



The REILLY Report



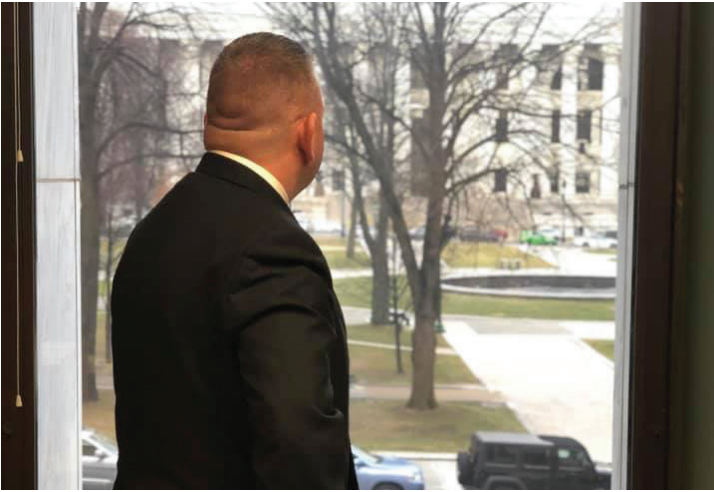
Kicking off #TownTourThursdays last summer



I have always been a believer in the power of social media, which is why my team and I kicked off our Town Tour Thursdays initiative using the hashtag #TownTourThursdays to share our experiences touring some of the South Shore's unique towns. It was a pleasure to meet so many of my South Shore neighbors and to learn about so many of our small businesses all the way from Etingville to Charleston. I look forward to doing this next summer!

For more information on these or any state matter, please contact Assemblyman Reilly at (718) 967-5194 or reillym@nyassembly.gov

In Albany And Around Our Community



It was touching to learn that after a decade of advocating for our students and parents my office at the Capitol would be located across from the New York State Department of Education.



In April, I visited the Andrew E. Zimmer Club for their annual Law Enforcement and Government Community Day for young kids, where I spoke about my service as an elected official and my time with the New York City Police Department.



In January, I met with Assistant Chief Kenneth Corey, the Commanding Officer of NYPD Patrol Borough Staten Island, and Deputy Chief Scott Henderson to discuss some of the department's local crime prevention initiatives.



In May, I welcomed Regional Director Leslie Wright from the New York State Parks Department to learn about the 62nd District's two beautiful state parks, which are Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve and the Mount Loretto Unique Area.



In February, I joined my colleagues and members of the community to break ground on Farview Park, a sprawling 42-acre park filled with plenty of recreational opportunities coming to the Charleston neighborhood next summer.



I was also visited in May by the I.S. 75 Debate Team, which had just placed in the State Championships. It was great to meet these future leaders!



In March, I met with Aileen Fuchs from the Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden to learn more about the work her and her team are doing on the site.



In June, my office sponsored our first rain barrel giveaway in partnership with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and the New York City Parks Department. We gave away over 200 rain barrels!



In July, I had the unique opportunity to tour Freshkills Park with Administrator Eloise Hirsh of the New York City Parks Department.



In September, I met with representatives from Tackling Youth Substance Abuse, part of the Staten Island Partnership for Community Wellness, to discuss youth substance abuse in our community and how we could all work together to prevent it.



It was great to see so many familiar faces at the annual National Night Out on the South Beach Boardwalk in August!



In October, I joined Councilman Joe Borelli and members of the community to unveil several upgrades at Carlton and Ida Court Parks, located in Huguenot and Annadale, respectively.

The community came together for a flag raising ceremony



It was brought to my attention last summer that the American Flag at the YMCA in Eltingville had become worn and tattered, so as a former board member, I wanted to surprise them with one flown at the State Capitol. Unbeknownst to me at the time was that this flag would be flown exactly on the 175th anniversary of the establishment of the Young Men's Christian Association (now known as the Y to many of us), which was founded in London on June 6, 1844.

