



Assemblymember
Jo Anne Simon

52nd District



Announcements & Upcoming Events

April 2018

A Message from Jo Anne...

The final 2018-19 New York State budget bills were passed on March 31st, 2018, enacting a \$168.3 billion state budget. I'm pleased to report that the state budget included **more protections for victims of sexual harassment** in several important ways: individuals working as independent contractors (previously unprotected by the NYS Human Rights Law) will now be protected on par with employees; every employer in New York State, including those seeking to contract with the State for various goods and services, will be mandated to have a sexual harassment policy that conforms to model policies to be developed by the State Division of Human Rights; non-disclosure agreements will be illegal except at the election of the victim; and when a state official has acted improperly, the state will be able to claw back the portion of a damages award attributable to that harasser's individual actions.

We were also successful in passing a bill that would **ensure that domestic violence offenders do not have access to firearms**, by reclassifying certain domestic violence misdemeanors as "serious offenses" which under New York law requires the offender to surrender their handguns. Under this new law, those convicted of such offenses would now also be required to surrender "long guns" (rifles and shotguns). It also provides for the reporting of such convictions to the FBI. This is a very important expansion of protections for victims of domestic violence.

We also invested in vital programs and services that help hardworking families and move New York forward, including significant **additional funding for education, a full restoration of funding for School-Based Health Clinics, ending school lunch shaming, and providing "breakfast before the bell" so that no child begins their school day hungry.** We also provided **additional capital money for NYCHA**, and the restoration of many of the Executive's proposed cuts to special education and other health programs.

Despite the significant progress made in this year's budget, **there were some missed opportunities and crucial issues that I fought hard for on behalf of my constituents that were not in the final budget.** First, we **did not create a significant dedicated revenue stream for the MTA**; we weren't even able to fund beginning investment in the infrastructure that would be necessary to institute any form of congestion pricing. We will be assessing for hire vehicles – a major cause of increased congestion - but that is far from enough to address the MTA's capital needs.

Second, I am profoundly disappointed that we were **unable to pass measures to aggressively combat the gun violence that is plaguing our nation.** My extreme risk protection order bill (ERPO) has already been passed overwhelmingly in the Assembly with strong bipartisan support and was included in the Assembly's one-house budget bill, but the Senate majority didn't support the measure. The bill would have helped prevent tragedies that involve interpersonal gun violence or suicide involving a firearm, like the Parkland school shooting.

I am also disappointed that we did not do more to address certain aspects of discrimination, such as including forms of discrimination on bases other than sex in the new employer policy requirements. **I also would have liked to see the final budget include much-needed voting reforms - such as early voting and automatic**

registration, campaign finance reform - particularly my bill to close the LLC loophole, full education funding of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity's court order, and the funding of my firearm violence research institute.

The budget also didn't include important bail and discovery reforms, the Child Victims Act to extend the civil and criminal statutes of limitations for sex offenses against a minor, and a host of Women's Equality initiatives, despite strong support from the Assembly. Failing to pass bail reform and the Child Victims Act breaks my heart and I will continue to do all that is within my power to see them become law. While our Assembly one house budget bill included a critical expansion of speed safety cameras, it was not included in the Senate majority proposal or the final budget. We know that speed cameras drastically reduce speeding and help save lives, and so I will keep fighting for this measure to pass this session through bill A7798.

I am thrilled and relieved that the City will have authority to use Design-build bidding for the BQE repairs from Atlantic to Sands, including the triple cantilever. This is a significant victory. Design-build authorization for the BQE will save time and money, which means fewer headaches for the community. Without design-build for this massive project, BQE repairs would not only take longer, but large trucks would have to be diverted onto local roads from their proper place on the BQE because the BQE will be unable to support their weight by 2026. With design-build, work can proceed quickly enough to avert that crisis. Sending trucks through our neighborhoods throughout western Brooklyn and through Downtown Brooklyn – the City's third largest commercial district – just doesn't make sense. It would damage the region's economy and frankly, would be downright dangerous for residents, especially children and seniors. I am very grateful to Speaker Carl Heastie for standing firmly with our communities on this issue.

