

# Statement from Assemblymember Tony Simone on Federal Government Shutdown Compromise

The shutdown deal that leaves our healthcare premiums to skyrocket is no deal at all; it is a cost that will crush millions of Americans across the country. The deal that has been adopted does nothing to save the millions of Americans who rely on the Enhanced ACA subsidy and the millions more in the private market who will also be devastated by premium hikes. **By ceding the leverage the shutdown gave the Senate Minority**, any deal that is passed in a **subsequent ACA-specific vote will remain in the hands of the same Congressional Majority that attempted these cuts.**



*Assemblymember Simone with Governor Kathy Hochul and legislative colleagues calling for an end to the threats to our healthcare and federal spending.*

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office has released estimates that failure to fund the ACA will allow 4 million more Americans to slip through the cracks and become uninsured in the next 10 years. A less conservative report by the Urban Institute, which considers how unaffordable life is for the average American, found that 4.8 million adults will become uninsured in 2026 alone. Additional analysis by The Center on Budget Policies and Priorities found that costs for the average ACA enrollee will double.

President Trump’s shutdown put millions of children and their parents at risk of going hungry. It let millions of government workers go unpaid and suspended essential services. It caused mayhem at our airports, grinding our airspace to a halt. This is not the America we believe in.

If the ACA is surrendered, all of this suffering will have been for nothing.

This deal sold out millions of our fellow Americans and played right into President Trump’s hands.

We had the leverage, and we must ensure history remembers this as a time that elected representatives stood strong against a President who is attempting the largest heist of history, stealing the future from the working class and delivering it on a gold platter to the oligarchy.

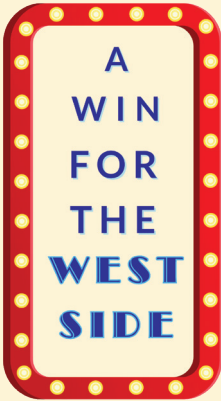
## Casinos Voted Down

Both the Caesars Palace Times Square and The Avenir Community Advisory Committees voted down the casino proposals. Throughout the process leading up to these votes, I made it clear I have long been personally opposed to the idea of a casino on the West Side, and in the years we have discussed this issue, I heard from thousands of constituents via public hearings, emails, phone calls, and conversations on the street. This was an incredibly open and democratic process. The results reflected the clear fact that an overwhelming majority of our community opposed a casino.

Immediately following the votes, I held a rally alongside

community members in Times Square to celebrate the wishes of constituents. At this rally, residents made clear that they opposed the casinos and had a different vision for the West Side. That vision includes affordable housing, parks, public safety, and schools.

We live in one of the most dynamic neighborhoods in the country, one that is always growing and changing. I am excited to work with all of you to focus on future plans that are in line with the future our community needs. Thank you to everyone who has contacted my office to make your voice heard in this process!



*Assemblymember Simone celebrates in Times Square the defeat of the casino proposals alongside community members.*





Assemblymember Simone Speaking At City Hall to Strengthen Democracy.

Ballot Dropbox  
Chapter Amendment

With a long record of attacks on voting rights coming from the federal government, such as the effort to dismantle the Post Office<sup>1</sup> and challenges to the Voting Rights Act<sup>2</sup>, it is more important now than ever to ensure all New Yorkers can safely and securely vote.

My pro-democracy bill with State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal (A1014/S752) passed the Legislature and has been signed into law by the Governor! This law will make it possible for early and absentee ballots to be returned at secure ballot drop-boxes, just as is already done in many states.

<sup>1</sup> <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2022/attorney-general-james-stops-efforts-dismantle-us-postal-service>  
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/voting-rights-act-faces-near-death-experience-us-supreme-court-2025-10-18/>

Fighting for Immigrant Neighbors  
The MELT Act

I introduced the *MELT (Mandating End of Lawless Tactics) Act* (A8908/S8462) this summer in response to ICE and other law enforcement’s use of masked tactics to sow fear and paranoia in immigrant and minority communities. From the Bronx to Federal Plaza, people are still being taken by masked agents. Intensifying raids are putting citizens and noncitizens alike at risk of being abducted by secret police. People are being taken off our streets and disappeared to extra-national concentration camps without due process.



My bill with State Senator Patricia Fahy will ensure that no law enforcement, local, state, or federal is allowed to engage in these masked, lawless tactics and must always wear visible identification. As your Assemblymember, I have a duty to ensure the safety and well-being of every person in this state. That is only possible if we pass the MELT Act and put a stop to these secret police tactics.

Photo of Assemblymember Tony Simone being detained by DHS while demanding to inspect DHS facilities, alongside Comptroller Brad Lander and other elected officials at 26 Federal Plaza.

Photo of Assemblymember Simone, Comptroller Brad Lander, and Assemblymember Grace Lee speaking at a press conference unveiling the MELT Act.