For generations the Y has been the backbone of our community and many others like it throughout the nation. Today they serve approximately 10,000 communities in the United States, engaging with over 21 million children and adults, and adapting to the specific needs of those communities, as well.

At our flag raising ceremony, I was joined by members of the Richmond County American Legion's Watkins-Kellett Post. This ceremony not only commemorated what the Y had done for the community, but also what these veterans have done for our nation. It was a moment that made me proud to be your representative.



Challenging Mayor of New York City's egregious expansion of the speed camera program



Earlier this year, the State Legislature passed a bill to permit the city of New York to increase the total number of citywide speed camera units from 140 to 750, along with their hours of operation. This summer, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that the city would be installing as many as 2,000 speed camera units throughout the five boroughs by 2021.

I have challenged the Mayor's administration's egregious expansion of the speed camera program and have even contested the legality of it, since the language used in the law only permits 750 camera units. In July, I wrote to the Mayor and his Department of Transportation Commissioner to let them know that their expansion of the speed camera program may actually be illegal, and had even threatened taking legal action to ensure that the integrity of the law is maintained. As a matter of fact, my office had submitted several requests under the Freedom of Information Act last summer to both the Mayor's Office and the Department of Transportation to obtain information about the speed cameras, such as the total number in use and their specific locations. This information would prove instrumental in making our case to a judge, and I am told we can expect to have it all in our possession by next summer.

In addition to that effort, I also introduced legislation in September that would give motorists fair notice that they are entering a photo-enforced school zone. A.08569 would require the Department of Transportation to install special signage on the side of the road exactly 50 feet before a speed camera unit. The signage would show the posted speed limit on a white backdrop, a warning that the motorist is in a school zone on a yellow backdrop on the top of the sign, and a warning that photo enforcement



is in use on a yellow backdrop on the bottom of the sign. I am sure that, regardless of whether you are in favor of or oppose the city's speed camera program, we can all agree that every step should be taken to ensure that enforcement is fair and the integrity of this law – treated the same as all others – is protected. I believe that adding highly visible signage is a no-brainer and can contribute to changing a motorist's behavior in a way that reduces speeding.

Using schools as early voting poll sites is inconsiderate and dangerous



For the first time in state history, New Yorkers were able to vote early this year during a nine-day period before Election Day, which was November 5th. The additional time was approved by the State Legislature in January, and while I believe the intentions are good, I did stress to my colleagues in the State Assembly that early voting would be disruptive to our children, teachers, and administrators if schools were used as poll sites.

I have long been an advocate for having schools closed on primary election days, since poll site operation jeopardizes student safety by allowing visitors to access the building throughout the school day, and can even be disruptive to educators and administrators as they operate a building under the abnormal conditions. Early voting now requires every election to be preceded by a nine-day period of voting, meaning that select public schools could be used as poll sites for as many as 27 days next year.

When the Board of Elections announced their first round of early voting poll sites, three Staten Island public schools made the list, along with others from across the city. I immediately wrote to the Mayor of New York City, the Department of Education Chancellor, and the Board of Elections Executive Director to express my concerns and ask that the use of these public schools be reconsidered, or if that request could not be granted, at least a guarantee that each school being used as a poll site would receive an additional police officer focused solely on the security of the building.

Instead of responding to my letter, the mayor then called for additional sites to be identified, and in October – just three weeks before early voting began – we learned that four more Staten Island public schools were added to that list. At this point I began hearing more frequently from concerned parents, teachers, and even school administrators who had felt blindsided in learning that their school would be used as an early voting site. Once again I urgently brought this to the Mayor's attention, and this time my office was successful in getting a response.

Just a few days before early voting began, we were able to secure a commitment from the city administration that an additional police officer would be assigned to provide building security at each public school being used as a poll site throughout the city; however, the bigger issue was the fact that these schools were even being used at all. I am happy to report that the city administration has pledged to work with us to ensure that schools are not used as early voting poll sites next year, and I promise to raise these concerns with the Board of Elections again as well.