



Community Newsletter

ASSEMBLY MEMBER DANIEL O'DONNELL

Manhattan Valley ■ Morningside Heights
Upper West Side ■ West Harlem

WINTER 2012

■ SERVING NEW YORK'S 69TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT ■

Dear Neighbor,

As this newsletter goes to print, the Assembly and State Senate are deep in preparation for the start of the 2013-2014 legislative session. There is much to be done, with Hurricane Sandy clean-up, our state's economic struggles, and the fight for equal treatment for all under our state's laws still continuing.

However, there is also currently a lack of clarity regarding how exactly leadership of the State Senate will operate, with an unprecedented coalition government planning to direct action in that chamber. This will impact what the Legislature will be able to accomplish this coming legislative session. While the situation remains murky on the Senate side of the Legislature, I'm proud that the Assembly will continue to be a strong advocate for progressive values for our state and nation, giving voice to those in New York who could otherwise be neglected or forgotten.

An issue that has come up frequently in my Community Office is the recent, once-in-a-decade "redistricting" process. As a result of the 2010 Census, Assembly and Senate district lines were redrawn to fit the changed populations of many districts, including my own. While the majority of my district remains the same, the district did lose some blocks, mostly at the northern end of the district, and gained others to the south. The new district lines come into effect at the beginning of 2013. To download a map of the new boundaries of the 69th District, visit <http://www.latfor.state.ny.us/maps/?sec=2012a>.

I want to thank those constituents whom I have represented in Albany for the past ten years, but who will no longer be in my Assembly district come January. It has been an honor to be your voice at the Capitol, and I look forward to continuing to see you in the community!

I hope you will find this newsletter informative and useful. My staff and I are always available to assist you in my Community Office located at 245 W. 104th Street, just off Broadway, or by phone at (212) 866-3970. I encourage you to call, write, or visit us, Monday through Friday from 9:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. For those with specific housing problems, I have a dedicated housing specialist on staff available to help every day.

Finally, watch for information about upcoming events, including my annual Cell Phone Drive to benefit victims of domestic violence, my Community Reading Challenge, and new events I am planning for this winter and spring!

Very truly yours,

¡Atención!

La oficina de la comunidad del asambleísta O'Donnell tiene disponible empleados que hablan español para asistir al público tiempo completo, lunes a viernes de 9:00 A.M. a 5:30 P.M. La oficina está localizada en el 245 West 104th Street, cerca de Broadway. También pueden llamar a la oficina en horas laborables al (212) 866-3970.

Recuerden que nuestro boletín informativo está disponible en español. Para obtener una copia favor de comunicarse con la oficina del asambleísta Daniel O'Donnell.

Assembly Member O'Donnell's Year in Review

This year got off to a wonderful start for Assembly Member O'Donnell, who took advantage of the Marriage Equality Act he led to passage in 2011 and married his partner of 31 years, John Banta, on January 29th. In June, they were delighted to celebrate the one-year anniversary of Marriage Equality's passage, and look forward to celebrating their own first anniversary soon. With the first three Marriage Equality victories at the ballot box in Maine, Maryland, and Washington State this fall, and the Supreme Court's decision to review two Marriage Equality-related cases next year, O'Donnell looks forward to continued advocacy and victories for LGBT Americans in 2013.

Another important bill of O'Donnell's, his anti-bullying legislation known as the Dignity for All Students Act, was fully implemented this summer. Students across New York State now have additional resources to protect them from discrimination and harassment, and schools are better equipped to prevent bullying from occurring. This spring, the governor signed into law an amendment to O'Donnell's bill, expanding it to cover cyberbullying. As of July 1, 2013, students will be further protected from bullying incidents taking place online and outside of school grounds.

For his work on the Dignity Act, the New York Association for Pupil Transportation honored Assembly Member O'Donnell with their 2012 Legislator of the Year Award. This award exemplified the greatest strengths of the Dignity Act – to combat bullying through heightened awareness and coordinated efforts, and to bring together the widest possible group of allies to do this.

O'Donnell was proud to fight for criminal justice reform with the passage in the Assembly of his bill A7624, which would seal the court records of cases dismissed at arraignment or earlier, thereby protecting defendants who have been wrongfully entangled in cases from further mistreatment. Unfortunately, this bill has yet to pass

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Assembly Member O'Donnell answering questions from young constituents at PS 163.



Assembly Member O'Donnell leading debate over the cyberbullying addition to his Dignity for All Students Act in Spring 2012.

Assembly Member O'Donnell's Year in Review (CONTINUES FROM PAGE 1)

the State Senate, but O'Donnell looks forward to advocating further on behalf of individuals targeted by unwarranted charges.

