeping 870,000 cars off the road for one year — and is necessary to meet the urgent climate goals outlined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and New York's own Climate Leadership & Protection Action. I fought for its inclusion in the New York state budget this year, but it was removed due to intense lobbying by the oil and gas industry. The science says we only have 30 months left to dramatically reduce carbon emissions, and so I am making its passage my priority for this year.

Auditing tax breaks for developers

"421-a" is New York State's largest tax giveaway, costing NYC \$1.7 billion in property taxes every year as a subsidy for real estate developers. The program has proven ineffective in building new affordable housing according to analysis by the NYC Comptroller. As debate rages about whether to extend, repeal, or replace 421-a this year, my common-sense bill, A7265, to audit compliance with the program's requirements—including rent stabilization—is gaining traction.

Enshrining the right to strike

New York is proud of its long history of organized labor. I believe that every worker deserves a union, a living wage, good benefits, and that all people have a right to dignified work. Unfortunately, New York law unfairly prohibits certain workers from striking, including farmworkers and public sector workers. I have introduced A9115 to grant all workers the right to strike in the New York State Constitution.

Learning safe driving

A5084 requires that the DMV add to its driver's education courses material about how to drive safely with cyclists and pedestrians in mind. This bill is part of the Crash Victims Rights & Safety Act legislative package. I spoke passionately about the safety of pedestrians and cyclists on NYC streets during February's joint budget hearing on transportation, given the concerning rise statewide in crashes between reckless drivers and pedestrians and cyclists.

Improving jail oversight

As the human rights violations, violence, and constitutional abuses continue at Rikers Island, I have advocated for an overhaul of the state correctional oversight body, the State Commission of Correction, which has abdicated its statutory oversight duties. A8497 reforms the membership of the SCOC, increases its public reporting requirements and the frequency of its inspections, and strengthens its disciplinary powers.



Inspecting the damaged basketball court at Taylor-Wythe Houses in Williamsburg. Repairs will be completed soon! (October 12, 2021).

LEGISLATION FOR THE PEOPLE



Visiting the wonderful staff at Williamsburg Y Head Start (March 4, 2022).

Taking on big pharma

A8824: requires that pharmaceutical manufacturers disclose to the Attorney General “pay-for-delay” contracts, which delay the introduction of generic drugs in New York, and would require such contracts to be posted publicly online. Action on “pay-for-delay” contracts is supported by the AARP—and many of you who’ve called or written to our office!

Stormwater management

A9445: would create equity in New Yorkers’ water bills by allowing cities to separate the cost of stormwater and sewer infrastructure from the cost of potable water. Currently, the cost of stormwater infrastructure is baked into water bills, meaning that the owners of parking lots and big-box stores, which contribute the most to flooding but use little potable water, do not pay their fair share. A9445 would help prevent the dramatic flooding witnessed in recent years while shifting the burden of stormwater costs away from residential ratepayers.

Reporting rent concessions

Constituents have complained of astronomical increases in rent in the last two years, including some tenants in rent-stabilized housing. Many landlords have used “rent concessions” (giving one or two months free) to charge a lower effective rent to tenants than what they report to the State Division of Housing and Community Renewal, allowing them to escape limits on rental increases in rent-stabilized housing. A9667 would close that loophole by requiring reported rents to include the value of rent concessions.

Fairness for adjuncts

A8457, the idea for which was brought to us by a constituent, would ensure that adjunct professors do not have their hours of labor under-



Delivering freshly-baked paczki to our elders on Fat Thursday at the Pete McGuinness Senior Center (February 24, 2022).

counted when they apply for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. It would mandate a minimum of 3.35 hours credited per hour of classroom time and has the support of the union of United University Professions, which represents the academic staff at 29 SUNY campuses and public teaching hospitals.

Protecting families

Many people live with their aunts, uncles, nieces or nephews in rental housing, yet our housing law does not consider these relationships as “family” for the purposes of succession rights on residential leases. S691, which is awaiting a number in the Assembly, would grant aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews the same tenant succession rights enjoyed by other family members in rent-regulated housing.



Rallying for a New Deal For CUNY and SUNY at the Capitol (March 23, 2022).

