



### Dear Neighbor,

There has been a palpable shift in how our society, and the world, is talking about climate change. As more people realize that global warming is not just a real threat, but an existential one, they have begun to hold government (and one another) accountable for taking bold steps to address the challenge of reducing emissions. For our climate, and for our own safety and security, this shift is coming not a moment too soon. In May, the United Nations released a report stating that over 1 million plant and animal species face extinction; a January study found that ice in Greenland is melting at four times the rate previously thought, contributing to sea-level increases; extreme weather events and their fallout have become ever-present; and climate change is beginning to fuel refugee crises, contributing to mass migration in Bangladesh and the migration of farmers from Central America. Climate change is no longer some far off problem – it is here, it is impacting us, and how we respond will dictate whether the planet remains livable.

That's why I am incredibly proud that the state legislature passed the "Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act of 2019" in June. This critical legislation requires that New York reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, and establishes aggressive interim goals for reducing environmental impacts. While transitioning to renewable energy and developing new innovative technologies to offset emissions presents a challenge, I strongly believe that it is one our state can rise to meet, and in doing so expand green jobs, and a green economy, benefitting all New Yorkers. This legislation was also undertaken with the understanding that just as with education, or healthcare, inequality's pernicious influence is not absent from climate change – it is marginalized communities who feel its impact most, and therefore those communities are given special consideration.

That New York is establishing itself as a leader in combatting climate change is especially important given that at this critical juncture, the federal government has made the terrifying decision to move backwards. The President has stated that climate change is a "hoax," the administration has disavowed reports prepared by their own government about the threats climate change poses, including the military's assessment that climate change is a strategic threat to the United States. One would think this, at least, would get the Administration's attention, but instead they've moved to strike the phrase "climate change" from federal communications. All the while, the executive branch has taken steps to divest from renewable energies and tilt the scales in favor of the very fossil fuels that are causing catastrophe to our ecosystems. Our planet simply cannot afford this level of ignorance and denial, and therefore it's essential that on the environment, just as we've done on issues like reproductive freedom and immigrant rights, states like New York must continue to lead the way.

Sincerely,

Deborah

## Albany Update

As discussed in my Spring update midway through the 2019 Legislative Session, there were already several accomplishments that I was proud to be a part of, including the long fought for **Reproductive Health Act**, which ensures that New Yorkers have access to reproductive health care to protect their health and life; a **Ban** on the dangerous and discredited practice of **Conversion Therapy**; and the **School Zone Speed Camera Bill**, which went into effect on July 11, 2019 and expands the number of cameras in school speed zones from 140 to 750.

**The speed camera expansion is an important step toward reducing traffic fatalities and injuries caused by speeding motorists.** Since sponsoring legislation in 2013 that created a pilot program to test the effectiveness of speed cameras, locations with cameras saw a decrease in speeding violations of over 60%. Organizations like **Transportation Alternatives** and **Families for Safe Streets** were instrumental in advocating for the bill's passage, and continue to work for increased safety measures on behalf of New Yorkers. If you have lost someone or know someone impacted by the terrible tragedy of a traffic-related incident, Families for Safe Streets offers free support services. Please visit: <https://www.transalt.org/familiesforsafestreeets/peer-support>, call 844-FSS-PEER, or email [info@familiesforsafestreeets.org](mailto:info@familiesforsafestreeets.org) to learn more.

The historically productive Session included the passage of many more important new laws, such as a package of housing and rent laws, common sense gun safety measures, the Jose Peralta New York State DREAM Act, and critical criminal justice reforms, as well as:

**The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act** - Combating the harmful effects of global climate change will be one of the preeminent challenges of humanity in the 21st century. Extreme weather events, rising water levels, shrinking natural habitats necessary for the biodiversity of our planet, and countless other dangers can all be directly traced back to the net-warming of our planet, caused by increased levels of greenhouse gas emissions. As previously discussed, with the current administration in Washington refusing to acknowledge the existence of the problem, New York assumed the mantle of leadership and has enacted the most ambitious climate change goal in the country. This landmark legislation will require 70% of energy produced in New York be from renewable sources, and net-zero greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors for the State by the year 2050 – an 85% decrease from 1990 levels with the remaining 15% to be offset by greenhouse gas neutralizing efforts.