For questions on any other parts of the budget, please contact my office.

Sincerely,



Jo Anne Simon

Dyslexia Awareness Day + Town Hall, Thursday, April 19th, 2018

You are cordially invited to attend the [3rd Annual Dyslexia Awareness Day](#) on Thursday, April 19th, 2018 at the New York State Capitol. This extraordinary event brings together students, parents, advocates, and experts from across the state who care about this issue. You will have an opportunity to hear from and network with others, and meet with legislators to share your experiences. In addition to a multimedia presentation and consumer panel, this year the day will also feature a Town Hall on the upcoming Dyslexia Guidance Memorandum (A08262/S06581, passed in 2017) that will soon be issued to New York State schools.

Please contact my office to RSVP, reserve a table, set up legislative appointments, or to learn more about the Town Hall. Email grossr@nyassembly.gov or call 718-246-4889. [Click here for more details or to RSVP.](#)

My Testimony to Community Board 2 on the 80 Flatbush Proposal

I recently submitted comments to Community Board 2 (CB2) on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the development proposed for 80 Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn. After careful review of the project and consideration of community feedback, I oppose the proposal given that the negative impacts on the community vastly outweigh the benefits. I have several concerns, including the project's gratuitous demand for an unprecedented Floor Area Ratio of 18; the pressure on traffic, transit, and congestion; the project's exacerbation of the woefully inadequate open space available to residents and resulting shadows; the pressure this project will have on the physical and social infrastructure, including the shortage of school seats

and overburdened transit; the missed opportunity to create more affordable housing; and other issues. [You may view my full comments here](#) on my Assembly website.

The next step in the ULURP process is the CB 2 Land Use Committee Meeting and vote on Wed., April 18th at 6pm, at St. Francis College, 180 Remsen Street (no additional public comments will be accepted before the vote, but the public can comment after the vote); a public hearing held by Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams on Mon., April 30th at 6pm, Borough Hall, 209 Joralemon Street at Court Street; and the CB 2 general meeting, including a full board vote on May 9th at 6pm (location TBD).

For project updates, contact the Boerum Hill Association at 917-833-6960 or <http://boerumhillassociation.org>.

Help Bring Back the B71 Bus!

Our Brooklyn neighborhoods lost a vital connector several years ago when the MTA eliminated the B71 bus line, which ran along Union Street. It's long past time to restore this bus service with a revised route that would serve the increased transit needs of the area's growing population. Linking the transit starved neighborhood of Red Hook to Crown Heights and lower Manhattan through a new B71+ bus route would provide a great option for riders to go to work, school, medical visits, local businesses, or cultural institutions.

I recently joined Council Members Brad Lander, Stephen Levin, and Carlos Menchaca and a coalition of schools, civic groups, advocates, cultural institutions, elected officials and community residents to call on the MTA and DOT to bring back our bus. Please join our efforts by [signing this petition and sharing it widely](#).

Save the Date: May 3rd, 4-5:45 PM. Join us for an event at the Brooklyn Children's Museum as we let the MTA know that families want the B71 bus back. Contact kathyparkpriceCEC15@gmail.com for more details.

Preserving 236 and 238 President Street

The New York City Landmark Preservation Commission voted unanimously to calendar 236 and 238 President Street after Carroll Gardens residents and community groups voiced their support for preserving the unique historic character of these two buildings and Carroll Gardens as a whole. Calendaring is the first step in the formal process of landmarking, and allows the agency to review any plans to change the buildings before making the decision to designate the structures as landmarks. While calendaring does not guarantee that 236 and 238 will become landmarked buildings, it does provide protection against changes or demolition until further research is done. I'm proud to have joined Council Member Lander, Representative Nydia Velazquez, and the Carroll Gardens community in the efforts to preserve 236 and 238 President Street.

Senior Citizen Lecture Series at St. Francis College.

This month's lecture series is "From New Nation to World Power: Culture, Politics, and Society in the United States, 1789-1896." Presentations will be on Tues. April 17th and on Tues. April 24th. All lectures begin at 11:10am in Room 3213. For more information, call 718-489-5272.

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