Alongside many of his Assembly colleagues, Assembly Member O'Donnell was proud to vote in favor of many pieces of gun safety legislation in 2012. One of his own bills, A2494-B, would require judges issuing an order of protection to inquire as to the possession of a firearm by the defendant, helping further protect victims from potentially dangerous individuals. This bill was Assembly Member O'Donnell's first piece of legislation to pass the Assembly following his election to the Assembly in 2002, and has passed the Assembly every session since, including this year. Unfortunately, the State Senate has refused to act on the bill. In the aftermath of the tragic shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, O'Donnell expects renewed action on gun legislation in 2013.

In the 69th Assembly District, O'Donnell enjoyed hosting many successful community events this year. His late-winter book drive with Project Cicero collected over 700 books for under-resourced city public schools, and his spring Reading Challenge—"Explore New York City"—encouraged hundreds of children to read about and discover their own communities. Watch for updates about these in 2013 – the book drive will begin shortly!

In the summer, O'Donnell hosted a successful cell phone drive for seniors and victims of domestic violence in need of emergency phones, and has recently hosted two popular health fairs and a flu shot clinic to help constituents stay healthy this fall and winter. The Assembly Member loves opportunities to meet with constituents, hear their feedback, and host events that will benefit them, so please feel free to approach him with questions or comments when you see him out in the neighborhood!

As the 2013 legislative session draws near, O'Donnell is especially eager to hear from his constituents about their priorities this year. He looks forward to continuing his advocacy on behalf of New York's children, social justice, criminal justice reform, and the LGBT community, as well as against hydrofracking. As the New Year will also bring into effect the new district lines drafted based on the 2010 Census, O'Donnell looks forward to getting to know his new constituents, continuing to work alongside current constituents, and supporting the 69th Assembly District both in Albany and in the district itself.

2013 Children's Book Drive

Assembly Member Daniel O'Donnell's **annual Children's Book Drive to benefit Project Cicero will begin on January 1st** and run through the end of February. Last year, the drive raised over 700 books, so expectations are high—start collecting books now!

Project Cicero, which distributes books to under-resourced New York City public schools, accepts **new and gently used books in excellent condition at early-reader to high school reading levels. Project Cicero does not accept textbooks, books for adults, or discarded books from school libraries.** The organization also distributes donated books to homeless shelters, community centers, juvenile detention facilities, and preschool and after-school programs. For more information on Project Cicero, please visit www.projectcicero.org.

Please bring book donations to Assembly Member O'Donnell's Community Office at **245 West 104th Street** (between Broadway and West End), **Monday through Friday**, between **9:30 A.M. and 5:30 P.M.**

"Hydrofracking" Watch An Update on the Risky Drilling Process

There have been rapid developments recently surrounding the complicated regulations and permitting processes that would govern the hazardous drilling practice of hydraulic fracturing, or "hydrofracking," should it be allowed in New York State. A final decision on the issue could even be made by Governor Cuomo as soon as February 27, 2013.

Currently, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has two simultaneous projects ongoing that have the potential to greatly impact the possibilities for hydrofracking in our state.

First, the original health impact study of the practice by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), considered by many to have been insufficient, is undergoing review by the NYS Department of Health (DOH) and three outside public health experts. While details of the inner workings of this review remain to be fully outlined, Assembly Member

O'Donnell is pleased that the DOH is undertaking this reevaluation, as he believes the health of our citizens should be kept at the forefront in the hydrofracking debate.

Second, the evaluation period for the DEC regulations governing hydrofracking has been extended 90 days after the previous deadline of November 29th and will incorporate findings from the health impact review. This extended evaluation timeline will include an additional 30-day public comment period. This period is running from December 12th to January 11th – more information can be found on the DEC's website, including on how you can submit public comment: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/77353.html>. O'Donnell believes it is imperative to allow full public participation at all stages of this decision-making process. Our health, environment, and water supply are simply too precious to sacrifice for energy, especially when there are far better and far safer alternatives.



Assembly Member O'Donnell discussing LGBT adoption rights on the "Michelangelo Signorile Show," a national radio program.

TENANT'S CORNER: Maintaining "Primary Residence" and Avoiding Eviction

Under New York State law, tenants living in rent stabilized and rent controlled apartments (also referred to collectively as rent regulated apartments) must use those apartments as their primary residence. If your apartment is rent regulated and you do not do so, you risk eviction.