*I was thrilled to install smoke alarms in the district with terrific Red Cross volunteers, as part of their "Sound the Alarm" initiative, which offers free smoke detectors, installation, and fire safety education, year round.*

**Ending the Use of Gay and Trans Panic Defense** – When thinking about the great strides that have been made in strengthening LGBT rights over the past decade, it is important to remember there is still much work to be done. One such reminder is the recent end of the "extreme emotional disturbance" defense, also known as the gay/trans panic defense in criminal court. The gay/trans panic defense could be used to reduce a murder charge by claiming emotional disturbance caused by learning the victim's sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Allowing the gay and trans panic defense to be used as a defense for the murder of an LGBT person is an insult to the criminal justice system of New York and I am relieved that defendants will no longer be able to use bigotry to defend violent acts committed against LGBT people.

I look forward to joining my colleagues in Albany again in January where we will no doubt continue to strive to enact progressive legislation that ensures the safety, protection, and dignity of all New Yorkers.

*Continued on next page*

## At Last, A Ban on Single-Use Plastic Bags

According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New Yorkers on average use a staggering 20 billion plastic bags each year. Our reliance on plastic, one of the most pressing issues of our generation, is creating a toxic problem in oceans and waterways with estimates of 1-2 million tons of plastic entering the ocean each year. Plastics have a devastating effect on our oceans, resulting in phenomena like the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, the suffering and death of marine life who ingest plastics and starve or become injured, and negative impacts for human health as toxins from plastics enter our food chain.

Thankfully, beginning in March of 2020, a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags will go into effect. While the ban includes some carve-outs, like allowing newspapers to continue to be wrapped in plastic, it will result in a significant reduction in the number of plastic bags entering New Yorkers' homes. Counties will also be able to charge a 5 cent fee on paper bags, with 60 percent of fees collected going to the State Environmental Protection Fund to support public education on plastic pollution, environmental cleanup and reusable bag distribution.

Although many may not realize the law's impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the alleviation of polluted waterways, research shows significant drops in plastic waste along shorelines where similar legislation has been implemented in other states and some European countries. While the City and State prepare for a transition to a plastic-free shopping experience at supermarkets and elsewhere starting next year, there are other ways to protect the planet one person at a time by carrying a reusable tote, a reusable water bottle, and recycling and composting.

## Pier 40, Our Community, and the Fight for a Public Park

Many New Yorkers who live on the west side of Manhattan are familiar with Pier 40 and the ball fields which have played a pivotal role in youth and adult sports leagues for families in this community. You're likely similarly aware of the challenges facing the pier, which is in desperate need of major capital repairs. When the Hudson River Park Act became law in 1998, thus creating Hudson River Park (the Park) and the Hudson River Park Trust (HRPT), that legislation stated "to the extent practicable ... the costs of the operation and maintenance of the park be paid by the revenues generated within Hudson River Park, and that those revenues be used only for park purposes." Unfortunately, this sentence has been misconstrued by State and City officials to mean that the Park must pay for itself, and additional funding from the State and City for the Park has not kept pace with the Park's maintenance and operating needs, as well as Pier 40's upkeep.

This reality has left park users, community residents, Manhattan Community Board 2 (CB2), and elected officials whose districts include Pier 40 with the responsibility of determining a legislative change that allows HRPT to pursue a solution for the persistent issues seen at the pier. In December 2018, my office along with my colleagues in the State Senate and on the Federal and City levels formed a working group and over the course of 6 months, through weekly meetings, conversations with HRPT, two committee meetings of CB2's Future of Pier 40 Working Group, a public forum, and a draft legislative proposal, our offices came to an agreement that could meet the needs of HRPT at Pier 40 and preserve the community's open space while allowing the Park to raise the funds it so badly needs.

Through much negotiation and discussion, state elected officials agreed to an amendment to the Hudson River Park Act that allows HRPT the opportunity to pursue a substantial redevelopment of Pier 40 by allowing the construction of office space, which is intended to stabilize the Park's funding and provide the funds critically needed to improve the sports fields and other park spaces. There was compromise on nearly every point of contention in the proposal for an amendment regarding Pier 40, and we have worked to find a suitable solution that addresses the concerns of the Park's immediate neighborhoods and community boards while also addressing the difficult realities of paying for a waterfront park that has been tasked with largely funding itself.

