



Assemblyman **Robert J. Rodriguez**



SPRING 2019

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

This month in the State Assembly has been busy. As we work to pass an on-time State Budget that addresses the needs of all New Yorkers, we are dedicated to ensuring that we deliver a fair and equitable transportation plan that will help fix our subways and that we continue to fund the services that so many people rely on. To keep you informed about the State Budget process I will be holding my Annual Budget Town Hall on Saturday, March 16th at 10:00 AM at the East Harlem Tutorial Program, 2050 Second Avenue. I hope you can join me!

Legislative Update - Budget Priorities

Improving Transportation for All

During budget negotiations I work hard to ensure that our State's services and agencies are able to provide New Yorkers with adequate healthcare, affordable housing, transportation solutions, and quality education for our children.

This year, I have been focusing on helping to fund and fix the MTA. Our transit infrastructure is failing New Yorkers and vehicular congestion in Manhattan has become unbearable. As you know, for the last 3 years, I have been the lead sponsor of MoveNY, my transportation funding bill that brings congestion pricing and equitable tolling to the five boroughs and creates a lock box for congestion pricing fees to go directly toward MTA improvements. Fortunately, In Governor Cuomo's recent State of the State address and in his FY 2020 Budget proposal, measures were included to implement a congestion pricing plan, yet it lacked many key components that would make the plan equitable. I am working hard with my colleagues in the State Legislature to make sure that our congestion pricing proposal is fair and delivers transit improvements to the areas that need it most. This money can help fund much needed transit improvements such as signaling, tracks, and capital projects. We can save the subway by thinking out of the box about how we fund the MTA.

I want you to know that this is one of my top priorities, and as we push to include important items in the budget, I will also be working in the Assembly to pass congestion pricing.

Census 2020

You Count!

As the new chair of the Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment, I am calling for an allocation of \$40 million in aid to ensure an accurate count for upcoming 2020 Census. According to the Fiscal Policy Institute, during the 2010 Census, New York State did not count as many as 4.8 million people, whom have been identified as the "hard-to-count" population. This population consists of our most vulnerable New Yorkers, such as, immigrants, low-income people, parents of young children and the homeless. An increase in funding, would ensure that community groups and local governments are able to implement strong outreach efforts to reach our hard-to-count population across each county.

Design Build

Economic growth and strength is important to the vitality of our city. I am advocating to expand the Design Build authority to New York City agencies for inclusion in the FY 2020 Budget. Design-Build will support New York City in major infrastructure projects that will maintain the City's economic strength and growth. This procurement method streamlines the construction process by merging design and construction phases, saving both time and money.

For example, Design-Build authority would give the same benefit and cost savings to City agencies that New York State has realized on its projects, like the newly completed Mario Cuomo Bridge. The NYC Department of Transportation, one of many potentially benefiting city agencies, estimates a 6% cost saving, or nearly \$250 million, and construction time savings of one to two years.

Further, the use of Design-Build as a project delivery method will allow the City to complete more projects, increasing opportunities for MWBE firms. By expanding Design-Build we can deliver effective, efficient public infrastructure projects in a responsible way.

Prescriber Prevails

I am working to protect New Yorkers who utilize the State's Medicaid program. The Executive Budget proposes that prescriber prevails be removed from all drug classes in both Medicaid fee for service and managed care. I oppose the proposal to curtail prescriber prevails in Medicaid fee for service and managed care. I am also pushing for continued support to expand prescriber prevails to all drug classes in Medicaid fee for service and managed care.

Prescriber prevails is intended to help ensure that patients receive the most appropriate medications to treat their conditions, and that the patient and doctor relationship should take precedent on what medications you receive—NOT the insurance companies. Health care providers know that patient response and medication effectiveness is critical to improving outcomes, and they rely on prescriber prevails to help meet treatment goals.

Cultural Arts

Throughout my time in the Assembly, I have been a voice for East Harlem's cultural arts Institutions and cultural groups across the State. In this year's budget, I am calling for the expansion of a dedicated operating fund for small to medium sized cultural arts organizations that work in underserved areas. The proposal would help address operational needs for nonprofit cultural arts groups that many times need more than just capital funding support from the State.