How to maintain this status, however, is not obvious or intuitive, but should be understood. While this article cannot fully explore this topic, there are actions tenants occasionally take that may lead their landlords to suspect that they have changed their primary residence. Here are some of the most common acts to be avoided:

1. Filing taxes using another address;
2. Registering a car or taking out automobile insurance in a state other than New York;
3. Obtaining a driver's license using another address;
4. Registering to vote in a state other than New York;
5. Subletting the rent regulated apartment;
6. Spending less than 183 days in the most recent calendar year in the apartment;
7. Signing a lease to another residence or owning property; or
8. Having a land-line telephone connected to another address.

It is important to note that there are no fixed criteria for determining primary residence. Should your landlord sue you for eviction, courts will look at the totality of the circumstances in each individual case. Consider this information when making decisions and remember that the staff at Assembly Member O'Donnell's Community Office is here to help you with answering your questions and concerns about this issue.

Hurricane Sandy Relief Efforts Continue: How You Can Help

While the 69th Assembly District largely escaped damage from Hurricane Sandy this October, many areas of our city were hit very hard and are still struggling to recover and rebuild. If you are interested in participating in volunteer clean-up and relief efforts, or are looking for a way to donate, please visit NYC Service's "Hurricane Sandy – New York City Responds" website at www.nycservice.org for more information.

Education Updates

- To make up for the school days lost to Hurricane Sandy, New York City public schools will be in session **Wednesday, February 20th** through **Friday, February 22nd**, as well as on **Tuesday, June 4th**, which was formerly a half day.
- Admissions deadlines: The deadline for Round 1 High School Applications, December 10th, has passed, as has the deadline for Middle School Applications (December 21st). The **kindergarten application period will run from January 22 - March 1, 2013**. Admission is not first-come first-served, but all families who want placement for the 2013-14 school year must submit an application. Pre-kindergarten admissions for 2013-14 will begin in early March.
- In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, almost all schools in New York City have returned to their regular buildings. Even the most affected schools are scheduled to be operating normally again by January 2, 2013.

FREE 2013 NYC PARKING CALENDAR

Assembly Member O'Donnell's office has copies of his annual parking calendar. It helps make sense of NYC's complicated alternate-side parking regulations!

If you would like a free copy, you can come pick one up in the Community Office at **245 West 104th Street** or call the office at **212-866-3970** to request that one be mailed to you. It is also available on Assembly Member O'Donnell's website at <http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Daniel-J-O%27Donnell/postings/>.

Assembly Member O'Donnell's Upcoming FREE Legal Clinics

For constituents who need help with legal issues but are unable to come to Assembly Member O'Donnell's Community Office during the workday, Assembly Member O'Donnell hosts a monthly evening opportunity for constituents to consult with a volunteer attorney.

Call **Joyce** at **(212) 866-3970** to make an appointment.

Upcoming clinic dates: January 31st / February 28th / March 28th / April 25th

ASSEMBLY MEMBER O'DONNELL HOSTS TWO EVENTS TO HELP KEEP COMMUNITY HEALTHY

This fall, Assembly Member O'Donnell hosted two of his annual health service events. The first, his 8th annual Community Health Service Day at the Children's Aid Society – Frederick Douglass Center, was a great success despite the difficulties posed for residents and health organizations by the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

Community members were able to take advantage of free flu shots; screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol, and glucose; as well as HIV and STD testing. In addition to these services, those who attended also received information about health insurance, diabetes prevention, and many other important aspects of maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Assembly Member O'Donnell also hosted his annual Flu Shot Clinic on November 16th at the William F. Ryan Center. Flu vaccines were administered free of charge, and most patients were in and out within 10 minutes. Over 30 residents were able to take advantage of this opportunity to protect themselves and their families from the dangers of this year's flu season!



Community members receiving free information and services at Assembly Member O'Donnell's 8th Annual Community Health Fair at the Children's Aid Society – Frederick Douglass Center.

Internships Available

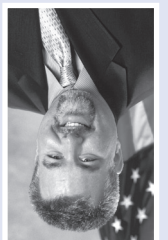
Assembly Member O'Donnell's Community Office is now accepting applications for the spring internship program from individuals who are high school age or older. To apply, please fax or email a cover letter and resume to **(212) 864-1095** or **wilsonc@assembly.state.ny.us**.

For more information, please call **212-866-3970** and ask for **Callie**.

E-Newsletters

Do you want more frequent updates about interesting community events, important government information, and what Assembly Member O'Donnell has been working on? Sign up to receive his monthly electronic newsletters by sending an email to **odonnell@assembly.state.ny.us**.

COMMUNITY OFFICE INFORMATION:
Open Monday through Friday
9:00 AM - 5:30 PM
212-866-3970
odonnell@assembly.state.ny.us



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