The amendment that was passed will allow for a redevelopment of Pier 40, either through new construction or an adaptive reuse of the structure on the pier, and limits the square footage for office space to 700,000 square feet (with an additional 50,000 square feet provided for HRPT's offices). The bill requires that 65% of the pier be used for passive and active recreation, of which 320,000 square feet must be dedicated for active playing fields. A dedicated pedestrian walkway around the perimeter of the pier must be preserved and the south side of the pier must allow access for recreational boating. Any development must be limited to an 88 foot height limit and a 98 year lease is permitted. New York City Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) is required for any development on the pier. In response to community concerns about the Request for Proposal (RFP) process, HRPT must set up a Pier 40 Task Force consisting of elected offices, and members of Community Boards 1, 2, and 4.

After this long process and the immense amount of work and energy that has gone into finding a legislative solution to this persistent question regarding Pier 40, I am hopeful that HRPT and the greater



*Presenting a proclamation to the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, in celebration of the essential contributions they've made to the Village over the past 50 years!*

community will recognize the compromise represented by this amendment. Considering that prior to this process there was little appetite for pursuing a legislative change because of the tenuous nature of involving the many interested parties and communities, we believe that this amendment is a major accomplishment that will ensure the future of the Park.

## Planning for the Future of the MTA

This year, I carried legislation that will have a large impact on public transit use and the efficacy of our subway system in the temporary alienation of a subterranean easement at Grand Canal Court Park. Located at the intersection of Avenue of the Americas, Canal Street, and Thompson Street, Grand Canal Court Park is a single basketball court positioned on what amounts to a peninsula. Below the sidewalk is a power substation which supplies electricity for the IND Eighth Avenue Line, otherwise known as the A, C, E, B, and D subway lines, and needs to be expanded in order to implement improvements and an additional power supply which would allow the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to operate trains closer together and therefore more frequently. Thankfully, the easement that needed to be alienated in order to allow the MTA to pursue this objective was entirely below grade and once complete the general public will see no change to the amount of park space on the basketball court. During construction, the court will not be accessible, however the MTA has committed to providing a construction fence to block any equipment that is staged while work is being done, and I am happy to see a positive outcome for transit needs in New York City.

## Recognizing LGBT History 50 Years After Stonewall

This summer, New York City and the world-wide LGBT community observed the 50th Anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising and commemorated this incredible achievement by hosting the 2019 World Pride celebration. This historic recognition provided an auspicious backdrop to the landmark designation of multiple buildings that are fundamentally important to the early Gay Rights Movement and the overall fight for LGBTQIA inclusion and civil rights. I was pleased to see that the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) chose to landmark six of these essential places; the Gay Activist Alliance Firehouse (99 Wooster Street), Caffe Cino (31 Cornelia Street), the LGBT Center (208 West 13th Street), the Women's Liberation Center (243 West 20th Street), the James Baldwin Residence (137 West 71st Street), and the Audre Lorde Residence (207 St. Paul's Avenue, Staten Island). These places represent a wealth of history within the LGBT community and also in the 20th Century History of the gay liberation movement that happened beyond the Stonewall Uprising. While the Stonewall Inn and the Stonewall National Monument are, of course, incredibly important to telling this story, there is more to the LGBT community's history before and after the events of 1969 that is signified in these spaces.

## The Importance of Community Gardens

Open space in New York City is scarce. Residents are often looking for respite from honking horns and high-rise buildings in order to find peace and serenity in neighborhood public parks. In response to the limited availability of open park space, green infrastructure is changing the landscape of city planning, sustainability efforts, and environmental protections throughout the boroughs.

Thus, the creation of urban gardens in densely populated areas is increasingly becoming an innovative and sustainable way to bring needed greenery into neighborhoods. These gardens not only serve as a critical respite for city-dwellers - they also provide essential environmental benefits, mitigating the urban heat island effect, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and improving air quality in the surrounding neighborhoods. Moreover, urban gardens assist with rainwater runoff, serving as a barrier to prevent sewer overflow from

making its way into some of the water supply. Green roofs also help sustainability and energy efficiency efforts by cooling interiors during summer months and providing insulation during winter months. And, importantly, research shows that taking part in a community garden increases participants' likelihood of becoming more environmentally conscious stewards of the earth's atmosphere, climate and ecology.