# Legislation Passed in 2025

## City Charter Commissions

Earlier this year, with State Senator Liz Krueger, I introduced a bill (A3665A/S590A) to end the mayoral “bump” power over local ballot proposals. This legislation repeals a long-criticized provision that has allowed mayors to suppress voter-initiated or City Council-backed proposals from appearing on the ballot. The bill has passed and awaits the Governor’s signature; this will balance power in our city and ensure that the people have the power to decide our city’s future.

## Online Sample Ballots

I passed legislation (A6741) that requires state and county boards of elections to post sample ballots online at least twelve days prior to the first day of early voting. This will make it easier for everyone to make an informed vote by knowing exactly what to expect when stepping in to cast your vote ahead of time. This bill did not pass the State Senate this year

## Voluntary Donations in Support of Municipal Animal Pounds or Shelters

When my husband Jason and I adopted our now departed fur baby, Radar, our lives changed in a transformative way. The love a dog brings to life is incomparable. It was for him and all rescue dogs like him that I introduced a bill to make it easy to donate to a local animal shelter when registering a dog.

We miss Radar every day. It is in his memory that we passed A4910 alongside State Senator Jose Serrano to create an option on dog registration applications for a dog owner to donate to a local animal shelter. For the love of pets, I am grateful to Governor Kathy Hochul for signing the bill into law!

## Support Act

Earlier this year, with State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal we introduced the SUPPORT Act (A2440A /S1744A). This would ensure that non-felony defendants that are found unfit to proceed to trial due to mental illness are connected with services and resources for their long-term stability. At the time of printing, the bill has been passed and awaits the Governor’s signature.

This bill will help break the cycle of mentally ill people who commit misdemeanors being detained and then immediately released without being helped. By connecting them with strong services, we can divert people off the street, into treatment, and back into society.



*Photo of Tony and Radar*

## Right of Publicity

The West Side is home to many SAG-AFTRA members and I was proud to partner with the union to expand protections around our right to publicity laws! I passed legislation with State Senator Mike Gianaris (A8882/S8391) which awaits the Governor’s signature. These updates will protect deceased people’s voice or likeness in expressive audiovisual works and require prior consent or the permission from the deceased person’s heirs. With the rapid emergence of unregulated uses of AI in creative works, protecting the voice and likeness of deceased performers has become even more important.

## Freedom to Read Act

As a closeted gay kid, stories and histories within books were the only place I could learn about who I was. That is why I am so proud to have passed the Freedom to Read Act with State Senator Rachel May (A7777/S1099) to end bigoted school book bans.

Every young person should see their identity and experiences reflected in the books they read and the lessons they learn. Students deserve access to a full, inclusive education free from censorship and discrimination. The First Amendment protects every student’s right to read, learn, and explore the histories and voices of all communities, including their own. In partnership with the New York State United Teachers, New York Library Association, Equality New York, New York Civil Liberties Union, among others, we fought and rallied for the Freedom to Read. By passing the Freedom to Read Act we have ensured all of these will continue for every student in New York State. At time of printing, this bill awaits the Governor’s signature.



# ANIMAL ADOPTION EVENT

This holiday season, I'm teaming up with Animal Care Centers of NYC to host a mobile adoption event! When I rescued Radar from a shelter, he brought Jason and I years of joy and countless happy memories. I encourage you to stop by the event to learn more about adopting a pet from ACC and maybe you'll find your newest family member!

**When:**  
**Saturday,**  
**December 13, 2025**  
**11am-2:30pm**

**Where:**  
**Pure Paws Veterinary**  
**Care of Hell's Kitchen**  
**506 W 42nd Street**

*Find your new friend, like these dogs from across the West Side who support my animal rights package!*



**Assemblymember**  
**Tony Simone**

214 West 29th Street, Suite 1401  
New York, New York 10001

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U.S. POSTAGE  
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Albany, New York  
Permit No. 75

**Community Office**  
214 West 29th Street, Suite 1401, New York, NY 10001  
212-807-7900  
SimoneT@nyassembly.gov

**Legislative & Community Update**  
FALL 2025

**Dear Neighbor,**

I am happy to report that a significant amount of my priority legislation has passed both the Assembly and the State Senate in 2025. From strengthening our democracy and voting access, to tackling the mental health crisis, these bills reflect the priorities I so often hear from my constituents. In this newsletter, you will find descriptions of these bills and where they currently stand in the lawmaking process.

Here in the district, we have at long last completed the approval process for the West Side casino proposals and I am proud that both Community Advisory Committees voted no on them.

With ICE and the Federal Government increasing activity here in New York City, you will read about new legislation I have introduced to protect our freedoms and dignity, along with direct action I have taken.

My community office at 214 West 29th Street, Suite 1401, (212-807-7900, [Simonet@nyassembly.gov](mailto:Simonet@nyassembly.gov)) is here to help you in any way we can. Please contact us if you're having a problem with a government agency, your landlord, a utility, or if you have concerns about the neighborhood. If your block association or another group needs my assistance or would like me to come to a meeting, please contact my office. And, to help me legislate most effectively, it's important for me to hear from you, so never hesitate to voice your opinion on legislation.

Thank you! In service,