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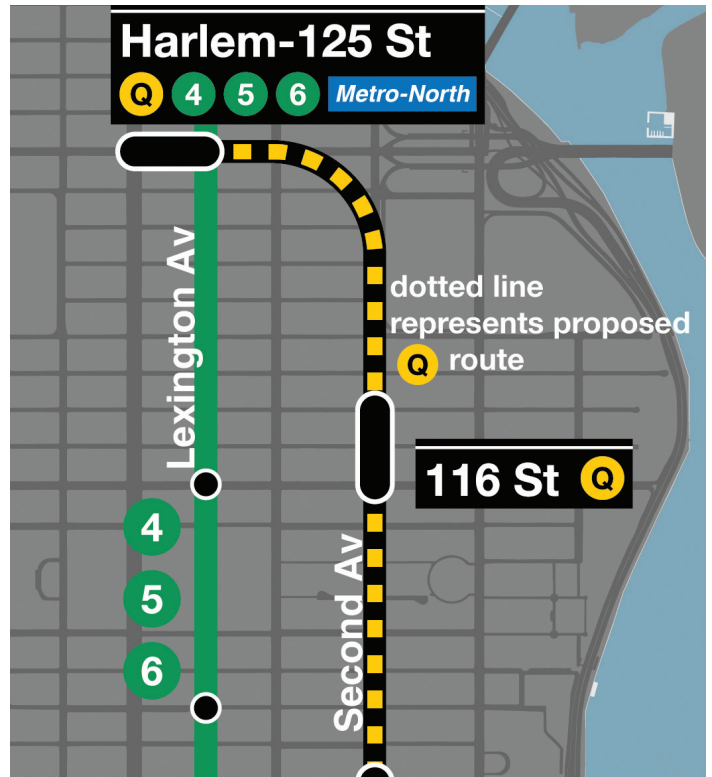
Green Space in our Community

Creating open spaces and access to the East River Waterfront has been one of my top district priorities. This year, I am working in collaboration with Senator Jose Serrano and Brian Benjamin to help secure additional state funding for the replacement of Pier 107 on the East River. This money is an investment in East Harlem community park space and brings us one step closer to our goal of revitalizing one of our most underutilized recreational assets in the district.

Second Avenue Subway

In November, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) approved the MTA's Environmental Assessment (EA) for Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway. The long-awaited Phase 2 will extend the Q train from 96th Street to 125th Street along Manhattan's East Side. The "Finding of No Significant Impact" marks Federal approval of the updated EA and makes the project eligible for FTA funding concluding the engineering phase of the project.

As a strong proponent of transportation equity, I fully support the Second Avenue Subway. For too long straphangers on the East Side have had to depend on unreliable and congested subway rides to connect them to downtown Manhattan along the 4, 5, and 6 lines. The benefits of Phase 1 are clear, and we need to ensure that Phase 2 is fully funded to completion.



Albany is Buzzing - Check out Newly Passed Laws

Voting Rights

On January 14th, the State Assembly passed a seven-bill legislative package to address voting rights in New York State. The bills will make voting easier and more accessible by:

- Establishing a 9-day early voting period
- An amendment to the state constitution that allows for no excuse absentee ballot voting
- Combine the federal non-presidential primary and state primary, making voting easier for New Yorkers and saving millions of dollars statewide
- Same day voter registration
- Automatic voter registration transfers when relocating or moving within New York State
- Pre-voter registration for 16- and 17-year-olds
- Closing the LLC loophole, to restrict LLC campaign contributions to the same \$5,000 aggregate contribution limit that exists for corporations

New York Finally Makes Dreams Come True

After nearly nine years, we are happy to announce that the state legislature passed the Jose Peralta New York State DREAM Act to help ensure the children of immigrants can achieve their

college dreams (A.782). The legislation is named in honor of the late State Sen. Jose Peralta, who strongly championed the bill and who tragically passed away in November. The Assembly Majority has passed it every year since 2013, never letting up in the fight to do what's right.

New York Passes the Reproductive Health Act

On Tuesday, January 22, the state legislature passed the Reproductive Health Act and two other bills that help to ensure a women's right choose. The legislative package moves abortions out of Penal Law to Public Health Law by constitutionally recognizing that a woman has the right to safe and legal abortion, mandates that insurance companies cover contraception, and protects women in the workplace by preventing employers from accessing an employee's reproductive health information.

