



Assistant Speaker

FELIX W. ORTIZ

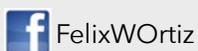
Working for Our Community in Albany and Brooklyn January 29, 2018

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If you have a comment or suggestion regarding the upcoming year and the 2018 session, please send an email, "like" the Facebook page and follow me on Twitter.

“Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Lowering the Blood Alcohol Concentration Level

Since my first term in the Assembly, I have led the fight to make our roads safer. My legislation to ban cell phone use by drivers was the first in the United States. More recently, I introduced “Evan’s Law” to permit law enforcement officers to conduct field tests at an accident site to help determine whether a cell phone was in use by the driver before the accident occurred.

My new legislation seeks to lower a driver’s blood alcohol concentration level from .08% to .05% when determining if the driver’s ability to operate a motor vehicle was impaired. We must always be proactive – and not reactive – when it comes to driver and passenger safety on our roads. I will make every effort to see this legislation enacted quickly.

School Nutrition Programs

As a longtime advocate for healthy living and eating, I welcome the Governor’s announcement of a five-point program to make sure no New York student from kindergarten through college goes hungry. The proposal would help more New York school children get a healthy start to the school day by bringing breakfast into classrooms across the state.

I am especially pleased that the Governor will expand on the Farm to School legislation I’ve sponsored. This initiative will double the state’s investment in the Farm to School program to use healthy, local, New York foods in school districts across the state to help schools provide students with nutritious meals from food produced by local farms.

In addition to the Governor’s initiatives, I have introduced legislation addressing trans-fats, proper food labeling, and prohibiting the sale and delivery of certain caffeinated or stimulant-enhanced alcoholic beverages to individuals under 21. Lack of healthy, nutritious food can impair a child’s ability to concentrate and perform well in school. It is also often linked to higher levels of behavioral and emotional problems for children in preschool through adolescence.

Gender ‘X’ on Licenses

I have sponsored legislation (A.8524) to allow New York State residents to identify as “non-linear” (neither male nor female) on their driver licenses and identification cards. Currently the only gender options provided to applicants on driver’s licenses is either male or female.

As we deal with gender identity, it becomes become more and more important to act on these societal changes. As issues dealing with gender identification become more prevalent in our society, institutions must begin to reflect the changes taking place.



I participated in this year’s Marches For Women. We must push back against the President’s misguided policies and ensure everyone is registered to vote and turns out this year!