KEY CO-SPONSORED LEGISLATION

In addition to introducing my own legislation, I co-sponsor and advocate for other important bills in the Assembly. Here are just some of my top priorities:

- The Build Public Renewables Act (A1466A): Our energy system is owned by corporate monopolies whose primary goal is squeezing profits out of New Yorkers. It’s no wonder we’re stuck at only 6% wind and solar power. The Build Public Renewables Act would direct the New York Power Authority (NYPA), already the largest public utility in the nation, to build out renewable energy at a breakneck pace, faster and cheaper than the private sector.
- Good Cause Eviction (A5573): Over four million tenants throughout New York State have no protection from retaliatory evictions or predatory rent hikes. Good Cause Eviction would prevent landlords from evicting their tenants without cause and would tie rent increases to inflation. This bill would provide an opportunity for tenants to challenge their evictions in court, give vulnerable tenants the right to remain in their homes, and massively increase opportunities for tenant organizing across the state. It would also stabilize the real estate market and make it harder for predatory landlords to flip properties by evicting tenants.
- The New York Health Act (A6058): Health care is a right. But unlike virtually every other industrialized country on earth, we treat it as a commodity, or a privilege granted by an employer. This legislation, which was first introduced thirty years ago, would establish a single-payer health care system within the State of New York. No more co-pays, no more premiums. Think Medicare for All on the state level.
- Elder Parole (A8855): For too many people in our prison system, a sentence is a de facto death penalty—24% of the NYS prison population is serving life, or near-to-life, sentences. Our prisons also hold 4,704 older adults (those 55+), many of whom are sick and dying. Elder parole would allow individuals aged 55 and older—who have served 15 or more consecutive years—the opportunity to be considered for parole and return to their communities.

NEWS FROM OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

No matter what's happening in Albany, our office is hard at work in North Brooklyn: resolving issues, advocating to city and state agencies, and bringing our community together around shared goals. Here's a bit of what we've been up to.

\$75 Million for Bushwick Inlet Park

We worked closely with Senator Chuck Schumer and fellow North Brooklyn elected officials to secure a \$75 million investment from New York City to complete the long-promised, long-delayed Bushwick Inlet Park, which will include more than 27 acres of world-class waterfront greenspace when completed. None of this would be possible without the incredible persistence of our neighbors and advocates!

Improving Street Safety

In the midst of an unacceptable rise in traffic crashes, my office has successfully advocated for the installation of new stop signs and speed bumps around Greenpoint, a "play street" for kids at PS84 in Williamsburg while the nearby park is being repaired, stronger protected bike lanes

and immediate safety improvements on McGuinness Boulevard—even as we await a proposal from the NYC Department of Transportation for a comprehensive redesign. Thank you to everyone who participated in the workshops and public comment opportunities!

Fixing the Taylor-Wythe Basketball Court

Last fall, I visited the Community Center at Taylor-Wythe, one of the public housing complexes I proudly represent. A year ago, a maintenance mistake flooded half the basketball court, making it unusable for community functions, after school programs and youth basketball leagues. After many delays and a lot of persistent advocacy, NYCHA has begun repair work!

Protecting North Brooklyn

My office distributed thousands of free COVID-19 rapid antigen tests and KN95 masks during the height of the Omicron variant wave. The best way to keep yourself protected is to get vaccinated, get boosted and get tested if you're feeling ill or have been exposed!

Assemblymember Emily E. Gallagher
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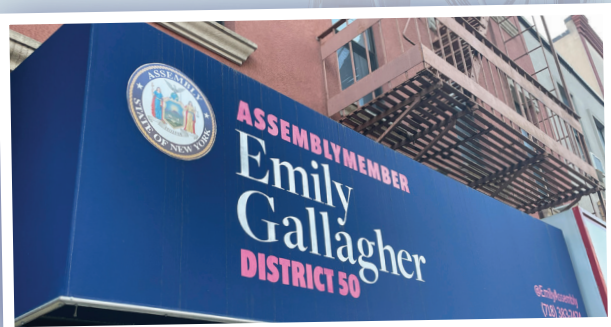
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ASSEMBLY MEMBER **Emily E. Gallagher**



Reports to the People

CONNECTING WITH OUR OFFICE



Need help with unemployment insurance?

Not getting a response from a state or city agency?

Have a neighborhood concern?

Reach out to our district office at 685 Manhattan Ave in Greenpoint!

Call us at 718-383-7474 or write to gallaghere@nyassembly.gov.