Over 600 community gardens are now scattered throughout the City. Right in the district, 75 Morton hosts a rooftop garden, which serves as an educational lab to acclimate a new generation of students to the importance of community gardens, urban farming, agriculture, and its impact on climate change in urban landscapes. The High Line partners with 12 community gardens in the South Bronx, sharing plants and horticultural expertise while supporting volunteers in their work of growing their gardens and programs. And on the Lower East Side, a garden named for Liz Christy, whose Green Guerillas non-profit organization was the catalyst for much of the modern urban gardening movement in the 70s continues to provide a beautiful setting in which to relax and learn. Urban gardens are essential green spaces for New Yorkers, and I encourage you to visit, get involved, and wholeheartedly support their good work.



*Debating in support of the Driver's License Access and Privacy Act, which restores the right for qualified drivers to access a driver's license regardless of immigration status; a policy that has been shown to increase driver and pedestrian safety.*

## New York Leads on Family Leave While U.S. Senate Leadership Flounders

Earlier this year, United States Senators Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) and Mike Lee (R-Utah) put forth a proposal called the Child Rearing and Development Leave Entitlement (CRADLE) Act which would allow new parents of biological or adopted children, to receive one, two, or three months of paid leave benefits in exchange for postponing the activation of Social Security retirement benefits for two, four, or six months. This proposal, which has been described as a best option for paid leave for new parents, would allow an individual to receive a benefit and delay their future retirement at a rate of two-to-one by adding time on the back-end of their employment and delaying their ability to draw a Social Security check.

Many in this country misrepresent Social Security as if it were an individual annuity, something that people have "paid into" for themselves alone and therefore can draw upon when they reach retirement, when in actuality there is no direct ownership of an individual's contributions over the course of their working life. In short, Social Security taxes benefit those who are currently retired and drawing upon the system. The way the CRADLE Act is described, as if an individual would "dip into" their future Social Security benefits, effectively portrays the Social Security system as if it were a private retirement savings plan and not the social safety net established as part of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal to eradicate unnecessary elder poverty. At no point was Social Security intended to cover all retirement needs, but was meant to establish a financial floor where everyone would benefit in some way without a means test.

As proposed, the CRADLE Act does nothing to ensure that the federal protections under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 are strengthened. Unfortunately, the CRADLE Act does remove worker contributions from the current Social Security system which go to paying benefits to currently retired persons. However, the New York State Paid Family Leave Act of 2016 ensures that parents of biological, adopted, or fostered children; persons caring for an aging, ailing, or ill family member of any age; or those assisting family dependents when a provider is deployed in military service can take up to 10 weeks of paid leave. In addition to claiming a wage benefit during that paid leave (in 2019 at 55% of the NY Average Weekly Wage), an individual has protections at work ensuring that their job will be available to them when they return, if they have health insurance it is available to them during their time off, and that they are protected against discrimination or retaliation when they return. This is a model for the country, not the erosion of Social Security offered by the CRADLE plan.

Only four U.S. states, New York, California, New Jersey, and Rhode Island, have active paid family leave programs available to individuals who are going through very natural family-based or phase-of-life changes such as welcoming a new child into their family, or caring



Photo credit: Brian Stanton

*In May, I was honored to join President Marvin Krislov, Provost Vanya Quiñones, and Chairman Mark Besca to receive an honorary degree and address graduates at Pace University's Graduate Commencement ceremony.*

for a loved one. According to the Congressional Research Service, across all employment sectors only 16% of adults employed in the United States have access to employer sponsored paid family leave policies of varying degrees. While most Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, which the U.S. is part of, offer some family leave benefit, and especially to new or expectant mothers, the U.S. is the only country that does not offer that support and not even to new mothers. This country needs a national family leave policy, similar to that in New York where worker protections are ensured and actual family-friendly policies value employees. Unfortunately, proposals like the CRADLE Act are harmful policies marketed toward Americans who have been denied adequate family leave protections and are willing to accept this snake oil when the Federal Administration has left them behind for far too long.

## Correspondence Corner

Letters play an essential role in the offices of elected officials – we write to formally state positions on important issues, ask key questions, and express both our outrage and our appreciation. I want to highlight some of the letters my office has sent in the past few months to share this important part of our work with you.

**Migrant Minors Transferred to New York State:** In June, I wrote to Governor Cuomo about the ongoing concern that migrant minors being held by the federal government are being blocked from accessing adequate medical care, especially regarding their reproductive health. After my office obtained a spreadsheet listing pregnant minors in the care of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), we were able to identify that several had been transferred to facilities in New York State. I asked the Governor to verify whether these minors are protected by New York State laws guaranteeing rights to reproductive health care, and whether the State is providing any oversight to ensure these rights are being upheld. As a result of my letter, my office is in conversation with the Office of Children and Family Services and the New York State Department of Health to further investigate this important issue.

