



Dear Neighbors,

It's budget season in Albany and while many New Yorkers pay close attention to City spending, the State's budget is more than twice the size and addresses some of the most important issues facing our community: mass transit, affordable housing and tenant protections, climate and energy policy, education, childcare, and more. Participating in this process and advocating for our neighborhoods is one of my most important responsibilities. And I'm pushing for big, transformative investments.

For decades, the cost of living in New York has spiraled upward. Our climate is warming at a rapid clip, with rising sea levels bearing down on our waterfront communities and "once-in-a-century" weather events happening with frequency. The rent is too damn high. The racial wealth gap remains, as does New York's status as the most unequal state in the union. And thousands suffer to sleep outside without a permanent place to call home; or languish in jail awaiting a fair trial for months at a time; or suffer the torment of untreated mental illness and substance abuse disorder without the care necessary to ensure their or their community's well-being.

The Governor's Executive Budget Proposal, the first step in the two-month state budget dance, makes some important progress but fails to demonstrate the leadership demanded by our state's moment in history. New York must raise taxes on the wealthy. We must fully-fund our mass transit and public education systems, instead of raising fares or tuition. We cannot continue pursuing economic development through a sprawling, opaque, and unaccountable system of tax giveaways. And we cannot commit to a statewide housing plan that excludes the protections tenants deserve under Good Cause Eviction. In short, we cannot afford to be so rudderless in such stormy seas.

In this newsletter, you'll find information on the legislation I've introduced and am prioritizing in the months ahead. There are also some brief neighborhood updates and contact information for our office if we can assist you. If you're not receiving our email newsletters, I invite you to sign up at nyassembly.gov/mem/Emily-Gallagher/enews

It continues to be the greatest honor of my life to represent this neighborhood that I love so much.

With gratitude,

*Assemblymember
Emily Gallagher*



LEGISLATION FOR THE PEOPLE

My team and I have been hard at work crafting, revising, and introducing legislation that lifts up all New Yorkers, exposes wrongdoing, and protects the environment we share. Here are just some of the laws I've introduced.

Shining a Light on LLCs

The LLC Transparency Act (A.3484) 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 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, labor unions, and district attorneys. It came close to passing last year — until a last minute lobbying push by the real estate industry. But we're feeling very hopeful this time around.

Tackling Building Emissions

The All-Electric Building Act (A.920A) would phase out gas hookups in new residential construction smaller than 7-stories in 2024 and all new non-commercial construction by 2027. The fossil fuels we use for heat and cooking in 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 and Protection Act. Governor Hochul has introduced a version of this policy in her Executive Budget Proposal, but the timeline for implementation is too slow!



Auditing Tax Breaks for Developers

“421-a,” which expired last year, was New York State's largest tax giveaway, costing NYC \$1.7 billion in property taxes every year as a subsidy for real estate developers to include some affordable and rent-stabilized units in their buildings. As debate rages about whether to replace 421-a this year, my common-sense bill (A.2900) to audit compliance with the program's rent stabilization requirements is gaining traction, especially after a class action lawsuit revealed several local landlords violating components of the law. This bill recently advanced out of the Housing Committee.

Water Bill Fairness

A.4019 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. A.4019 would help prevent the dramatic flooding witnessed in recent years while shifting the burden of stormwater costs away from residential rate-payers.

Improving Jail and Prison Oversight

New York State's sprawling system of prisons and jails operates with too little accountability and oversight; the human rights crisis at Rikers Island is unfortunately only one prominent example. That's why I've reintroduced legislation to overhaul the State Commission of Correction, an oversight body with a statutory requirement to ensure basic minimum standards at all correctional facilities — but they've been asleep at the wheel. A.8497 reforms the membership of the SCOC, increases its public reporting requirements and the frequency of its inspections, and strengthens its disciplinary powers.

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)

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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. A.3416 would close that loophole by requiring reported rents to include the value of rent concessions.

Rx Pricing Transparency

Last year, I introduced legislation (A.895) that would require the public disclosure of nefarious “pay-for-delay” contracts, in which a pharmaceutical company pays a generic drug manufacturer not to produce a generic version of a prescription drug, even after the patent has expired, leading to higher prescription drug costs for patients. This year, the Governor has included this legislation in her executive budget proposal, and I am fighting to ensure that it passes so that New York can finally shine a light on the corrupt practices of Big Pharma that keep so many life-saving drugs unaffordable to the public.

