



71<sup>ST</sup> Assembly District

ASSEMBLYMEMBER

**AL TAYLOR**

**REPORTS TO THE PEOPLE**

Community Board 9  
January 2019

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## THIS MONTH IN ALBANY

### 2019 Legislative Session Convenes

Assemblymember Al Taylor traveled to Albany for the convening of the 2019 legislative session of the New York State Assembly, which officially started on January 14<sup>th</sup>. The Assemblymember looks forward to a productive session. He plans to focus on housing, education, and transportation service issues, and is excited that the Assembly passed election reform legislation. He is taking constituents' concerns, as raised during his 2018 listening tours and forums throughout the 71<sup>st</sup> District, directly into account as he forms his legislative priorities for the 2019 session. With Democratic majorities in both houses of the legislature, Assemblymember Taylor believes that there is a great opportunity for progress in this session.



## MTA NOTICE!

### 168<sup>th</sup> Street 1 Station Closing

The 1 train station at 168th Street closed on January 5, 2019 until early 2020. For alternate service to Washington Heights, use the A & C trains at 168<sup>th</sup> Street or get off at the 157<sup>th</sup> Street 1 train station and take the M5 bus.

### Election Reform Passed in Albany

Following the myriad of issues and concerns raised following November's election in 2018, the Assembly passed a package of bills on Monday, January 14, 2019, to both streamline elections in New York and improve the State's approach to suffrage. The passed legislation will allow for early voting and no-excuse voting by mail (A.00780, A.00778), pre-registration of minors (A.00774), automatic transferring of voter registration when an individual moves within New York State (A.00775), and a proposed constitutional amendment that would allow same day voter registration (A.00777). The proposed amendment will not appear on the ballots of New York State voters until November 2021. Additional approved legislation will restrict LLC campaign contributions to the same \$5,000 aggregate contribution limit that exists for corporations and requiring all contributions by LLCs be attributed to a member, closing a campaign finance loophole and helping to ensure transparency in New York State elections (A.00776). Finally, another bill (A.00779), was passed to combine the state and federal primaries, which will save New York State taxpayers millions of dollars. As a member of the Subcommittee on Election Day Operations and Voter Disenfranchisement and a co-sponsor of all of these pieces of legislation, Assemblymember Taylor is proud to have played a key role in helping to modernize New York State's elections.



### Assembly Passes Protections for LGBT People

On January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the New York State Assembly voted to pass legislation banning "conversion therapy" for minors (A.00576). The practice has been denounced by the medical establishment as traumatizing and harmful to young people. Additionally, the legislature voted to add gender identity as a

protected class under the State’s hate crime laws, protecting transgender persons from discrimination and hate crimes (A.00747). Assemblymember Taylor co-sponsored both pieces of legislation, and both passed with overwhelming bipartisan support. Governor Cuomo has said he will sign both bills into law. These new laws will make New York a more open, inclusive, and safe State for LGBT youths and adults.

**HDFC Crisis Forum Legal Clinic**

A legal clinic to address the HDFC crisis was held on January 16<sup>th</sup> at the City College of New York’s North Academic Center (NAC) Ballroom. Participants in the legal clinic were able to meet with lawyers to discuss

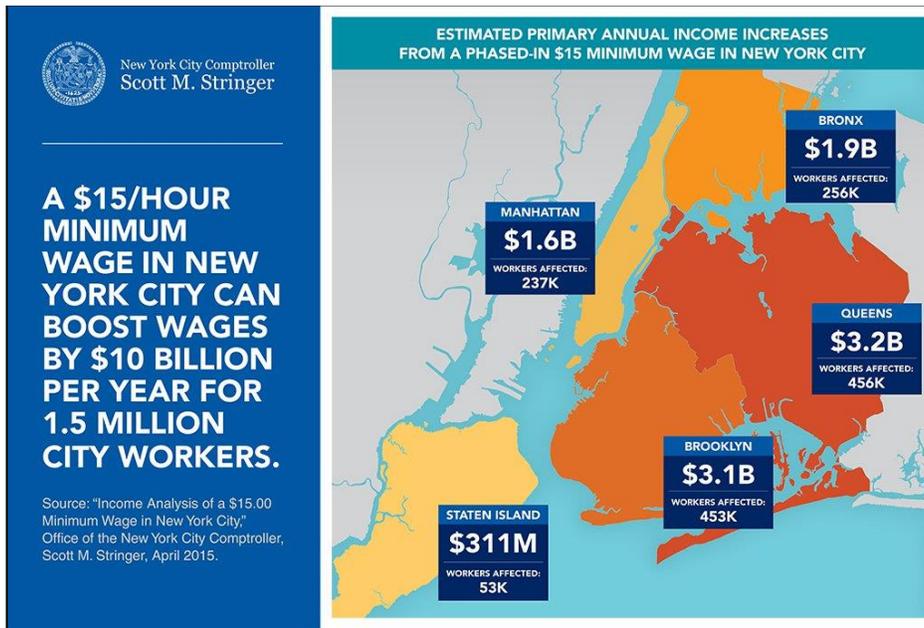


specific questions concerning their HDFC. Following the individual sessions, a panel discussion was held for all attendees. Numerous agencies, community organizations, and other elected officials, including but not limited to the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) and New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), the HDFC Coalition, as well as Senator Brian Benjamin and Assemblymember Carmen de la Rosa, attended the event and helped answer questions. Attendees described the clinic as enormously helpful and informative, and expressed interest in another future clinic. Thank you to everyone

who came out and made this event an overwhelming success!

**Minimum Wage Increases for Workers**

As of January 1, 2019, wages for employees in New York City will rise to \$15.00 an hour for workers employed by large companies and \$13.50 an hour for workers employed by small businesses. The increases are part of a plan for sustainable wage growth in New York State. Assemblymember Taylor is committed to making a difference for hard-working constituents and aims to support similar legislation in the upcoming legislative session.



**Drug Take Back Act Comes Into Effect**

The ‘Drug Take Back Act’ (A.09576) came into effect on January 6, 2019, after being signed into law in July of last year. The law, co-sponsored by Assemblymember Taylor, creates a pharmaceutical industry-funded program for the disposal of unwanted prescription or over-the-counter drugs. It will prevent the abuse of drugs as well as the contamination of the State’s water supply caused by the improper disposal of drugs. The program requires chain pharmacies and mail-order pharmacies to provide consumers with on-site collection, prepaid mail-back envelopes, and other federally approved methods to encourage safe drug disposal. These new programs will save taxpayer money, benefit our State’s environment, and assist local and state law enforcement and medical professionals in their efforts in combatting prescription drug abuse.