Common Sense Legislation to Protect New Yorkers from Gun Violence

In late January, the state Assembly passed common sense gun laws to help reduce violence in our neighborhoods. The legislative package included bills that have passed the Assembly in past years, including keeping guns out of the hands of those that have demonstrated they pose a risk, banning bump stocks and creating a buyback program for illegal guns.

STANDING UP FOR FULL WOMEN'S EQUALITY



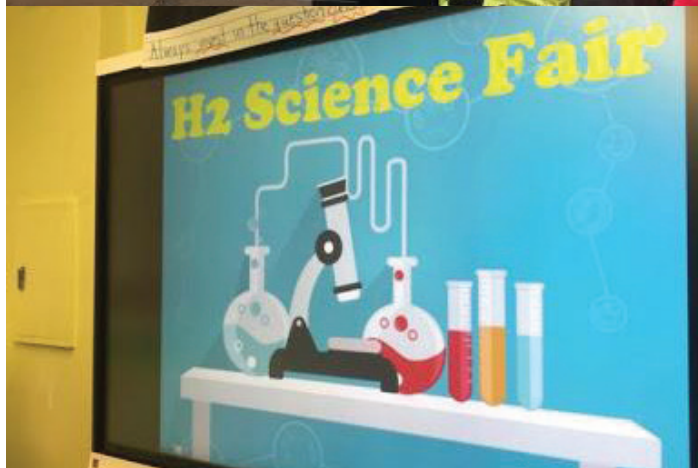
#ReproRights #ReproFreedom #WomensRights #NYSAssemblyMajority

IN THE DISTRICT



Hockey Coming to Harlem!

On February 1st, Assembly Member Rodriguez joined Community School Districts 4 and 5 and the NHL to roll out the new street hockey platform in local schools. The program aims to give East Harlem children access to more sport and athletic options throughout the community.



Our Little Scientists!

Assembly Member Rodriguez attends the Success Academy 2 Science Fair.



Healthy Smiles, Healthy Lives!

Assembly Member Rodriguez attends the annual Give a Kid a Smile Day at P.S. 83.



Closing the Digital Divide

Stanley Isaacs Neighborhood Center receives grant to help reduce the digital divide in East Harlem.



Community Connects to MTA Opportunities

Assembly Member Rodriguez joined the MTA and over 300 community members at the MTA's Construction and Employment Info Session.

In the Works

Higher Education

In the legislature we have made college more affordable for New Yorkers through TAP and the Excelsior scholarship, I want to make it easier for all high schoolers to get into college. I've introduced a bill (A. 2837), to make the process of college applications more navigable for New York's students by establishing an automatic application program for state high school students into SUNY and CUNY colleges.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally responsive teaching is a pedagogy that connects students' prior life experiences to their learning while embodying an appreciation for their culture. Research has shown that these student-centered strategies improve classroom climate, student behavior, and overall student academic achievement. I have introduced a bill (A.2528) that will require the education department to establish professional development in culturally responsive teaching and provide access to these professional development sessions on their website. Teachers who attend these sessions will gain the skills to incorporate their students' cultural experiences, values, and beliefs in knowledge acquisition.



**Assemblymember
Robert J. Rodriguez**

Assembly District 68 55 East 115th Street (212) 828-3953
EAST HARLEM EL BARRIO HARLEM



BUDGET TOWN HALL MEETING

SATURDAY, MARCH 16 - 10AM
LOCATION: 2050 Second Ave
East Harlem Tutorial Program

COME & SHARE YOUR QUESTIONS & CONCERNS

FEATURED DISCUSSION

TRANSPORTATION

GUEST SPEAKER
CONGRESSMAN ADRIANO ESPAILLAT



EVERYONE IS WELCOME!
~Light Refreshments will be served~
RSVP OR FOR MORE INFORMATION:
(212) 828-3953

New York State Assembly, Albany, New York 12248



Assemblymember
**Robert J.
Rodriguez**

**Reports
to the People**

Spring 2019

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