Empowering Public Sector Workers

Consistent with my belief that every worker deserves the right to withhold their labor to protest unfair or unsafe working conditions, I am working with the New York State AFL-CIO to introduce legislation that would remove the draconian penalties that public sector unions and workers face if they elect to go on strike. Under current law, public sector unions can face millions of dollars in fines, jail time, and loss of dues for engaging in any kind of work stoppage. These excessive punishments have no place in a state that values organized labor and the right to a fair contract.

Enough With the QR Codes!

Ever been forced to fumble for your phone and take a picture of a blurry QR code at a restaurant just to read the menu? We’re not big fans either. This simple bill (A.4064) requires all eating establishments to provide a physical or tangible menu upon request. Thanks to our constituent who brought us this common sense idea!

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:

- **Good Cause Eviction (A.4454)**

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.

- **Fix the MTA**

With federal aid drying up and ridership still not back to pre-pandemic levels, the MTA is facing another fiscal crisis and

Governor Hochul wants to close the budget gap in part by raising fares without improving service. I support a different path. The Fix The MTA package will make a fiscally sound, accountable, and efficient MTA – while freezing fares, funding frequent, reliable service, and making buses free for all New Yorkers over the next four years. Find out more at FixTheMTA.org.

- **Invest in Our New York**

I support raising the tax rate on corporate income (A.3690) and making it permanent to ensure the wealthiest corporations operating in New York State pay their fair share. We can restructure the income tax code with additional brackets on the top 5% of earners, along the lines of the Progressive Income Tax (A.3115). We should enact the Capital Gains Tax (A.2576) to add a surcharge tax on investment income over \$500,000 a year at the same rate working New Yorkers pay on their wage income. And we must create an Heirs Tax (A.3193) to treat large inheritances as taxable income.

- **Build Public Renewables Act (A.0279)**

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.

- **Elder Parole (A.2035)**

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.

McGuinness Boulevard Safety Improvements

I'm so excited about the progress that's been made over the past few months to create a safer McGuinness Boulevard, including the "daylighting" of 14 corners — improving visibility for safer pedestrian crossings — as well as painted median tip extensions, left turn bans at key intersections, and the installation of bike corrals. Back in June 2022, when the Department of Transportation said they needed additional time

to study a more substantial transformation of the boulevard, we authored a letter calling for immediate safety improvements around which there was broad consensus. Coupled with persistent community organizing, we achieved the first physical safety interventions on McGuinness in more than a decade. But there's much more to do. Stay tuned!

Town Hall on Good Cause

On March 2, we teamed up with Senator Julia Salazar for a packed town hall at El Puente in Williamsburg on Good Cause Eviction, crucial legislation to prevent displacement from outrageous rent hikes and no-fault evictions. We heard moving testimony from tenants, shared important resources from local community organizations, and called on our neighbors to get involved in the struggle for housing stability.

Assemblymember Emily E. Gallagher
685A Manhattan Avenue, Brooklyn New York 11222

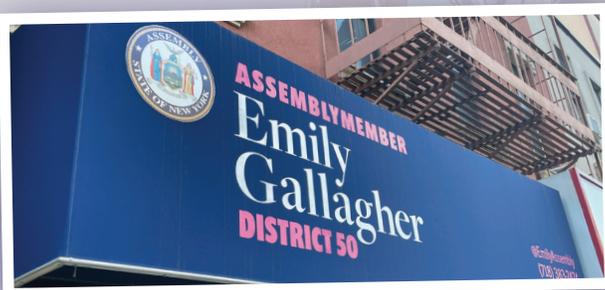
ASSEMBLY MEMBER
Emily E. Gallagher



Reports to the People

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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 Avenue in Greenpoint! Call us at 718-383-7474 or write to district50@nyassembly.gov.

Free COVID-19 Tests

The novel coronavirus is still out there getting too many of our neighbors sick. You can help protect yourself and others by testing regularly. Our office is stocked up on free rapid antigen tests so stop by to pick up a few!