**Advocating for Better Communication about Composting:** In an effort to inform constituents on the benefits of creating a culture of sustainability, I wrote to the Commissioner at the Sanitation Department to inquire about the New York City Department of Sanitation's efforts to educate the public on the proper ways to compost and recycle to reduce waste in landfills across the City. Although many people already recycle and compost, others remain confused over the proper materials needed to compost correctly. I requested that the DSNY clearly highlight items that should be recycled or composted to avoid contamination concerns that reduce composting effectiveness, and produce an easily shareable and informative short video for New Yorkers.

**When Development Threatens Open Spaces:** In New York City, shadows are common and can be real detriments to the enjoyment of open spaces. Due to recent rezoning in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, proposed tall buildings that are now as-of-right would cast shadows on the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, threatening the Garden's beautiful plantings. Earlier this year, I wrote to Mayor de Blasio, Council Speaker Johnson, and Department of City Planning Chair Marisa Lago requesting that they work to change the evaluative measures within the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) application process that has led to these types of incursions being allowed. There should be changes to the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) and Environmental Impact Study (EIS) portions of large projects that ensure shadows and other impactful elements of development are thoughtfully discussed in ULURP and do not harm the surrounding community.

## Spotlight on CUNY and SUNY: Environmental Programs

With an increased focus on the need to address climate change, I'm pleased to highlight some of the excellent academic programs dealing with these issues close to home. The State University of New York (SUNY) offers 224 degree programs related to environmental science at 52 of its campuses through the state and within New York City. Environmentally focused programs at SUNY cover a wide variety of fields: atmospheric science, environmental and water resources, environmental toxicology, forest health, coastal environmental studies, fisheries and aquaculture, wind energy, solar energy, green buildings, and more. Just a few examples of SUNY's environmental science and related programs from around the state include:

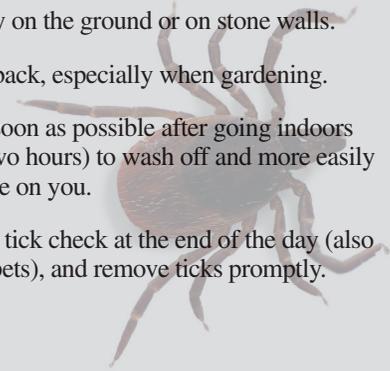
- SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
- SUNY Brockport -- Water Resources
- SUNY Cobleskill -- Fisheries and Aquaculture
- SUNY Maritime -- Marine Environmental Science
- Clinton Community College -- Wind Energy and Turbine Technology
- Rockland Community College -- Green Building Maintenance and Management
- Stony Brook University -- Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences

Visit [www.suny.edu](http://www.suny.edu) or call: 800-342-3811 to learn more.

## Tick Safety

One result of climate change and higher numbers of hotter days is an increase in the threat of ticks and the diseases they carry. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as the climate becomes warmer, the geographic area in which ticks can survive expands. The New York State Department of Health recommends using the following guidelines to protect you and your family from diseases spread by ticks:

- Wear light-colored clothing with a tight weave to spot ticks easily.
- Wear enclosed shoes, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Tuck pant legs into socks or boots and shirt into pants.
- Check clothes and any exposed skin frequently for ticks while outdoors.
- Consider using insect repellent.
- Stay on cleared, well-traveled trails. Walk in the center of trails. Avoid dense woods and bushy areas.
- Avoid sitting directly on the ground or on stone walls.
- Keep long hair tied back, especially when gardening.
- Bathe or shower as soon as possible after going indoors (preferably within two hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks that may be on you.
- Do a final, full-body tick check at the end of the day (also check children and pets), and remove ticks promptly.



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*Deborah Glick's*



## NEIGHBORHOOD UPDATE

ASSEMBLYMEMBER  
66<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT  
NEW YORK CITY

*HOW TO REACH US:*  
Call 212-674-5153 or  
email [glickd@nyassembly.gov](mailto:glickd@nyassembly.gov)

PRSR STD.  
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## FREE FLU SHOT!

**Thursday, October 10, 2019  
1:00 to 4:00 P.M.**

**Please join my office for our annual free Flu Shot event.  
Location details to come. See you in the Fall!**